

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE PROGRAM**

*Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
April 3-4, 2009*

CONCISE EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

WAC 232-12-047 Unlawful methods for hunting

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Provide flexibility for management and hunting season structures. Provide clarification to equipment restriction rules and not infringe on 2nd amendment rights.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

None

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I think and many others I know would like the caliber size changed to 22 center fire for deer only. If it's legal to shoot a cougar why can't we use it for deer as well? I can see it wouldn't be good for elk but for deer. A 22 is probably the most used caliber that poachers use on deer. Am I right?? just consider it thank you	The Department has considered this recommendation in the past but will not propose it. There are far too many inappropriate firearms and ammunition types to loosen this restriction for big game.
Thank you for allowing crossbow hunting during the rifle, or any season. It will allow many hunter to harvest animals safely in urban environments and allow an another method of take to enhance our pursuits in the outdoors	Thanks for your input.
Outstanding proposal on the use of crossbows in firearm restriction areas.	Thanks for your input.
Crossbows should not be allowed to hunt during an archery season but modern firearm	Thanks for your input. As you can see by reading the rule language, that is what we have proposed.
I think that .22 caliber centerfires should be allowed for deer federal, Winchester, and Remington all make (and load) a bullet designed for deer hunting. Considering the fact that .22 caliber centerfire are legal for cougar (which weigh roughly the same as deer and are thin skinned) then they should be legal for deer. Idaho and Oregon and many other states allow the use of .22 caliber centerfires.	The Department has considered this recommendation in the past but will not propose it. There are far too many inappropriate firearms and ammunition types to loosen this restriction for big game.
I urge the committee to be very careful about crossbow usage and allowances for them. It is a very slippery slope and there is a lot of passion on both sides of the crossbow issue.	The proposed rule would allow crossbow use in firearm restriction areas during modern firearms seasons. In addition the proposal was presented to the public during the public meetings this summer and received strong support.

WAC 232-12-051 Muzzleloading firearms

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Provide flexibility for management and hunting season structures. Provide clarification to equipment restriction rules and not infringe on 2nd amendment rights.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- In the last sentence in section (1) (a), insert the word “all” between “in” and “muzzleloading”. This change helps further clarify that weapons intended for modern smokeless powder have never been allowed under the restrictions.
- In section (2) (d), insert the word “small” between hunting and game. Delete the words “birds,” “cottontail rabbits,” “and,” and “snowshoe hares.” In this section related to muzzleloading shotguns, the term “small game” is more appropriate and less exclusionary.
- In section (2) (g), insert the word “percussion” between “powder” and “revolvers.” This change clarifies the intent. The intent is to not disallow a current legal activity through the process of clarifying the WAC language.
- In section (3) (a), replace the words “covered or closed” with the word “enclosed.” Based on input provided by Enforcement, “covered or closed” would disallow some equipment that is currently allowed and that is not the intention of clarifying the WAC. “Enclosed” is better terminology.
- Under section 3, add after the word “protection” the following: “if that person possesses a concealed pistol license as defined in RCW 9.41.070.” This change addresses the issue of a more limited approach to allowing handguns for personal protection to those who qualify for a concealed pistol license.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I believe it would be beneficial to state exactly what type of projectile is legal instead of just getting rid of the projectile reference for the 2009 pamphlet only. There will be a lot of questions regarding this I am sure. Also, if you want traditionally modern firearm hunters to switch over to muzzle loader and given the aging demographic involved, a non-traditional scope of 1-2x may be beneficial for enticing these hunters into muzzle loading. That is about as far as I have read. It's too bad WDFW is getting rid of the muzzle loader deer/elk combo season! That would have been very nice to keep, BUT at least the season is longer. Thanks for that one!</p>	<p>The Department polled hunters extensively on these topics and the result is what you see in the proposed rules. Hunters did not want to allow scopes for muzzleloading. They also preferred a separation between deer and elk muzzleloader seasons. For those hunters that hunt both deer and elk in the same location we are proposing an overlap of a Saturday and Sunday that will still allow some of that. We will make it clear in the big game pamphlet what type of projectiles will be legal.</p>
<p>I noticed that the section WAC 232-12-051 Muzzleloading firearms. As amended had the rules about non-jacketed projectiles crossed out for clarification I would like to know if jacketed bullets or sabot projectiles are now going to be legal. (I hope so) and if so could we add a paragraph stating such. Thanks for listening to us.</p>	<p>By deleting the lead-only restriction the rule would allow all types of projectiles. To spell out every single type of product on the market that was available and allowed would be impossible. We will make it clear in the big game pamphlet that all types of projectiles will be legal.</p>
<p>I don't like making primitive hunts more modern. Primitive hunters used lead bullets in their muzzle loaders, iron sights and percussion caps. None of this sabot junk and shot gun primers, black powder substitutes. Whenever you make these primitive hunts less primitive, it is the “modern weapon” hunter who must give up hunting opportunity. Let's keep it primitive or modern. Hunters know and can decide.</p>	<p>The Department polled hunters extensively on these topics and the result is what you see in the proposed rules. Hunters did not want to allow scopes for muzzleloading, or changes to the ignition system restrictions, or further restrictions on propellants. They did however want all types of bullets to be allowed. We will make it clear in the big game pamphlet what type of projectiles will be legal.</p>
<p>My comments are limited to my review of the “Hunting Equipment” Regs for Archery, Muzzle Loader and Modern Fire Arm. As I read each of these sets of equipment rules I came away pleased with what has been proposed up to date and I want to say especially in agreement with the Archery and Muzzle Loading Equipment Rules. In both of those areas with the advance of technology it would be easy to lose the true essence of which these disciplines are supposed to be about. The weapons themselves in both of those categories are already so far advanced that any further technological assists begins to place them alongside that of modern firearms. We can make ourselves invisible in the woods, spray ourselves with concoctions that make us have no scent, and possibly no sense and fewer cents, we hide in the trees with all of our attractants designed to bring the game animal close enough to ambush and then claim a great victory. Anyway, as I stated above it pleases me that WDFW is trying to maintain a</p>	<p>Thanks for your support.</p>

<p>balance between style of hunting chosen and keeping the 'playing field' somewhat level.</p>	
<p>After approximately 18 years of hunting the black powder season in the 550 unit I didn't think you could surprise with any of your decisions. Well I was wrong, last year you issued so many permits for cow elk in the 550 unit because you said you had to reduce the Mt Saint Helens herd and now you want to reduce the season. What the hell are you really trying to do? Not everyone gets vacation time to use for hunting and count on the Thanksgiving week as their time to be able to take their sons, daughters and grandkids out hunting and now you want to take that away. What you are going to do is make someone like me who has supported the Fish & Game Department by hunting & fishing and paying my share but I have just about had it and I'm seriously considering giving up hunting in Washington State and will start hunting elsewhere.</p>	<p>This was an error. We have proposed a resolution in the Recommended Adjustments that again increases the permit level.</p>
<p>Hi, it's probably worthless to even try, but I would really like to appeal the decision to prohibit the use of scopes on muzzleloaders. I know this issue was "voted" on last spring when you solicited comments last time, but "voting" on something like this is hardly fair. The issue I have with all this is I am 58 and I can no longer get my eyes to focus open sights in the same plane as the animal. This problem is very common in those over 55 who need bifocals and is not a "visual impairment" under WAC, but it sure effectively prevents me from hunting with my muzzleloader, that is if I want to do anything other than cripple animals. If you want to decide this with a "vote", limit the vote to those over 55. Or just allow those over 55 to use scopes.</p>	<p>The Department also polled hunters extensively on this topics and the result is what you see in the proposed rules. The majority of hunters did not want to allow a change sighting equipment. All styles of sighting equipment are allowed for muzzleloaders during the modern firearm season.</p> <p>During the muzzleloader season we would recommend a high quality peep sight. These often help hunters correct for aging eyes.</p>
<p>If only 1100+ hunters reported hunting with a muzzleloader, why are there 2000+ votes cast, mostly for no improvement in seasons or equipment? Do votes from all hunter types apply to these issues</p> <p>There is much prejudice on behalf of the modern fire arms people against anything approaching equality for muzzleloader hunters. Let them use a single shot twelve gauge with open sights and then tell me muzzleloaders are akin to modern rifles.</p>	<p>We were able to sort respondents by the type of hunting they enjoyed, and muzzleloader hunters strongly supported the proposals we are presenting.</p>
<p>Thanks for the email on the purposed changes for the 2009-2011 hunting seasons, I have not yet had a chance to look at them all but there is one proposed rule change that I am very glad to see. I choose Black Powder for my deer hunting seasons and have not liked the idea of not being able to carry my usual pistol for personal protection. Following the past law, I have left my defensive pistol at home. Myself and the people that I hunt with hope this goes in effect for the 2009 and beyond hunting seasons.</p>	<p>Thank you for the input.</p>

<p>The Commission should review the current rules regarding ignition systems used in modern day muzzle loading firearms. It is now difficult for muzzle loading hunters to purchase new muzzle loading firearms that utilize percussion caps, further, it is unreasonable to expect hunters to have to pay extensive gunsmithing costs to convert new guns to use of percussion caps. With the current rules in place, use of 209 primers is prohibited, it is near impossible to find new guns that don't use 209 primers. With this attitude toward 209 primers, the State of Washington will soon see a reduced number of muzzle loader tags purchased because new guns using percussion caps are so hard to find. If this stance remains regarding the use of 209 primers, the Commission may as well mandate that only swing hammer guns be used and do away with in-line guns all together because swing hammers, being the "traditional muzzle loader" are the only guns still readily available for use of percussion or musket caps. If the Commission is so dead set on "traditional" guns and methods, why not do away with percussion and musket cap ignition systems and mandate no ignition systems other than flintlock, after all flintlock would be the most primitive "traditional" ignition system still available today. I am not opposed to prohibiting the use of optics; however, use of jacketed projectiles that perform better in "killing" of game animals just makes good sense. The Commission should think about perception when setting rules, if the commission feels that inhumane injuring of animals by use of antiquated projectiles is better than solid, quick, humane, kills by utilizing modern projectiles, then the commission should keep the current rules in place.</p>	<p>We are proposing a change allowing any type of projectile made of any material. The issues related to ignition systems, scopes, and powder did not receive enough support from the public to result in a recommendation for change. The public and especially the muzzleloading community told us they wanted status quo on those three issues.</p>
<p>My recommendation is regarding muzzleloader season and equipment. I would like to see a separate season for "Flintlock" style ignition muzzleloaders. This would allow those who would like to hunt in the true primitive manner, a chance to harvest game by the traditional method which muzzleloaders were originally used by our forefathers. A special season could be added for both early and late, or possibly a special permit application for flintlocks in a early or late season separate from percussion cap style muzzleloaders.</p>	<p>The Department has explored this topic in the past but it garnered very little favor. In addition, we have so many different user groups now that are looking for a unique time period to hunt that there isn't any more time left in the calendar. You can use the equipment you have described during the muzzleloading season.</p>
<p>Is the state ever going to consider the use of optics for muzzle loaders? As an older hunter my sight could use some help. Seems odd that rifle hunters have no restrictions on optics.</p>	<p>The Department also polled hunters extensively on this topics and the result is what you see in the proposed rules. The majority of hunters did not want to allow a change in sighting equipment. All styles of sighting equipment are allowed for muzzleloaders during the modern firearm season. During the muzzleloader season we would recommend a high quality peep sight. These often help hunters correct for aging eyes.</p>
<p>I agree with the elimination of all lead bullet. The hunter should be able to choose the projectile of choice provided it meets a minimum grain for the given animal. Some weapons shoot better and more accurate with a specific bullet. The traditional hunters who choose to use the most primitive methods can still do so but those who want to be a bit more accurate can also have their way.</p>	<p>Thanks for the support.</p>
<p>Do love the idea of letting muzzle loaders pick which kind of bullets to use, and do like the current other restrictions</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I think that we should keep the lead projectiles rule. Because this is a traditional hunt. Therefore we must keep the hunt as traditional as possible.</p>	<p>The muzzleloaders polled on this topic overwhelmingly supported the change in bullet types. You can still use lead if you want to keep your hunt as traditional as possible.</p>
<p>I like the new definitions applied to muzzleloader. For years I have had to apologize to my Hunter Ed classes for the</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

<p>wording in the regulations. Whoever wrote the definitions didn't understand the difference between "charged" (powder and bullet in the barrel) and "loaded" (charged and primed). I strongly support elimination of the restriction on bullets to un-jacketed lead only. That was an ill-conceived restriction, almost impossible to enforce, and as such probably was commonly violated.</p>	
<p>I also think you should keep the current rules of primitive blackpowder hunting in force. That is, no modern in-line ignition and no telescopic sights allowed. Keep it simple. Keep it primitive.</p>	<p>In-lines have been legal for many years and we are not proposing to change that. The ignition restrictions do disallow some in-lines that don't meet the exposed to weather criteria. We are not proposing a change to sighting systems.</p>
<p>I didn't see if you addressed scope and other "modern" issues for muzzleloaders, although you may have as I was not able yet to read all of the proposals. Anyway, I would like to weigh in on the side of making legal every available modern method for the muzzleloader hunter. In this way every hunter can make his/her choice as to how they would like to pursue their sport. I believe we owe it to the game animals to make every effort for a quick clean kill and a scope can certainly go a long way to insure this. If a man/woman would like to pursue their animals in buckskins and traditional gear that is fine, but why restrict the rest of us to less efficient front stuffers that are getting harder and harder to even purchase? In the end the gun must be loaded one shot at a time from the muzzle and capped somehow at the other end, so why put all these other silly restrictions on the sport that probably just cause more wounded and lost animals? It is just plain silly and most other states already realize this</p>	<p>The Department also polled hunters extensively on this topics and the result is what you see in the proposed rules. The majority of hunters did not want to allow a change sighting equipment. All styles of sighting equipment are allowed for muzzleloaders during the modern firearm season.</p>
<p>It is unclear to me if a <u>Revolver</u> Muzzleloader Pistol is legal for Big Game hunting. If so, is it legal to have each revolver chamber loaded and capped? To be consistent with big game muzzleloader rifle regulations it should be stated that only one chamber at a time may be loaded and/or capped. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the regulation changes. I can fully appreciate the labor that goes with such a document changes and generally give you high marks for the changes. I welcome most of them. Good luck in drafting the final version.</p>	<p>The black powder revolver would not be legal for big game. Only some types of small game.</p>
<p>Are we to assume that Jacketed Projectiles are now LEGAL for muzzleloaders?? It is not clear or expressly stated as far as I can see.</p>	<p>Yes, they would be legal under the proposed language.</p>
<p>I also believe a blackpowder hunter should be allowed to carry with him a <u>modern handgun</u> for safety purposes. This would include protection in cougar/bear areas and also for emergency signaling purposes. It is a very simple matter to determine if an animal was taken with a legal BP arm or a modern firearm.</p>	<p>As you can see in the proposed rule we have included that language.</p>
<p>Also, better restrictions on "traditional" muzzleloader equipment is needed. It is my opinion, that there are a lot of Washington muzzleloader hunters using 209 primer guns. This needs to stop or the regulations need to change.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>WAC 232-12-047 Unlawful methods for hunting: Recommend also a removal of any language that restricts certain muzzleloader rifles from being used-those that are considered of modern design with 209 ignition should be allowed for hunting during the muzzleloader season.</p>	<p>This topic is not covered in the WAC that you reference, however we did ask this question of the public this summer and the majority of the muzzleloader hunters do not want a change to the ignition system restrictions.</p>
<p>My question is about muzzleloaders. I read the new language and I am confused. Can I use 209 caps in a muzzleloader?</p>	<p>You may not use 209 caps in a muzzleloader.</p>
<p>I believe that the recommendation to change the Muzzleloader rules to include the use of Copper bullets and 209 primers are</p>	<p>We are proposing to allow all types of bullets but we are not proposing to allow 209 primers.</p>

a good change. Both environmentally and financially.	
The following agency response pertains to all comments in this section	
Embrace technological advancements in weaponry such as in-line muzzleloaders.	The Department polled hunters extensively on these topics and the result is what you see in the proposed rules. The majority of hunters did not want to allow a change in ignition systems. In-line muzzleloaders are currently allowed during muzzleloader season, if they use conventional percussion caps and are exposed to the weather in some way. All styles of ignition systems are allowed for muzzleloaders during the modern firearm season.
I wish you would allow in line muzzle loaders for muzzle loader season.	
Too, 209 primers need to be allowed as a viable and legal ignition method for muzzleloaders. Everything else looks fine.	
<p>Re-considered the reason behind the exposed nipple to weather. You can hardly find a gun anymore w/exception to a Hawkins kit that doesn't have the nipple exposed to weather. Especially w/weather in Washington that is wet, why not allow for a closed breach to keep the percussion cap from getting wet & mis-firing. Imaging how many dry days we get in Washington during hunting season. I don't have to get the logic behind a weather exposed nipple & percussion cap. Consider allowing a 209 percussion cap. Wouldn't it make sense for a better ignition for the powder? I bought my son a gun to use that is a 209 primer & closed breach but unfortunately we can't use it in Washington (we hunt in Utah where it is authorized). Consider allowing a 1 power shot gun scope for muzzle load. My eyes aren't the greatest anymore & I put one on my gun this past year in Utah. It allowed me to focus better & provide a clearer shot. Not much advantage otherwise if that is the reason behind the Washington laws. I started muzzle loading w/my first gun in 1987 from a Thompson Center Hawkins Kit. Eventually the stock went bad & I bought a Thompson Center inline in 1998 that does have the open exposed nipple for a percussion cap & believe it would fit the criteria for a Washington State muzzleloading gun. However, to hunt here I would have to remove the 1X scope I put on last year & have to get another gun for my son because I would have wasted money on for the first gun.</p>	
Under the muzzle loading rule change you can't find hardly any guns that will shoot no.11 caps why not make 209's legal in this state. A lot of other states allow these. If the traditionalists want a special season give them one.	
I don't understand why this state will not allow 209 ignitions. It is standard in most new inline muzzleloaders. It should be allowed! Thank you for allowing a modern handgun to be carried for protection. Long overdue! I think scopes should be allowed on muzzleloaders, especially for seniors! On a general note, maybe you should really consider cancelling the entire hunting season for 2009 due to the horrific winter/road kill the wildlife have had to endure. We all could stand a year off!	

<p>Dear Members of the Wildlife Commission, I would like to start by thanking the commission for undertaking the task of rule changes. A lot of these rules are obsolete and have needed to be addressed for some time now. So my hat is truly off to you folks for doing what's needed to be done for some time now. With that said I would like to comment on a couple of separate issues related to the proposed rule changes. My first comment is reference: <i>WAC 232-12-051 Muzzleloading firearms</i> I would like to see the approval of 209 shotgun primers as approved ignition methods for muzzleloaders. This ignition method does not improve accuracy nor does it increase the maximum effective range of the gun. The 209 primer simply improves the chances that the gun will fire in wet conditions. It is like using a release in archery terms as opposed to shooting with fingers. A number of other states have already approved the 209 primers. As a result of the widespread use of 209 primers it is hard to find a "legal" muzzleloader for purchase. I agree that the "exposed to the elements" part should remain. I do not support a system that is like a break action shotgun that prevents rain and sleet from coming in contact with the primer. I would like to be allowed to use the 209 primer as a choice. Please take this into consideration.</p>	
<p>I would recommend that archery hunters be allowed to carry a pistol if they have a concealed weapons permit.</p>	<p>We have made that change. Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>Don't change regulations on bullets for muzzleloaders. Jacketed bullets will extend the range for the muzzleloader. I don't support muzzleloader handguns either.</p>	<p>The vast majority of the respondents on the public surveys supported the proposed change to muzzleloader equipment. Over 70% of the muzzleloaders that responded wanted this change. The Department is moving forward with the recommendation. If success rates change substantially for muzzleloaders the hunting seasons will be adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>Twenty-two other states allow muzzleloading handguns for deer and other big game. With the help of the Washington State Muzzleloader's Association and the Borderline Bass and Contenders, the Agency feels it has written appropriate restrictions to this rule that will make muzzleloader handguns a viable hunting tool.</p>
<p>I don't support the ability to carry a handgun during archery seasons. Too modern.</p>	<p>The current proposed language would only allow those people that possessed a concealed pistol license. The Agency has received a lot of requests for this allowance.</p>
<p>Give crossbows its own WAC and don't blend issues.</p>	<p>The Agency will likely propose a stand-alone WAC for crossbows over time. Given the complexity of the 3-year package as it is, we decided to leave the language in the archery equipment WAC for the time being.</p>
<p>Concerned that felons will carry handguns if our regulations allow them during archery seasons.</p>	<p>The Administrative Codes that the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopts do not supersede legislative statute or federal law. If a state law, a federal law, or a court action prevented an individual from possessing a handgun or a firearm, the codes in question would not reverse that.</p>
<p>Supports the Department's muzzleloader handgun proposal.</p>	<p>The testimony is consistent with the Department's final recommendation.</p>
<p>Supports the Department's muzzleloader projectile proposal.</p>	<p>The testimony is consistent with the Department's final recommendation.</p>
<p>Supports the Department's proposal for handgun carry by archers and muzzleloaders.</p>	<p>Based on other input received the Department's proposal has been modified so that only individuals with a concealed pistol permit may carry a handgun.</p>

WAC 232-12-054 Archery requirements – Archery special use permits

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Provide flexibility for management and hunting season structures. Provide clarification to equipment restriction rules and not infringe on 2nd amendment rights.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Under section 1.a., add after the word “protection” the following: “if that person possesses a concealed pistol license as defined in RCW 9.41.070.” This change addresses the issue of a more limited approach to allowing handguns for personal protection to those who qualify for a concealed pistol license.
- Under section 1.e., change the second sentence from:
~~Disabled~~ hunter permittees in possession of a crossbow special use permit may hunt with a crossbow.
To:
~~Disabled~~ However, disabled hunter permittees in possession of a crossbow special use permit may hunt with a crossbow in any season that allows archery equipment.
 This adjustment clarifies that disabled hunter permittees may hunt with a crossbow during any season that allows archery equipment.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Please allow archery hunters to be able to carry a side arm while bow hunting. I have had cougars sneak around me a while out hunting and would feel better being able to carry.	The change you are requesting is in the proposal for the archery equipment and muzzleloader equipment WACs for those with a concealed pistol permit.
The side arm now for our personal protection I give you a big THANK YOU. I have been in many life threatening spots now just from cougars in my area (4 cougars and 1 bear) in 8 years, and at least having a hand gun would make me feel better about walking around on my own.	Thanks for your support.
Dear gentlemen; I am an archery hunter, and do love the sport for not only target shooting for score, but also to hunting game. I do like your latest modification under article WAC 232-12-054 archery equipment requirements---archery special use permits. I like this new common sense requirement for simply protecting one’s self protection.	Thanks for your support.
I do not think that crossbows should be allowed during archery season, except by disabled people ONLY. I feel that crossbow hunters should be allowed to hunt in the muzzleloader and/or modern firearm season. Crossbows provide technological advantage over archery that is unfair because of the ability to maintain full draw for extended amounts of time with no effort by the hunter. Also, I believe that it must be clarified as to what the draw weights are for crossbows, similar to that of standard archery equipment.	The Department’s proposal would allow crossbows in firearm restriction areas during modern firearm seasons, not during archery seasons.
I would recommend that archery hunters be allowed to carry a pistol if they have a concealed weapons permit.	The change you are requesting is being recommended in the final adjustments.
I don’t like making primitive hunts more modern. Primitive hunters did not use compound bows, trigger releases, sighting glass, metal arrows. Whenever you make these primitive hunts less primitive, it is the “modern weapon” hunter who must give up hunting opportunity. Let’s keep it primitive or modern. Hunters know and can decide.	The Department polled hunters extensively on these topics in the past and we work closely with the user groups on the Game management Advisory Council when it comes to best practices regarding equipment.

<p>My comments are limited to my review of the “Hunting Equipment” Regs for Archery, Muzzle Loader and Modern Fire Arm. As I read each of these sets of equipment rules I came away pleased with what has been proposed up to date and I want to say especially in agreement with the Archery and Muzzle Loading Equipment Rules. In both of those areas with the advance of technology it would be easy to lose the true essence of which these disciplines are supposed to be about. The weapons themselves in both of those categories are already so far advanced that any further technological assists begins to place them alongside that of modern firearms. Laser lights, scopes, flashing knocks, (on arrows – supposedly to enable retrieval of game animals, but most arrows do not remain in game animals), these types of aids ought not to be a part of a style of hunting that was envisioned for the early muzzle loading and bow hunting dedicated seasons and these things possibly begin to encourage a less than fair chase hunting of game than game animals deserve. We can make ourselves invisible in the woods, spray ourselves with concoctions that make us have no scent, and possibly no sense and fewer cents, we hide in the trees with all of our attractants designed to bring the game animal close enough to ambush and then claim a great victory. Anyway, as I stated above it pleases me that WDWF is trying to maintain a balance between style of hunting chosen and keeping the ‘playing field’ somewhat level.</p>	<p>Thanks for your support.</p>
<p>Embrace technological advancements in weaponry such as in-line muzzleloaders and mechanical broadheads. We should want to effectively dispatch animals.</p>	<p>The Department has explored this topic in the past but there was very little support for the idea.</p>
<p>I am strongly in favor of this change due to the marijuana grows that are being discovered. I have a concealed weapons permit, I would rather have my pistol with me than leave it in my truck for two reasons: 1) Added protection for me while in the woods, and 2) Less chance of being stolen. Prior to the marijuana grows, I never even considered taking my pistol.</p>	<p>Thanks for your comment.</p>
<p>Great job on WAC 232-12-054! I whole-heartedly support being able to carry a handgun for protection when bow hunting.</p> <p>It was a bad forced choice between perhaps losing your life or limb by not having a firearm along to protect against larger predators, or losing one's hunting privilege for having a handgun along for protection.</p> <p>This change makes so much sense and doesn't compromise at all the integrity of hunting only with bow.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>Do not like the introduction of crossbows under any circumstances, too much potential for poaching. Do not like letting archers carry handguns, there have not been enough "incidents", (zero?), to warrant this change.</p>	<p>We are proposing allowing crossbows in firearm restriction areas during modern firearm seasons only.</p>
<p>I am happy to see that archery hunters will be able to carry a handgun for protection. I have had two close encounters with black bears in the last two years, one where the bear charged to within 40 yards of me.</p>	<p>Thanks for your input.</p>
<p>First, there is no reason to allow crossbows in any season except if they are being used by a handicap hunter. There are plenty of other weapons to use in firearm restriction seasons such as a shotgun, muzzleloader, or a bow. There is no reason to allow a crossbow during the archery season. It can only lead to less opportunity for archers.</p>	<p>We are proposing allowing crossbows in firearm restriction areas during modern firearm seasons, only. When we presented this idea to the public this summer it received a lot of support.</p>
<p>The second comment is regarding the ability to carry a modern pistol for personal protection. The woods are a different place today what with drug grows and illegal's poaching game out of season and without a permit. We never</p>	<p>Thanks for your support.</p>

<p>know what or who is around the next corner. It makes sense to be able to protect our person in these instances as well as in the event of a wild cat or other such confrontation.</p>	
<p>My first recommendation is to allow the use of lighted arrow nocks for archery hunting. There is no advantage to using these products prior to making a shot. The advantage would be seeing clearly where the arrow hits the animal allowing the hunter to make a better decision on how soon to begin tracking the animal. Tracking a marginal shot too soon usually results in pushing the animal and a non recovery. It seems clearly more ethical to be certain of the shot placement. I believe it makes the difference between recovering an animal or having it die unrecovered.</p>	<p>The Department has explored this topic in the past but there was very little support for the idea.</p>
<p>Have not noticed any archery changes. Such as the use of illuminox, and why are they not legal? Same as expandable broadheads? To my knowledge these things could help in making archery more ethical. The ability to find the arrow after the shot as well as knowing exactly where the arrow entered. I believe this could result in better odds of finding your game after the shot, knowing how good the shot placement and how long to wait to avoid jumping the wounded animal. Finding the arrow in the heavy cover in most of Washington can prove to be quite a task. Thanks for your time and info.</p>	<p>The Department has explored this topic in the past but there was very little support for the idea.</p>
<p>WAC 232-12-054 Archery requirements--Archery special use permits: Section A) please, please approve the exception for modern handguns to be carried for personal protection. Section B) agree with electric devices in general for the aid of further accuracy; however, in recent months and into the future I do expect to see small digital cameras available to mount to the bow to help with personal filming AND (review of shot placement). I would like to see electric defined a bit clearer.</p>	<p>Thanks for your input. Regarding your second comment, the Department has explored this topic in the past but there was very little support for the idea.</p>
<p>My third recommendation is to NOT allow the carrying of hand guns while archery hunting. I feel the temptation to use a hand gun inappropriately may be too great for some archers.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I am very pleased to read the wording regarding the possession of modern handguns for personal protection during archery season. I have three grandsons who are becoming a part of the hunting tradition and even though we may never have a problem with the personal protection issue it is a bit more comforting to know I would have a better way of dealing with a bad situation. <i>I may never have a house fire either but it would be irresponsible not to carry fire insurance.</i> There are other issues not pertaining to personal protection. I have had a situation (not during archery season) where it was necessary to dispatch a horse because of a broken leg – I would hate to have only a bow and arrow to do that with. Fortunately I had a handgun with me. I am definitely in favor of this recommendation!</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I strongly oppose and disagree with the recommendation to allow muzzle loader and archery hunters to carry a modern firearm weapon during their hunting season. I see the reasoning was for personnel protection. What do they need protection from gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, wildlife, PETA? I have spent over 35 years working in the woods every day in remote areas and have never had or heard of a situation that would have justified this recommendation. If we had grizzly bear populations I would consider it reasonable. But right now all I see this resulting in, is a means for making poaching easier for muzzle loaders and archers. This</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

<p>recommendation if passed would make it almost impossible for game wardens to do their job and convict poachers.</p>	
<p>I am not keen on allowing archers and muzzleloaders to carry handguns. I carry pepper spray and feel just a safe. Allowing handguns will encourage the hunter to dispatch with the handgun. For a muzzleloader it is also almost impossible to enforce.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>My final comments to the WDFW concern the archery season firearm restriction. This regulation states and I quote, "It is illegal to carry or have in possession any firearm while in the field archery hunting, during the archery season specified for that area." I am at a loss to understand the basis for this rule. It is a second amendment right of all U.S. citizens to keep and bear arms. Currently, there is not even a national parks restriction involving this law. Of all places a person should be able to carry a firearm for personal protection is in the wilderness. I wonder what archers or fisherman in Alaska would think if the ADFW tried to adopt a similar law? It simply does not make sense. Not in Alaska, and not in Washington. I cannot find this regulation on the books for Montana, Idaho or Oregon either. It would be my guess that somewhere in the Washington poaching archives is a small collection of cases where an archer shot a deer or an elk with a firearm, then tried to make it appear as if they harvested the animal with their bow. Even if those events happened, any regulation set forth by the WDFW should not supersede the Bill of Rights. It should not be assumed that archery hunters would hunt with a firearm when in the field archery hunting. Archery hunters should be allowed to carry firearms for personal safety. I've had this conversation with a large number of archery hunters, as well as WDFW officials at regional meetings. Everyone I've talked to is in agreement. No one supports this regulation. No one knows exactly when or why this regulation was enacted. And no one seems to know how to repeal it. Please put this up for review in front of those who are in a position to amend or scrap it. If not, I will be happy to take up the cause if someone can point me in the right direction.</p>	<p>We are proposing a rule change that will allow modern handgun carry for personal protection if they have a concealed pistol permit.</p>

WAC 232-12-055 Hunting – Hunter orange clothing requirements

A. Agency reason for adoption:

To clarify who needs to wear hunter orange during all seasons.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

Under section 2, change from:

(2) It is unlawful to hunt deer or elk during the modern firearm early and late general seasons in any manner unless the hunter is wearing fluorescent hunter orange clothing.

To:

(2) It is unlawful to hunt deer or elk during ~~the~~ all modern firearm early and late general seasons in any manner unless the hunter is wearing fluorescent hunter orange clothing.

This change is to clarify that all general seasons are affected. Some hunters may have been confused about the meaning of "early and late..."

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I absolutely agree with this addition. I still run across people during modern rifle whom have zero AND often times full camouflage. I do think it should be considered to make	Thank you for your support.
Hunter orange requirements need to be modified to include muzzle loader hunters. With the new weapons and the new powders and bullets you are recommending. The effective range of these weapons have greatly increased to the point there is not much difference between so called primitive weapons and a single shot modern rifle. On the west side most game is taken by modern firearms or muzzle loaders within 80 yards. The increased range of muzzle loaders put the public and other hunters at an increase risk the same as modern firearms. Muzzle loaders wearing hunter orange would not impact their success rate and make it safer for the public and other hunters. Several other states are requiring muzzle loaders to wear hunter orange.	The muzzleloader regulations in Washington are generally more restrictive than some states and the more modern muzzleloader firearms are not legal here. Therefore, at this point, the Department is not recommending adding the hunter orange clothing requirement during muzzleloader seasons.
Also I find the section on Hunter Orange a little more confusing. It has always been my understanding, because I am only a big game hunter that I only had to wear hunter orange during the deer and elk seasons. I have always worn my camo while pursuing cougar. Is this still the case?	You are correct; you may hunt cougar outside of modern firearm deer or elk seasons without wearing hunter orange.

WAC 232-12-062 Party hunting

A. Agency reason for adoption:

To clarify what is meant by party hunting.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

Change the WAC language from:

Party hunting is defined as killing big game or turkeys which another person tags, killing big game or turkeys with the intention of having another person tag the animal, or tagging a big game animal or turkey which another person has killed.

Party hunting is illegal for big game and turkey, except for hunters with disabilities and their designated hunting companion as defined in WAC 232-12-828.

To:

Party hunting is defined as shooting at or killing big game or turkeys for another ~~which another person tags~~, killing big game or turkeys with the intention of having another person tag the animal, or tagging a big game animal or turkey ~~which~~ that another person has killed.

Party hunting is illegal for big game and turkey, except for hunters with disabilities ~~and their~~ who have a designated hunting companion as defined in WAC 232-12-828.

This change is to address an attempt to kill another person's game as well as actually killing it. The edit to the hunters with disabilities section is for clarification.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I appreciate the precise definition in the party hunting section. It has always been my understanding that the party hunting restrictions did not mean that you couldn't do drives but it is nice to see it spelled out clearly.	Thank you for your support.

WAC 232-12-068 Non-toxic shot requirements

A. Agency reason for adoption:

To reduce lead shot levels in the environment, especially in areas that are consistently used by a high density of hunters such as found on and around pheasant release sites.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Change 2010 to 2011 to reflect an extended phase-in period.
- Eliminate references to hunting “game animals” and “big game” to focus the phase-in of non-toxic shot on upland bird, dove, and band-tailed pigeon hunting on units where WDFW releases pheasants. These areas have higher hunter densities and a higher potential for lead shot ingestion by birds, predators, and scavengers.
- Add Fort Lewis, Belfair, Woodland Creek, and Lincoln Creek release sites to complete the listing of areas where WDFW releases pheasants.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Support	
In favor of requiring non-toxic shot for all bird hunting, even though I currently use lead shot.	Thank you for your comment.
Conditional Support	
Support for the non toxic shot restriction in areas where problems have already been identified and with waterfowl, but not statewide for upland birds.	There are areas that have a greater risk of impacting wildlife, and many of those areas are included in the first step of the phase-in approach proposed. Reducing the lead available on WDWF owned and managed lands is consistent with managing lands for healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations.
Oppose – Scientific Evidence	
Opposed to the proposed lead shot restriction because there is minimal evidence to scientifically support such a restriction. Unlike waterfowl hunting where shooting is concentrated on specific areas, the same is not true for the pursuit of upland birds or other species where a shotgun might be used. Some might argue that “any” lead is bad. While in the strictest sense this might be true, it’s just not realistic in upland areas. Do not implement a lead shot restriction for these species until science conclusively identifies the problem.	<p>Scientific evidence of <u>population level</u> impacts on the proposed list of species is not available and would be extremely expensive to acquire. However, lead shot is toxic and the rationale behind the proposal is more based on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Scientific investigation has shown that lead shot is toxic, sometimes at very low doses. The most recent compilation of lead shot literature consists of over 500 articles from a variety of sources including the Journal of Wildlife Management, the Wildlife Society Bulletin, the Journal of Wildlife Diseases, and the Bulletin of the Wildlife Disease Association. The species studied varied widely and included waterfowl, upland birds, eagles, ravens, doves, and humans. 2) Scientific investigations have shown that lead shot is ingested by the birds in this proposal and by over 70 bird species in North America, including those that may eat birds injured or killed with lead shot. 3) Many studies have shown that lead shot is known to cause both lethal and sub-lethal effects in a variety of birds. Sub-lethal effects can include behavioral changes, weight loss, and decreased productivity. 4) Some studies have indicated that humans that eat game harvested with lead shot can have increased blood lead levels. Not all game meat related studies of human blood lead level have indicated a lead concentration above acceptable levels established by the Center for Disease Control.

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
	5) Reducing the lead available on WDFW owned and managed lands is consistent with managing lands for healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations.
<p>Oppose – Economics, Availability, and Effectiveness</p> <p>Mandating nontoxic shot for all upland bird and dove species also makes hunting much more expensive since steel shot and other alternatives are much more expensive than lead shot. We are already losing hunters, making it more expensive during rough economic times doesn't seem to be wise if you want to retain or build hunter numbers.</p>	<p>Non-toxic shotgun shells are more expensive than lead shot shells. A comparison (not intended to be comprehensive):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 ga: lead (\$6 - \$16/box of 25) • Steel shot (\$15 - \$23 per box of 25) • HeviShot (\$21 - \$26 per box of 10). <p>Non-toxic shot ranges from \$0.60 - \$2.60 per shell as opposed to \$0.25 to \$0.65</p> <p>The cost of some types of non-toxic shot has decreased in cost since it first hit the market. With an increase in demand for non-toxic shot, costs are anticipated to decrease. However, this decrease will not likely be quick.</p>
<p>The high cost and very limited availability of non toxic shot for 28 gauge and .410 ammunition, or with less common shot sizes, would prohibit me from utilizing WDFW lands. It seems to me to be unwarranted in areas where upland game is the exclusive target.</p>	<p>As demand has increased, ammunition companies have offered non-toxic choices for a wider variety of gauges. While not all choices are currently easy to find in local stores, increased demand should result in increased availability</p>
<p>Steel is much harder to obtain a killing shot and results in more wounded game. Lead shot is the best, most humane option.</p>	<p>Many references note the difference in effective down-range power exhibited by steel shot. Other non-toxic alternatives perform much like lead. References indicate that decreasing shooting range below 40 yards, increasing shot size, and practicing with the non-toxic shell can improve hunting efficiency.</p>
<p>Oppose – Old Shotguns</p> <p>Using steel shot, or other even more expensive non-toxic shot, would ruin some very fine guns or force hunters to replace them with shotguns designed to handle steel.</p>	<p>There are a limited number of older shotguns are not built for steel shot. Other non-toxic shot alternatives (e.g., HeviShot “Classic Doubles”) are advertised as being acceptable for these shotguns.</p>
<p>Oppose – Eliminate Hunting and Shooting</p> <p>Restricting lead shot is another step in eliminating hunting. Eventually, that will decrease WDFW revenue.</p>	<p>This proposal has not been brought forward as an attempt to reduce hunting. There are many other states in the U.S. (e.g., South Dakota, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Oregon, Nevada, Iowa, and New Mexico) as well as national wildlife refuges that have successfully implemented similar regulations.</p>
<p>Oppose – General Comments</p> <p>I find the implementation on "non toxic" shot requirements unsettling and unnecessary, which only complicates the rules for other hunters.</p> <p>I oppose your recommendations for the non-toxic shot requirements for the 2009 – 2011 Hunting Season.</p> <p>I read the proposal on non-toxic shot and I firmly believe that non-toxic shot is not needed except for waterfowl.</p>	<p>The intent of this rule is to be proactive at addressing a known factor that contributes to overall wildlife health.</p> <p>At the end of the phase-in period, the rule would be fairly simple as it would apply to pheasant release sites and all WDFW lands.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
A measure so far reaching as this one should have received much more public notice than a line item in your hearing agenda as it will impact thousands of licensed bird hunters in the State of Washington.	The issue of regulating lead shot has been part of the three-year season setting process since early 2008 and was included in public surveys, posted on the WDFW website for the process, and was a topic at public meetings held throughout the state in 2008.
I am strongly against the proposed ban on lead shot. We have a steel shot requirement for waterfowl hunting. I am 73 years old and hunted all my life I have never seen a case of lead poisoning in any upland game.	Studies have shown that birds sickened or killed by lead poisoning are quickly removed from the landscape by predators and thus are difficult to quantify.
I have two main questions: 1) How long will it take to eliminate, (contain) the lead that already is in the traditional high use hunting areas? 2) If we eliminate the use of lead shot do we really make a difference as long as lead fishing weights, and other points of contamination are prevalent?	While the time to eliminate existing shot is unknown, we know that the rate of natural deterioration of lead shot is fairly slow. It will take less time if more shot is not added to the landscape. There also have been discussions within the agency about addressing the use of lead fishing weights, although a timeline has not been discussed.
If the proposal is implemented, the State should create a buyback of lead shot shells if further restrictions are implemented prior to 2012. Many people purchase shells by the case and they should be allowed time to utilize or recoup their investment.	It is important to note that lead shot would still be legal to use on all private lands as well as other public lands that do not regulate the use of lead shot. A buy-back program would be very expensive. We would investigate partnerships with ammunition companies to potentially address this issue.
If the WDFW supports this action I urge an extensive education program. Hunters need to learn how to shoot light(er) non-toxic loads to get better performance and therefore cleaner kills. I foresee too many folks blasting 3 inch fours with 1 1/4 oz or 1 1/2oz at pheasants because steel will "not perform". While some of this is so that they can shoot the occasional duck that jumps up I think most hunter lack a basic understanding of how non-toxics, especially steel will perform. I think they would be amazed at how well 7 shot steel field loads will work if the gun is properly choked and shots are ethically selected. Finally, the education process should not end with just a review of ballistic performance, hunters also need to understand that steel will ricochet and "bounce" off of objects much differently than lead. This is particularly important when hunting our upland rocky and scabland areas.	One of the primary aspects of this proposal is implementation of a comprehensive non-toxic shot education program. Current plans are to utilize the WDFW website as well as direct mailings to hunters.
What about the rules of possession of lead shot, If I have a box of lead shot in my truck while parked at a release site, but I have steel in my vest and in my gun am I still in possession of lead shot.	The rules for possession of lead shot (e.g., in your truck) are only for the specific areas listed in the proposed rule. In most cases, this rule only applies to hunting activity for the species listed.
Support	
Please make all WDFW lands limited to nontoxic shot for all hunting in 2011. In particular, please limit the new wildlife areas in Oakville and Ebey Island to nontoxic shot in 2009. These are important wintering areas for waterfowl. I Also ask that only nontoxic shot be permitted for trap and target shooting on WDFW lands where this type of shooting is allowed.	Thank you for your comment. The two areas mentioned do not have significant hunting opportunities related to the species identified in this recommendation. However, the Ebey Island parcel is already included as it is part of the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area. This proposed regulation is strictly for hunting. Expansion of areas for further restrictions for target shooting on WDFW lands would need to be presented at a different time. The existing restrictions in section 2 would remain.
I come from a hunting and gun-owning family, and do not oppose this type of recreation. I support responsible recreation. Please confirm the rules requiring broader use of non-toxic shot.	Thank you for your comment.
Oppose – Scientific Evidence	
The CDC wrote a paper related to the North Dakota Department of Health inquiry on lead fragments in game meat donated to food banks. This report proves that hunting with lead is safe for humans.	The study conducted by the CDC did not prove that hunting with lead was safe for humans. The report did state that those who ate meals of game shot with lead had a blood lead concentration lower than 10 micrograms per deciliter, the

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
	<p>level at which the CDC recommends case management. However, the results of the study showed that those who ate game shot with lead ammunition had a significantly higher blood lead level than those who did not.</p> <p>The following is a link to the CDC report as posted by the National Shooting Sports Foundation. http://www.nssf.org/share/PDF/ND_report.pdf</p>
<p>The ban of lead shot for waterfowl hunting has not resulted in any benefits and neither would a ban on lead shot for upland game hunting in Washington.</p>	<p>There are studies published that show that the non-toxic shot requirement for waterfowl has resulted in fewer lead poisoning events in waterfowl.</p>
Oppose – General Comments	
<p>I believe the current policy addresses the problem of "hot spots" adequately and in a reasonable manner. I submit that most game lands in Washington, such as the LT Murray, the Quilomene, etc, are not subject to lead "hot spots" like a small pheasant release site. Logically, there is a distinct difference in several hundred hunters shooting day after day in a release site like the VOA and a few hunters chasing chukars in the Quilomene and firing only a few shots in a vast area.</p>	<p>The current proposal adds another site to the existing list of sites where non-toxic shot is required. Additional proposed areas (for 2010 and 2011) are aimed at reducing overall lead deposition on WDFW owned and managed lands and is consistent with managing lands for healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations. In addition, hunter densities on WDFW managed lands tend to be much higher than other lands resulting in deposition of lead over time.</p>
<p>In 1993, I conducted an experiment in one of my own pheasant flight pens by spreading 15 pounds of 71/2 lead shot across the pen, releasing 8 pheasants into the pen and analyzing stools for lead shot. Birds were held for 22 weeks. No birds died and no shot was found in the stools.</p>	<p>The typical method used to evaluate lead exposure is blood lead level or lead levels in the liver of an animal. In addition, crop contents are usually analyzed instead of stool samples as pellets would not likely be passed through a bird's digestive system and be readily identifiable. That said, it is not unreasonable to have no birds die as increased lead levels do not necessarily result in death of the individual.</p>
<p>I can understand the use of nontoxic shot in areas that are frequented by water fowl, but not in the remote areas where I hunt pheasant and quail in E. WA. Please do not approve any regulation that would require the use of nontoxic shot on upland birds on a statewide basis.</p>	<p>Those areas of highest hunter density are being identified. Other areas are proposed to be phased in, but on WDFW owned property only. This is not a statewide proposal for all public and private lands.</p>
<p>Public meetings were not held at the right time of year and those without email did not get notified of these rules changes. This was not good public involvement.</p>	<p>Actually, the public involvement process started back in June of 2008 and included news releases, emails, and direct mail to those who contacted the agency asking to be on our mailing list (about 800 people). There was a second comment period in August and September which included public meetings. This is the third comment period and is now focused on specific recommendations developed using the information gathered during the first two phases. All of this process was also included on our web site, which contains a summary of the entire process.</p>
<p>After 51 years of hunting, I have not known anyone to die from eating birds shot with lead shot, nor have I ever found a bird dead from lead poisoning.</p>	<p>Increased blood lead levels do not always result in someone or some animal dying. Studies have shown that increased blood lead has sub-lethal effects, (e.g., changes in behavior or brain function) that may not be easily identified.</p>
<p>The "Green Sheet" states that "Adoption is planned for the April 2-3-4, 2009 Commission meeting in Olympia". This indicates that the decision has already been made by the Department of Fish and Wildlife and that the Commission is merely going through the motions. I find this kind of language offensive.</p>	<p>The intent of the statement is that public comments are being accepted at the March meeting and the Commission will not make a decision until the April meeting. We will review the language to make it more acceptable in the future.</p>
<p>Lead shot is not a proven problem in Washington. The Department needs to conduct specific research in Washington to determine if it is a problem.</p>	<p>Scientific evidence of <u>population level</u> impacts on the proposed list of species is not available and would be extremely expensive to acquire. However, lead shot is toxic and the rationale behind the proposal is more based on the following:</p> <p>6) Scientific investigation has shown that lead shot is toxic, sometimes at very low doses. The most recent compilation of lead shot literature consists of over 500 articles from a variety of sources including the Journal of</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
	<p>Wildlife Management, the Wildlife Society Bulletin, the Journal of Wildlife Diseases, and the Bulletin of the Wildlife Disease Association. The species represented in this compilation varied widely and included waterfowl, upland birds, eagles, ravens, doves, and humans.</p> <p>7) Scientific investigations have shown that lead shot is ingested by waterfowl, shorebirds, and the birds in this proposal. The list of birds affected totals over 70 species in North America, and includes those that may eat birds injured or killed with lead shot like eagles and ravens.</p> <p>8) Many studies have shown that lead shot is known to cause both lethal and sub-lethal effects in a variety of birds. Sub-lethal effects can include behavioral changes, weight loss, and decreased productivity.</p> <p>9) Some studies have indicated that humans that eat game harvested with lead shot can have increased blood lead levels. Not all game meat related studies of human blood lead level have indicated a lead concentration above acceptable levels established by the Center for Disease Control.</p> <p>10) We are conducting research on golden eagle ecology and have found that their blood contains high levels of lead. The source is still being determined. In addition, we are working on remediation of lead contamination and mortality in swans in northwest Washington. This research has resulted in hazing of swans off of contaminated sites. Conducting additional scientific studies in Washington may constrain already limited funding of wildlife conservation.</p>
<p>Fancy shot is too expensive. Wait for bismuth or other alternative shot.</p>	<p>Non-toxic shotgun shells are more expensive than lead shot shells. A comparison (not intended to be comprehensive):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 ga: lead (\$6 - \$16/box of 25) • Steel shot (\$15 - \$23 per box of 25) • HeviShot (\$21 - \$26 per box of 10). <p>Non-toxic shot ranges from \$0.60 - \$2.60 per shell as opposed to \$0.25 to \$0.65</p> <p>The cost of some types of non-toxic shot has decreased in cost since it first hit the market. With an increase in demand for non-toxic shot, costs are anticipated to decrease. However, this decrease will not likely be quick.</p>
<p>Steel is much harder to obtain a killing shot and results in more wounded game.</p>	<p>Many references note the difference in effective down-range power exhibited by steel shot. Other non-toxic alternatives perform much like lead. References indicate that decreasing shooting range below 40 yards, increasing shot size, and practicing with the non-toxic shell can improve hunting efficiency.</p>
<p>Older shotguns are not designed to use steel shot.</p>	<p>There are a limited number of older shotguns are not built for steel shot. Other non-toxic shot alternatives (e.g., HeviShot “Classic Doubles”) are advertised as being acceptable for these shotguns.</p>
<p>Why three years and not five years?</p>	<p>The Department thought that three years was sufficient time to educate and transition to non-toxic shot use on WDFW wildlife areas, especially considering the total acres impacted were less than 3% of the state and that the regulation was</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
	intended to only address upland bird, mourning dove, and band-tailed pigeon hunting. However, we have decided to modify our recommendation and will only restrict lead shot use on pheasant release sites beginning in 2011.
Educate don't regulate.	The Department is committed to an extensive outreach and education program.
Change regulation "all game animals" should not be there it is more than upland game.	"Game animals" was removed from the proposal. That change is reflected in the final agency recommendation.
Checkerboard ownership between DNR and WDFW would make it hard to determine whose land you are on.	A change made to the final agency recommendation removed "all WDFW lands". The recommendation now only includes units where pheasants are released for hunting as these are the areas where hunters are purposely concentrated and thus lead shot deposition and potential for direct or indirect impacts are greatest.
Lead shot won't hurt pheasants and grouse. It doesn't lay on top of the ground. Add nickel plated, copper plated.	Studies have shown that pheasants do ingest lead shot as well as non-toxic shot in areas where it is used. The availability of shot varies by location and ground cover. Dense forest habitats and areas with higher ground cover are likely to have less spent shot available. In some cases, "plated" shot is considered non-toxic.
Upland bird hunters do not deposit enough shot to be a problem. Target shooting is a bigger problem.	Target shooting may deposit more lead shot into the environment than hunting, however, this proposal deals with a hunting rule and does not cover recreational shooting.

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

A. Agency reason for adoption:

To implement legislation providing special hunting opportunities for terminally ill persons and direct the Department to develop criteria and issue special use permits to hunters and fishers with disabilities.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

None

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None

WAC 232-12-840 Hunting and fishing opportunities for terminally ill persons

A. Agency reason for adoption:

To implement legislation providing special hunting opportunities for terminally ill persons and direct the Department to develop criteria and issue special use permits to hunters and fishers with disabilities.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

None

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None

WAC 232-28-248 Special closures and firearm restriction areas

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Maintains discernable GMU boundaries. Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

Under **Firearm Restriction Areas**, after the first sentence, add the following sentence:

“Exceptions to firearm restrictions may be made through rule by the Fish and Wildlife Commission.” This change provides the flexibility to the Fish and Wildlife Commission to deal with wildlife damage on a case-by-case basis.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Opposed to the GMU 388/578 shift. Leave the Klickitat River as the boundary.	The Klickitat River is currently not the boundary. We are proposing that the River be the boundary. Thank you for your support.
Don't change GMU 388. It takes the late season away. Keep it the late archery hunt.	There would still be an early archery season. There are also late archery opportunities in nearby GMUs. The Regional biologists feel very strongly that the late season vulnerability of deer needs to be addressed to improve the post-hunt characteristics of the deer population. The current season structure that includes a late general season for archers is not sustainable.
Make the area between Fisher Hill Road and the Klickitat River a separate GMU, suggest GMU 588. Make it a separate hunt.	Simply isolating this small area as a stand-alone GMU would not guarantee the hunting season structure that you are promoting. As described above, a change in this area is necessary from a deer management perspective.
Modify the western boundary of GMU 388 from what was proposed to the Glenwood Highway where it runs through the Klickitat Wildlife Area, this would add the Soda Springs portion of the WA into GMU 578.	The Klickitat River boundary is clearly definable; it allows us to manage the more open habitats as a group; and retains the current deer management emphasis for most of the Wildlife Area.

WAC 232-28-266 Damage prevention permit hunts

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Will improve our ability to address property damage caused by turkeys.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

None

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Deer season is listed as, August 1 – March 31, elk season is listed as 50 spike or antlerless August 1 – March 31, 30 bulls only May 15 - July 31 and except spike only July 1 - July 31, and turkey is listed as December 16 – March 1. All tags/hunting activity is required to be reported by January 31. Would a new tag and hunting license need to be purchased for the February and March hunts, is the harvest considered your animal for the year or is it a second tag, and does the damage hunt get reported the same as regular hunting seasons? Can you only hunt elk damage hunts on the side of the state that you select on your original tag (east or west)?	If there is an approved hunting season after January 31, the requirement is to submit your hunting activity within 10 days of the close of the season. The tag is still valid through the end of March and reporting on the tag does not invalidate the tag. The harvest is actually captured using a different mechanism than the mandatory reporting system. For elk, both eastern and western tags are valid.

WAC 232-28-272 2009 Black bear and 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 cougar hunting seasons and regulations

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Maximize recreational hunting opportunities for black bear and cougar within biologically sustainable limits.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Change the WAC title from:
WAC 232-28-272 ((~~2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009~~)) 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 Black bear and cougar hunting seasons and regulations.

To:

WAC 232-28-272 ((~~2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009~~)) 2009 Black bear and 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 Black bear and cougar hunting seasons and regulations.

The change is due to public input supporting the August portion of the fall bear seasons for 2009 to the maximum extent possible within biologically sustainable limits. The Department plans to recommend the 2010-2011 fall black bear hunting seasons to the Fish and Wildlife Commission in March 2010.

- Change:
2009-2011 Fall Black Bear Seasons

To:

2009-2011 Fall Black Bear Seasons

The change is due to public input supporting the August portion of the fall bear seasons for 2009 to the maximum extent possible within biologically sustainable limits. The Department plans to recommend the 2010-2011 fall black bear hunting seasons to the Fish and Wildlife Commission in March 2010.

- Delete GMU 204 from hunt area for Northeastern B and add it to hunt area for Northeastern A. The reason for the change is for consistency of season dates among adjacent GMUs.
- For tables showing cougar seasons: change the "Hunt Area" in each table from:

<u>Hunt Name</u>	<u>Hunt Area</u>
Coastal Puget Sound North Cascades Columbia Basin	GMUs 418, 426, 437, 448, 450, 460, 466, 485, 501, 504, 506, 530, 601-621, 636-651, 658-663, 672-684, 699, 407, 410, 454, 624-633, 652, 666
South Cascades Blue Mountains Kittitas-Yakima Spokane	GMUs 124-133, 145-154, 162-186, 328, 329, 342-368, 503, 505, 510-520, 524, 550-574, 653, 654, 667
Chelan Okanogan Okanogan-Ferry Stevens-Pend Oreille Klickitat	GMUs 101, 105, 108-121, 203, 204, 209-242, 242-247, 249-251, 382, 388, 578 within Chelan, Ferry, Klickitat, Okanogan, Stevens, or Pend Oreille counties

To:

<u>Hunt Name</u>	<u>Hunt Area</u>
Coastal Puget Sound North Cascades Columbia Basin	GMUs <u>136-142, 248, 254-290, 371-381,</u> 418, 426, 437, 448, 450, 460, 466, 485, 501, 504, 506, 530, 601-621, 636-651, 658-663, 672-684, 699, 407, 410, 454, 624-633, 652, 666
South Cascades Blue Mountains Kittitas-Yakima Spokane	GMUs 124-133, 145-154, 162-186, 328, 329, 342-368, 503, 505, 510-520, 524, 550-574, 653, 654, 667

Chelan Okanogan Okanogan-Ferry Stevens-Pend Oreille Klickitat	GMUs 101, 105, 108-121, 203, 204, 209-242, 242 243-247, 249-251, 382, 388, 578 within Chelan, Ferry, Klickitat, Okanogan, Stevens, or Pend Oreille counties
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The reason for the change is to correct omissions.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
The following agency response applies to all comments on this rule	
Fall Bear Seasons	
<p>I am writing in opposition to the proposed season change for Washington State fall bear season. Moving the season opener on public lands from August 1 to September 1 significantly impacts hunting opportunity while does little to mitigate conflicts between hunters and other recreational land users. The August 1 bear opener provides an opportunity to hunt when no other big-game seasons are available. As a positive consequence, bear hunters have an entire month to spend in the woods before the majority of big-game hunters - deer hunters, elk hunters, etc. - fill popular public hunting grounds. Because of this, August is the ideal month for serious bear hunters to fill their tag long before bears become spooked by a massive influx of other hunters.</p> <p>The proposal states that moving opening day to September 1 aims to reduce conflict with other recreational users on public lands. In theory, this makes sense. It begs the question; however, what is the actual justification for the decision? In my experience, as the season currently stands, there is very little conflict between these two groups. Most bear hunters make it a point to access areas far away from people. When they do encounter other people, most hunters who are well aware that they are under a microscope make certain to act with respect and avoid any negative interaction.</p> <p>Is it a coincidence that just this last season, a young bear hunter accidentally shot and killed a hiker during the August season? I would wager not. But let us not forget that this accident was the first of its kind in the last twenty-five years. That's a quarter century of harmless interaction between hunters and other recreational users. Bear hunters in Washington are already a significant minority. This change will only reduce our numbers, similar to the elimination of bait and hounds. The WDFW states that hunting is its most-effective tool for game management; but that tool is only available if there are hunters who choose to partake.</p> <p>Reducing the bear season by delaying the opener significantly impacts the opportunity for a very specific group of hunters and fails to address any real conflict. Because of this, I ask that the commission forgo this rule change and maintain the general bear season, keeping the opener on August 1.</p>	<p>The rationale for limiting the bear season to private lands in August was based on a couple of concerns. The primary reason was bear harvest over the last three years exceeded some of our indicators for sustainable populations in some of the bear management units. So our objective was to reduce harvest slightly during the fall season. Shortening the fall seasons also facilitates additional spring harvest on industrial timberlands to address bear damage to trees. As we increase spring seasons, we may continue to exceed the thresholds for maintaining sustainable populations. Spring seasons not only help address tree damage, but the harvest tends to include mostly males; which helps manage for sustainable black bear populations.</p> <p>The decision to reduce take during the early portion of the season (August) rather than the end of the season was because then it also helps reduce conflict with other summer recreational users (e.g., campers, hikers, berry pickers). The reason for allowing harvest on private lands in August was to still provide a mechanism to take bears involved in nuisance activity (e.g., orchard damage).</p> <p>The Department has received numerous comments on this recommendation and all of the comments do not support the change to the August bear season. Because we're "on the bubble" in terms of the biological justification for reducing bear harvest, the Department has altered our recommendation to open the 2009 fall bear season August 1 (for the subset of Bear Management Units). The revised recommendation tries to balance the emerging biological concern, provide early fall hunting opportunity, and address public input. We will continue to monitor bear harvest trends and biological information and provide the Fish and Wildlife Commission with a recommendation for the 2010-2011 fall bear hunting season in March 2010.</p> <p>The Fish and Wildlife Commission does not have the authority to regulate hikers.</p>
<p>Please do not shorten the bear seasons or limit the hunting to private lands only during any portion of the season. This appears to be a knee jerk reaction to the Sauk Mountain Accident, but nonetheless- it was an accident and a VERY isolated incident. Please don't limit the hunting privileges of the entire group on account of the potential for conflict with other user groups.</p>	
<p>In regards to the proposed season changes, I would recommend that we Do Not limit the Bear Hunting Seasons to</p>	

<p>Private Lands only in the summer. The seasons should remain as they are, and if there are concerns of too many female bears being harvested, perhaps we should limit the number of 2nd bear tags, or increase the price of the 2nd bear tags. If the goal of the season change is to reduce the possible conflict between other users, it would help to have better public education regarding hunting seasons. For example, when I have been backpacking in other areas of the country, the trailhead kiosks would have recommendations to hikers to wear hunter orange. Public awareness of the hunting seasons and popular hunting areas could help prevent future conflicts of multiple use. The NW forest passes can also have notices on them. The unfortunate accident that happened last summer could have been prevented if the hunter followed the rule of 'identify your target and know what lies beyond your target', and it could have just as easily been a fellow hunter, or a game animal...and it could have happened regardless of he was on private or public lands, regardless of season, or hunting method.</p> <p>I believe that the seasons, including High Buck, should stay similar and open to modern firearms. However, there should be more of an effort to post signage in wilderness areas and trailheads notices of the seasons and recommendations for bright colors. Something to the effect of: Notice: this is a popular multi-use area for hiking, biking, and hunting. Wearing bright colors and hunter orange is recommended.</p>	
<p>Cougar Seasons</p>	
<p>I would also like to see the cougar seasons left alone as well. It gives us an 'excuse' to get out and go hunting when most other seasons are closed.</p>	<p>The changes to cougar seasons are based on matching harvest levels to sustainable cougar populations. Additional harvest increases the risk of impact to cougar populations.</p>
<p>We oppose the any weapon for cougar hunting ending on Nov. 30 in Klickitat County. We believe there is an over population of cougars in Klickitat County which is the biggest reason for the low deer numbers. We would like to season for any weapon to end on March 31.</p>	<p>The cougar season in Klickitat County extends to March 31. However, Klickitat County is participating in the pilot cougar hunt with dogs, so the later portion of the season is for permit hunters with dogs.</p>
<p>The cougar season has been cut drastically, which will only result in an increase in complaints and a decrease in funds for the state since many people will no longer be buying cougar tags.</p>	<p>The changes to cougar season are based on matching harvest levels to sustainable cougar populations. Additional harvest increases the risk of impact to cougar populations.</p>
<p>You should ask land owners and sportsman about the number of Cougar kills found in Northeast Washington, I think (cat kills) greatly contribute to the decline of deer in Stevens county. I personally have seen mule deer numbers increasing in unit #121.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I oppose your bear season changes and most I oppose your changes on the cougar seasons. I feel this is a change that the game Department want in concerns to your thought on party hunting. In the survey that was on the game department web this winter 70% of the hunters responding ask that these seasons be left alone. I have hunted in the state of Washington and have purchased a hunting license every year sense 1958. And at no time have I seen more bear and cougar, animals, and sign of them as I am seeing currently.</p>	<p>The changes to cougar season are based on matching harvest levels to sustainable cougar populations. Additional harvest increases the risk of impact to cougar populations.</p>
<p>I see that you have shortened the cougar season in the area that I generally hunt cougar which is GMU 516. Plus you have changed the bag limit to 1 animal. I liked the longer season (Aug 1 to Mar 15) so I wonder if the population has decreased that much to warrant such a change? As always I would prefer the longer season.</p>	<p>The changes to cougar season are based on matching harvest levels to sustainable cougar populations. Additional harvest increases the risk of impact to cougar populations.</p>
<p>First and foremost, is the amount of Cougars, Coyotes, Bears and Bobcats I saw this year. Not only was I born and</p>	<p>Cougar and bear populations are managed at a level to maximize hunting opportunities to the fullest extent possible</p>

<p>raised hunting in Washington, but I have hunted in Wyoming, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, Maryland & several more places and have never, even combined, saw as many of these predators as I did in this season alone (13 Cougars, 19 coyotes, 7 bears & 5 bobcats). In these numbers, 5 cougars and 3 coyotes were in pursuit of or attacking deer. Also, I would say that close to 60% of the deer that I saw this year, which I must mention was very low, had claw marks on them. Growing up in this country and hunting many years in the same areas as I hunted this year, I was astonished how few deer & elk I saw and how many predators were in the areas. This to me, should be a major concern to outdoorsmen, hikers, berry pickers, the WDFW, etc.</p>	<p>while maintaining a sustainable, healthy cougar and bear population in each management unit within the state. In some areas where harvest isn't impacting populations, seasons are liberalized. Where harvest appears to be impacting populations (or has the potential to), seasons are reduced to sustainable levels.</p>
<p>Cougar seasons: What about rifle seasons? That is when people are out deer and elk hunting with their bear and cougar tag. Also a drawing for cougar after Jan. 1, do you really think 40 tags in an area will result in any harvest without dogs.</p>	<p>Over the last four years, the Department has received several requests for a late season cougar hunt (without dogs) in areas where late seasons are dedicated to hound hunts. As a result, the Department is recommending some late season permit opportunities for hunters without dogs. The Department will continue to adjust permit levels as we learn what harvest success rates are for those permit hunts.</p>
<p>There is no population data on cougars in the Blue Mountains. I have seen the population increase dramatically. Don't change the cougar season. It will have a big negative impact.</p>	<p>Currently, our harvest data suggest cougar populations in the Blue Mountains are being over harvested slightly. The Department has initiated a study to determine the population size of cougar in the Blue Mountains. Harvest levels will be revised if necessary when data from our project becomes available.</p>
<p>Don't change the bear opener in 2010 and beyond from August 1 to September 1. (petition supporting this comment: 610 signatures received)</p>	<p>The rationale for limiting the bear season to private lands in August was based on a couple of concerns. The primary reason was bear harvest over the last three years exceeded some of our indicators for sustainable populations in some of the bear management units. So our objective was to reduce harvest slightly during the fall season. Shortening the fall seasons also facilitates additional spring harvest on industrial timberlands to address bear damage to trees. As we increase spring seasons, we may continue to exceed the thresholds for maintaining sustainable populations. Spring seasons not only help address tree damage, but the harvest tends to include mostly males; which helps manage for sustainable black bear populations.</p> <p>The decision to reduce take during the early portion of the season (August) rather than the end of the season was because then it also helps reduce conflict with other summer recreational users (e.g., campers, hikers, berry pickers). The reason for allowing harvest on private lands in August was to still provide a mechanism to take bears involved in nuisance activity (e.g., orchard damage).</p> <p>The Department has received numerous comments on this recommendation and all of the comments do not support the change to the August bear season. Because we're "on the bubble" in terms of the biological justification for reducing bear harvest, the Department has altered our recommendation to open the 2009 fall bear season August 1 (for the subset of Bear Management Units). The revised recommendation tries to balance the emerging biological concern, provide early fall hunting opportunity, and address public input. We will continue to monitor bear harvest trends and biological information and provide the Fish and Wildlife Commission with a recommendation for the 2010-2011 fall bear hunting season in March 2010.</p>
<p>Cougar population has exploded in the last 40 years. No change is needed to the cougar season in Kittitas County.</p>	<p>We have a long-term cougar project in Kittitas County and data from that project indicates cougar populations are stable</p>

Deer populations have been declining as a result of cougar predation. No science behind the proposal. Boot hunters can identify a cougar.	to slightly declining (in last two years). The Departments recommendation will only reduce harvest slightly.
Boot hunters are losing too much opportunity. Can't take a cougar when bear hunting with this proposal.	The Department is recommending weapon restrictions consistent with general seasons for deer and elk.

WAC 232-28-273 2009-2011 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas

A. Agency reason for adoption:

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

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

Under Bighorn Sheep Permit Hunts

- Change the permit level for the Cleman Mountain A bighorn sheep hunt from 4 to 3. This change is due to recent lower counts of mature rams in the population.
- Change the permit level for the Cleman Mountain B bighorn sheep hunt from 4 to 3. This change is due to recent lower counts of mature rams in the population.
- Change the hunt name of Quilomene A to Quilomene. This change is because the A designation is no longer necessary.

Under Mountain Goat Permit Hunts

- Add the following hunts:

<u>Naches Pass</u>	<u>Sept. 15 – Oct. 31</u>	<u>Fife’s East, Fife’s Peak, Corral Pass, Basin Lake</u>	<u>Any Legal Weapon</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Bumping River</u>	<u>Sept. 15 – Oct. 31</u>	<u>Nelson Ridge, Cash Prairie, American Ridge, American Lake, Timber Wolf, Russell Ridge</u>	<u>Any Legal Weapon</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Blazed Ridge</u>	<u>Sept. 15 – Oct. 31</u>	<u>Blowout Mtn., Blazed Ridge, Blazed North, Milk Creek, Rock Creek</u>	<u>Any Legal Weapon</u>	<u>1</u>

This change is due to meeting population thresholds in the above areas to justify goat hunts.

- Add superscript “a” to the “permit” column and change the associated language from: Mountain goat populations are managed as a collection of subpopulations and the ideal harvest is distributed through all the subpopulations. The director is authorized to open or close subpopulations to protect from overharvesting specific areas.

To:

Mountain goat populations are managed as a collection of subpopulations and the ideal harvest is distributed through all the subpopulations. The director is authorized to open or close subpopulations and reduce permit levels to protect from overharvesting specific areas.

This change is to allow flexibility for biologists to reduce permit levels if necessary due to overharvest.

- Delete the last sentence under bag limit:
Bag Limit: One (1) adult goat of either sex with horns four (4) inches or longer. WDFW urges hunters to refrain from shooting nannies with kids. ~~Permit hunters may start hunting Sept. 1 with archery equipment.~~
- Insert superscript “b” after table heading “Permit Season”
- Insert footnote “b” as follows: “^bPermit hunters may start hunting Sept. 1 with archery equipment.”
The reason for the changes is that the language associated with the archery component of the goat season was incorrectly placed under the Bag Limit heading, but it belongs as a part of the permit season table.

Under Moose Permit Hunts

- Change the MH footnote from:
^{cMH}This is a damage hunt administered by a WDFW designated hunt master. Only master hunters may apply, except master hunters who have harvested a moose previously in Washington state may not apply; these hunts will not affect accumulated points; and any weapon may be used. Successful applicants will be contacted on an as-needed basis to help with specific sites of moose damage on designated landowner's property. Not all successful applicants will be contacted in any given year depending on moose damage activity for that year.”

To:

“^{HM}This is a damage hunt administered by a WDFW designated hunt master. Only master hunters may apply, ~~except master hunters who have harvested a moose previously in Washington state may not apply~~; these hunts will not affect accumulated points; and any weapon may be used. Successful applicants will be contacted on an as-needed basis to help with specific sites of nuisance moose activity damage on in designated ~~landowner's property~~ areas. Not all successful applicants will be contacted in any given year ~~depending on moose damage activity for that year.~~”

The reason for the change is to clarify that Master Hunters may apply even if they have harvested a moose previously in Washington State and the Master Hunt program may be used for nuisance activity as well as damage.

- For the Mt. Spokane Master Hunter moose hunt, change the permit level from 10 to 20. The reason for the change is to address the increasing number of problem moose in Spokane.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I respect the Commission’s decision in regards to Mountain Goats and appreciate the added ewe hunts for Sheep.	Thank you for your comment.
I think adding a master hunter damage hunt for moose is wrong...I don’t think special consideration should be given to master hunters. It seems like the master hunter program was created just to give certain people special access and to bring in a few extra bucks to the state. Also, I do not see any expanded youth hunts being suggested. We need more youth special opportunities.	The Department decided to use master hunters given the “call-up” nature of the damage hunt. In this case, hunters will be hunting on mostly private lands and used to resolve problems associated with increasing lowland moose population.
The last two winters has had a demoralizing high fatality death rate on Deer and moose populations in management Areas 117 (49 degrees) and 124 (Huckleberry). I live in a secluded area where Deer and moose were plentiful for 4 years. Moose were seen daily. After last winter and this winter snow fall our wildlife needs all the help it can get to recover.	The Department is recommending a slight reduction in moose permits in that area due to fewer moose observed during our recent aerial surveys.
Goat permits: All I got to say is are you kidding me?	The Department is modifying its original recommendation and is adding additional permits in the SE Cascades.
I sure hope I am reading the proposed changes to the Mtn. Goat areas and quota's wrong? Another cut in the amount of tags? And now very limited areas? Come on! I have asked this question before and I will ask it again, By what means is the goat population survey done, who conducts the survey and what time of the year is it done?? I spend a tremendous amount of time in the Goat Rocks Wilderness area each year beginning about July and ending about October and see different herds of goats in drainage after drainage. I also spend a lot of time in the Smith Creek area as well and see more and more goats with each visit and also see them on more and more ridges. Unless on foot, horseback or glassing from good vantage points, some of these goats could go unnoticed, but if just a little amount of effort is made, well over 100 animals can be seen in a single day with decent visibility. I am only speaking of 100 goats that can be seen while hiking the trails and ridges in a single day, not 100 in the whole Goat Rocks Wilderness area.	The Department is adding additional permits in the SE Cascades. However, during the development of our last Game Management Plan we did increase the goat population size needed to allow hunting. Goat populations now need to be at least 100 animals for ensuring sustainability. As a result, goat harvest will decline slightly.
I am not sure what is going on here with the significant reduction in goat hunting opportunity. There are units where there is a healthy population of goats that are being closed down (specifically Bumping and Corral Pass area). I can go into one little area in the bumping and see over 100 goats on any weekend. This is only one small part of the entire unit. I am NOT in favor of these proposed changes as it seems overly conservative. If the state does not have adequate funding to do surveys perhaps there is a way to train hunters	The Department is adding additional permits in the SE Cascades. However, during the development of our last Game Management Plan we did increase the guideline for goat population size needed to allow hunting. Goat populations now need to be at least 100 animals for ensuring sustainability. As a result, goat harvest will decline slightly. The subunits are relatively close together and should not present any significant obstacles for hunters to familiarize

to do observations so that a better feel is obtained for true population numbers. In addition the assigning subunits once someone draws is not fair to hunters. If that is how the populations are going to be managed then make those areas what hunters put in for allowing hunters to choose where they want to hunt. As it is now someone may draw a tag and then get assigned an area that they are not familiar with and not be allowed to hunt an area they are familiar with.	themselves with them.
Sheep – In favor of the changes.	Thank you for your comment.
Moose - I am not sure why there is a decrease in tags in some units. Based on what I saw in my hunt (Hangman unit) as well as what other friends saw on their hunt (49) there are plenty of moose, plenty of calves and opportunities to expand the moose tags, not contract them. I would encourage additional tags be added to at least these units, if not more units.	Moose permits are based on composition counts (bulls:100 cows and calves:100 cows) during our annual surveys and mean age of harvest bulls.
Eliminating the Swakane sheep hunt- Vehicle/sheep collisions are on an upswing. Why eliminate this hunt only to let vehicles kill more sheep. I guess my years of applying for this hunt (I have the maximum # of points available) are useless now.	Given the level of mortality to the Swakane herd the Department prefers to close the unit to hunting until the vehicle collision issue is resolved and the herd begins to rebound.
Please require applicants to have any valid big game license prior to applying for a special permit and restrict non-residents to 5%.	The Department will be considering options to address the low odds of drawing permits prior to the 2010 drawing. Thank you for your comment.
I support allowing the director to open/close goat subpopulations as needed.	Thank you for your comment.
Please close Lake Ann and Artist Point/Heather Meadows area on Mt. Baker to goat hunting.	Thank you for your comment. The Department prefers to use Director authority to allow the local District Biologist working with other state/federal landowners to determine if areas need to be closed to protect from overharvest.
No to ewe sheep tags. If there are a surplus of sheep in an area they could be transplanted to other areas in need.	The Department only recommends ewe tags when there are no options for relocation.
If you want to give a Master hunter a Moose tag is fine but the “once in a lifetime” should not be waived. Hard enough to draw these tags.	The once in a lifetime is waived for the Master Hunter permits.
Require applicants to first purchase a big game license for revenue generation purposes.	The Department will be evaluating ways to increase revenue and address the extremely high drawing odds for some permit hunts before the 2010 big game drawing. Please visit our website for more information in the coming months.
Cap non-resident participation so that most permits go to WA residents first.	At this point, we don’t have a very high number of non-resident applicants. Please visit our website for more information about the 2010 big game drawing in the coming months.
Take 10% of people with 13 points or more and put them into a special draw (take away from auction/raffle).	Thank you for your comment. The Department will be evaluating ways to increase revenue and address the extremely high drawing odds for some permit hunts before the 2010 big game drawing. Please visit our website for more information in the coming months.
Translocate sheep rather than opening these hunt ewe opportunities.	The Department already relocates bighorn ewes prior to offering a ewe hunt. At this point in time, there are no translocation options available and a few of our herds are above objective, so we are recommending a ewe hunt to help reduce population to within objective.
Mountain Goats – We should be able to open more sub-units than what we have done. Open south shore of Chelan, there are more animals there.	To protect from over harvesting small herds, the Department only recommends hunts in herds that meet or exceed 100 animals.

WAC 232-28-282 Big game wild turkey auction, raffle, and special incentive permits

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Within biologically sustainable limits, maximize revenue for game species management and research.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

Under Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Auction or Raffle Permit, add GMU 166 to the list of hunt areas. This change is because of the increased number of mature rams in the population.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Turkey Raffle: Bag limit: Three (3) additional wild turkeys, but not to exceed more than one turkey in Western Washington or two turkeys in Eastern Washington. Open area: Statewide. Open season: April 1 - May 31 AND September 1 - December 31. What is a legal bird for the spring season and/or for the fall season, any bird, visible beard only, or mixed bag?	The rule is “3 additional wild turkeys,” which would be any bird.
All Big Game Raffle Tags: The seasons read that hunting starts on September 1 and goes through December 31 and any legal weapon can be used. Most hunts start on September 8 for archery but the raffle tickets start September 1. Can you start hunting September 1 and/or hunt any time a GMU is not open to the general season, as long as there is, was, or will be a general season in that specific GMU? Does the elk raffle tag allow you to hunt statewide? Is it required to hunt archery during archery season, muzzleloader during muzzleloader season, and modern firearm during modern firearm season, or can any weapon be used any time with the raffle tags? Is hunter orange required for someone hunting with a modern firearm in an archery or muzzleloader unit?	Yes, the season for most auction/raffle permits is Sept. 1 to Dec. 31 regardless if other seasons in that GMU are open or closed (as long as there is a WDFW Commission authorized season in that GMU for that animal). There is an eastside and westside elk auction/raffle permit. Auction/raffle hunters can use any legal weapon during their entire season. The Department is recommending auction/raffle hunters wear hunter orange if they are hunting with a modern firearm.
Allow only 1 Mountain goat raffle. With these tags being fewer and fewer the drawing is the way to get one.	Thank you for your comment. The rationale for the two goat raffle tags is to provide dedicated funds for goat management, but using a raffle program that is still affordable to everyone. Unfortunately, one of our primary limitations for goat management is funding for basic activities like surveys, and the raffle program helps generate revenue beyond what the general permit process does.

WAC 232-28-287 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 Cougar permit seasons and regulations

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Maximize recreational hunting opportunities for black bear and cougar within biologically sustainable limits.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

For hunt area in the Kittitas-Yakima hunt, change from “GMUs 328, 329, 342-368” to “GMUs 328-368.” The reason for the change is to correct for GMU omissions.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None

WAC 232-28-291 Special hunting season permits

A. Agency reason for adoption:

To clarify types of permit hunts.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Under section 2.A., change from:

A. Persons who have previously harvested a mountain goat, bighorn sheep, or moose in Washington are ineligible to apply for a special hunting season permit for that species. This lifetime harvest restriction does not apply to individuals who harvested a mountain goat before 1999, raffle or auction hunt authorizations, or antlerless-only moose hunts.

To:

A. Persons who have previously harvested a mountain goat, bighorn sheep, or moose in Washington are ineligible to apply for a special hunting season permit for that species. This lifetime harvest restriction does not apply to individuals who harvested a mountain goat before 1999, raffle or auction hunt authorizations, ewe-only bighorn sheep hunts, master hunter moose hunts, or antlerless-only moose hunts. The reason for the change is consistency in requirements between this WAC and WAC 232-28-273 2009-2011 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas.
- Under section 5.C., change from:

C. Special hunting seasons for hunters age 65 and older: Only applicants sixty-five years of age or older on or before March 31 of the current license year will be eligible to apply for special hunting season permits for hunters age 65 and older.

To:

C. Special hunting seasons for hunters age 65 and older: Only applicants sixty-five years of age or older on or before March 31 of the current license year will be eligible to apply for special hunting season permits for hunters age 65 and older; except for special moose hunts for persons age 65 and older, applicants must be 65 years of age or older by November 30 during the license year they are applying for.

The reason for the change is consistency in requirements between this WAC and WAC 232-28-273 2009-2011 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>It used to be that years ago you could apply for a permit and if your name was drawn than you had to wait three years before you could reapply. I feel that this should be reenacted so that everyone in the hunting community can have an opportunity to draw these said permits. I would like to know if there is a way or a plan to bring this topic up for vote. Thank you.</p>	<p>That system was in place prior to the current weighted point system. Changes planned next year should help improve the odds of drawing for many hunts, just because of the new “pools” being created. The odds will shift to hunters in these smaller pools rather than all deer applicants or all elk applicants.</p> <p>If this does not work, the Department could consider waiting periods in the future.</p>
<p>Please consider these changes to the bonus point lottery system, which would make it a weighted bonus point system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The individuals with the highest number of points or the groups with the highest average number of points receives the available tags. -If there are more individuals or groups that share the highest number of points, than there are tags available for that hunt, then a drawing is held between those individuals or groups with the highest number of points. -Hunters are able to select their top four hunt choices -Hunt drawings are performed in an order based on the highest number of points that the applicants in each hunt have. Hunts whose applicants have the largest accumulated number of individual or group points are decided first. 	<p>The Department considered this during the public comment period. However, the changes planned for 2010 should help with drawing odds. If not, this type of proposal could be placed back on the table.</p>
<p>I would like to comment on issue 59. I am all in favor of increasing the odds of drawing a special permit. I have 13 elk points and have met several people who have drawn more than one permit in the last 13 years. I feel that the current permit system is to random, I like the idea of having a drawing that considers the applicants with the maximum points first and foremost, other states do this and I feel that it is a more fair system. Putting applicants with more than 10</p>	<p>The Department considered this during the public comment period. However, the changes planned for 2010 should help with drawing odds. If not, this type of proposal could be placed back on the table.</p>

<p>points into a separate draw, or giving then 25% of the tags available would be the next best thing.</p>	
<p>I would like to express my opposition to the earlier date for controlled hunt applications. I am a non resident hunter from Oregon. I generally base my decision on whether or not to apply for controlled hunts (which requires a purchase of a tag) in Washington based on my Oregon drawing results. The earlier date will not allow me to get my Oregon results before the Washington applications are due. This will probably cause me to not hunt in Washington at all. I am probably not unique to this scenario. You stand to lose some revenue with nonresident tag sales.</p>	<p>The Department currently does not sell many non-resident tags and has not tried to aggressively market opportunities for out of state hunters. Many permit applicants have asked that we conduct our drawings earlier, so we are accommodated that request.</p>
<p>There was a proposed rule chance that would allow hunters with 13 or more points special consideration in the permit drawings. Did this proposal die in public comment? I have been Applying for a group hunt in GMU 247 for over 13 years, I was hoping to get my Dad and two sons, one chance at all of us filling our tag before my dad can no longer hunt. I suppose there was not a lot of public support because there is not a lot of hunters like me that have devoted 13 years trying to get drawn for one special hunt. It just irritates me, I know several people who have put in for this hunt the first time and have been drawn. I know of one group that was drawn there first time. In my opinion the game managers should have given this more consideration. The hunt experience, passed down through generations is the only way to keep family's involved in hunting.</p> <p>I will put in again this year and ever year after, but this year is probably my dad's last chance.</p>	<p>The Department considered this during the public comment period. However, the changes planned for 2010 should help with drawing odds. If not, this type of proposal could be placed back on the table.</p>

WAC 232-28-294 Multiple season big game permits

A. Agency reason for adoption:

To increase the number of multi season permits and hunter participation.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

In the table describing legal animal, the rule said any legal buck and any legal bull. Some general seasons (e.g. many archery seasons) allow any deer or elk; therefore, we are recommending a change in the wording of the table to reflect what is legal in these seasons.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Multiple season big game Permits Section 4 for the multi-season deer tag says: Legal Animal Any legal buck consistent with the game management unit or area restrictions</p> <p>Is this intended to limit the archer with a multi-season deer tag to bucks only, even though the general season rules for a specific unit might allow the taking of a doe? I.e. should "Any legal buck..." be changed to "Any legal deer..." in section 4 of WAC 232-28-294?</p> <p>The same question applies to the multi-season elk tag. Is it</p>	<p>You are correct; our intent was to allow any legal deer or elk consistent with the GMU or area. The correction has been made to the recommendations. Thank you.</p>

<p>"Any legal bull..." or "Any legal elk..."?</p>	
<p>As for the system you folks have come up with for the "all weapons tag" drawing. This will just create a race to purchase a tag that is not necessary and is not a level playing field for all. Most folks will have something else to do at the moment the drawing results are posted and therefore the folks that don't have something else to do (game department employees friends and relatives maybe?) will have an unfair advantage at getting a tag. What is wrong with a fair and equitable lottery for the tags that everybody has a reasonable time to enter and therefore a reasonable shot at? If you are drawn you may purchase your tag. Wow what a concept! If the state thinks it needs more revenue from this drawing (which is obviously the reason it is being proposed) then raise the fee to enter the drawing slightly and LOWER the price to purchase a tag when drawn. The state will net more revenue this way. It may take a year or two to come up with the proper formula but creating this "race" is just nuts.</p>	<p>In the past, some permits were never purchased and by the time we conducted three drawings and notifications, the hunting seasons had started. We will limit the number notified to approximate the number of successful applicants that needed to be notified in the past drawings in order to sell out the permits. So it shouldn't be too much of a rush. In the past, successful applicants only had two weeks to purchase anyway.</p>
<p>Thank you for proposing an increase of multi-season elk. Per earlier feedback I would have liked to see this increase further (or even for additional cost) to allow hunters who enjoy multiple methods and the time in the field to hunt the duration as well as across both sides of the state.</p>	<p>We are monitoring the success rates of multi-season permit holders carefully to determine whether additional permits can be offered in the future. At this point it appears that elk permit holders are more successful than others, so the number of multi-season permits available must be limited. The price of the permit is set by the Legislature, not the Department.</p>
<p>I have twice been drawn for multi-season deer. It is a joy. I doubt that I hunted many more days, but the quality of my season was significantly enhanced. We're losing hunters because of access and because of conflicting priorities. Opening up deer (but not elk) to general multi-season would encourage more hunters to stay in the hunt. You're simply more likely to buy your permit if you know that you have the extended period to hunt. Accordingly, my strongest recommendation is that you open up the multi-season concept for deer to all.</p>	<p>Opening up the multi-season deer permits may be a possibility in the future. We plan to monitor success rates for a couple more years to determine if that is possible. Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>I am also in favor of the new regulations for multiple season permits. If possible, please reduce the application fee to allow more hunters to apply.</p>	<p>The application fee is set by the Legislature, not the Department. At this point, we have plenty of applicants to sell all of the permits.</p>
<p>I didn't realize hunters selected were not buying all permits. I better understand the game manager's intention and now am less inclined to disagree with the change. I still think the Green Sheet is misleading in that it addresses all the surveys conducted but does not mention that was addressed. If all permits are quickly sold under first come, first serve, then I think it would be better to inform hunters they have X number of days to buy permits, after which the rest will be sold first come, first serve.</p>	<p>As previously mentioned, that system was in place, but resulted in multiple drawings and notifications. That delay is partially why the permits did not sell once hunting seasons started.</p>
<p>I am very seriously concerned with the "first come first served" aspects of the permit drawing provisions. I hate the Oklahoma Land Rush mentality that I know will derive from this method.... and believe me it will!! How am I to know that ALL people drawn will receive word of their drawing at the same time? What if my mail comes late or I am out of town when my notice comes? Am I out of the running through no fault of my own doing? If I am unable to get an actual permit are my points returned? I heartily recommend that the Agency return to the previous method!!!</p>	<p>We will limit the number notified to approximate the number of successful applicants that needed to be notified in the past drawings in order to sell out the permits. So it shouldn't be too much of a rush. In the past successful applicants only had two weeks to purchase anyway.</p>
<p>I was fortunate to draw a any weapon deer permit for 2008. It costs a lot more but I loved that it allowed me to be selective and get out more in the woods. Hope you make more available.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>What are the impacts of the multi-season tag? I know it brings in badly needed money, but it is having a terrible effect on early archery seasons. The number of hunters I now see in</p>	<p>As the archery seasons have become more attractive over the past several years, more hunters have decided to hunt in those seasons. The multi-season permit added a few more as well.</p>

the woods is at least double that of a couple years ago. Many of them are multi-season tag holders who spent 20 minutes practicing with a bow and are now out flinging arrows 60 yards at the first elk they see. And now you are going to increase the number of permits available? Why not make them a true drawing like other hunts, and have hunters use preference points? I just feel like it is all about money.	<p>However, by most standards, the archery general seasons are not very crowded.</p> <p>The drawing for the multi-season permits will continue and does use a weighted point system.</p> <p>These permits do provide much needed funding for the Department, but also provide additional options for hunters.</p>
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WAC 232-28-295 Landowner hunting permits

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Adopt permit levels and seasons that help address elk damage problems and provide hunter access to private lands.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

Under Pine Mountain Ranch LHP Special Hunting Permits (public opportunity) for deer, change “Any Bull” to “Youth Only, Any Bull.” This change is based on a negotiated agreement with the landowner.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Make it easier and more beneficial for private land owners to let the public hunt on their land.</p> <p>Make it easier for those landowners to stay in the program and not want to opt out once their contract is over.</p>	The Department will continue to identify new ways to improve the private lands access program, both for the landowner and the hunter.
I am disappointed that the 4-O Cattle Co. hunts are being scratched out. This is a great opportunity. Please continue to work with the 4-O Ranch.	The 4-O Ranch requested not to be part of the 2009 Landowner Hunting Permit program. We will continue to be open to including the 4-O in future years through our program guidelines if the owner wishes to be part of the program.

WAC 232-28-333 Game management units (GMUs) boundary descriptions – Region three

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Maintains discernable GMU boundaries. Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

None

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Please leave the borders to Grayback unchanged.	This is a necessary change both from a deer and elk and elk management standpoint as well as maintaining boundaries that make sense and are more discernable.
You are recommending a boundary change between Unit 578 and 388, moving a large portion of 388 to 578. I have no concerns about the boundary change except that it will eliminate late archery season in the new areas of unit 578 and give it exclusively to muzzleloaders for elk. If I read the recommendations correctly, there is no late deer season in unit 578. Although I am not opposed to muzzleloaders hunting in	The changes in the boundaries and the changes in the season structures are all designed to improve the deer herd management and ultimately improve the hunting experience. There are also good late archery deer season opportunities in the adjacent units of 572 and 560. For more information on the rationale for the recommendations, please review the issue statements that are provided on our web site regarding this

<p>the unit, I don't agree with preventing archers from hunting it also, especially for deer. Why can't archers and muzzleloaders hunt together? Neither one is required to wear hunter orange, you cannot tell the difference between either of these hunters in the woods, so safety can't be the reason. By this change, you will have displaced many late archery hunters. Their next option would be to move over to 388, where you already say it is a distressed herd. Much of 388 is also private land and many archers will be targeting the same crowded public areas, straining relations with adjacent private landowners. Moving the boundary makes sense as there will be a natural boundary that is easy to identify. Please allow the archery hunters to have a late, 3-point minimum deer season while the muzzleloaders are having their elk season.</p>	<p>issue.</p>
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WAC 232-28-335 Game management units (GMUs) boundary descriptions – Region five

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Maintains discernable GMU boundaries. Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- In order to correct a long-term error, the reference to the 80 Rd was removed from the GMU 560 legal description as shown below:
 Beginning on SR 141 and Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd at the town of Trout Lake; N on the Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd to ~~US Forest Service Rd 80 (Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd); N on US Forest Service Rd 80 (Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd)~~ to US Forest Service Rd 82 (Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd); N on US Forest Service Road 82 to Yakama Indian Reservation boundary....
- In order to correct a long-term error, the reference to the 80 Rd was removed from the GMU 578 legal description as shown below:
 at the town of Trout Lake; N on the Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd to ~~US Forest Service Rd 80 (Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd); N on US Forest Service Rd 80 (Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd)~~ to US Forest Service Rd 82 (Mount Adams Recreational Area Rd); N on US Forest Service Road 82 to Yakama Indian Reservation boundary.....

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
The following agency response pertains to all comments in this section	
<p>I am opposed to changing the boundary for 578 (West Klickitat). I hunt muzzleloader and we are limited on deer areas. One of the main areas we hunt is the Buck Creek area. Since Wind River is not open for deer during the late hunt our area will be reduced even more. The boundary is not that difficult to follow, so I see no reason to change it.</p>	<p>The current GMU 388 & GMU 578 boundary has a confusing boundary description. Part of GMU 578 lies east of a good-sized portion of GMU 388. This fragments a popular elk hunting area into “East” and “West”. It also inappropriately groups western forested habitat with eastern agricultural and arid habitats.</p> <p>The current GMU 578 & GMU 574 boundary has a confusing boundary description. The boundary uses high elevation USFS roads that are difficult to travel and are impassible in winter. Both sides have essentially identical hunting opportunities and management issues.</p> <p>The current GMU 574 & GMU 568 boundary has a confusing boundary description. It uses de-commissioned USFS roads (hard to find), the USFS boundary (nothing physically present), and requires cross-country navigation to find the boundary.</p> <p>They both have very similar hunting regulations for deer and elk</p> <p>As a result, the Department feels the proposed changes are vitally important and will make deer and elk management more effective, and ultimately serve the hunting public in a better fashion.</p>
<p>I support and think it has been long overdue for the boundary changes to management units 568, 572, 574, and 578.</p>	
<p>Here are my comments on the proposed hunting regulation changes: I fully and support the Klickitat River as the boundary between Units 578 and 388. At this time I support the 3 point minimum for buck deer in unit 578. I support making the late muzzleloading for buck deer in Unit 578 permit only.</p>	
<p>We support making the Klickitat River the boundary between West Klickitat (578) and Grayback (388).</p>	
<p>I just wanted to let you know how much I disagree with your new proposals on changes in the hunting unit 578(west Klickitat) You say that you give us other units to hunt but nobody knows these units, or they are mostly private land.</p>	
<p>The boundary changes between West Klickitat (578) and Grayback is a good idea. Making the Klickitat River the boundary between the two units will be easier to understand than a series of road systems.</p>	

<p>388 which used to be 588 has been an archery unit for late season hunting for many years. I am an archer and only hunt deer in the late season because I hunt elk in the early season. The portion of 388 that you propose to cut away and add to 578 is where my family has hunt for many years. A few years back I purchased property in that area so I could have a place to camp and hunt with my grand kids ages 12 and 15 along with my nephews and friends. This area of unit 388 is the most conducive to archery hunting because the rest of unit 388 is mostly open terrain with the exception of the area just due North of the proposed change. One of the best parts of having this portion of 388 available to late archery hunting, is it usually includes the Thanksgiving holiday which gives the youths time off from school to hunt or participate in the hunt where the early season is taken up with school activities. Please do not take this away from us. A way that this could be accomplished would be to take the portion of 388 from Fisher Hill Road to the Klickitat River and make it the old 588 unit and manage it as a Western Elk and Blacktail unit. This would satisfy the most hunters in that the rifle folks would get back what they had lost when the unit changed to 388 and the archers would not lose their late season even though permitting for does could be necessary.</p>	
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WAC 232-28-336 Game management units (GMUs) boundary descriptions – Region six

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Maintains discernable GMU boundaries. Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

None

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None

WAC 232-28-337 Deer and elk area descriptions

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Maintains discernable GMU boundaries. Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- **Elk Area 2033:** Replace the entire description to correct errors within the boundary and make it easier to follow on the ground.

Old Boundary (as filed with Code Reviser):

Starting from the Division St Bridge in Cashmere; South on Aplets Way and Division St; west on Pioneer St; South on Mission Creek Rd, west on Binder Rd and continue south on Mission Creek Rd; west on Tripp Canyon Rd; where Tripp Canyon Rd leaves Tripp Creek, then west on Tripp Creek; at the end of Tripp Creek, then west approximately 1 mile to Camas Creek Rd; west on Camas Creek Rd (USFS 7200 RD) (excluding Camas Land firearm closure.*) to U.S. Hwy 97; north on U.S. Hwy 97 to Mountain Home Rd (USFS 7300 RD); north on Mountain Home Rd to the Wenatchee River in Leavenworth; South on the Wenatchee River to the point of beginning.

New Boundary:

Starting at the Division St bridge over the Wenatchee River in the town of Cashmere; S on Aplets Way then Division St to Pioneer St; W on Pioneer St to Mission Creek Rd; S on Mission Creek Rd to Binder Rd; W on Binder Rd to Mission Creek Rd; S on Mission Creek Rd to Tripp Canyon Rd; W on Tripp Canyon Rd to where Tripp Canyon Rd stops following Tripp Creek; W on Tripp Creek to its headwaters; W up the drainage, about 1000 feet, to US Forest Service (USFS) Rd 7200-160; W on USFS Rd 7200-160 to Camas Creek Rd (USFS Rd 7200); W on Camas Creek Rd (USFS 7200 Rd) (excluding Camas Land firearm closure.*) to US Hwy 97; N on US Hwy 97 to Mountain Home Rd (USFS 7300 Rd); N on Mountain Home Rd to the Wenatchee River in the town of Leavenworth; S on the Wenatchee River to the Division St bridge in Cashmere and the point of beginning.

- **Deer Area 1035:** Created new deer area to focus hunting pressure of white-tailed deer onto private property along the Highway 395 Corridor. This is an experimental hunt in an area with a high number of vehicle-deer collisions to see if reducing the deer herd through hunting might also reduce collisions.

New Boundary Description Reads:

That portion of GMU 121 beginning at the intersection of US Highway (Hwy) 395 (State Route 20) and State Route (SR) 25: S on SR 25 to Old Kettle Rd; E on Old Kettle Rd to Mingo Mountain Rd; S on Mingo Mountain Rd to Greenwood Loop Rd; E on Greenwood Loop Rd to the bridge over the Colville River; S on the Colville River to the bridge over Gold Creek Loop / Valley Westside Rd; W and S on Valley Westside Rd to the Orin-Rice Rd; E on Orin-Rice Rd to Haller Creek Rd; S on Haller Creek Rd to Skidmore Rd; E and S on Skidmore Rd to Arden Hill Rd; E on Arden Hill Rd to Townsend-Sackman Rd; S on Townsend-Sackman Rd to Twelve Mile Rd; S on Twelve Mile Rd to Marble Valley Basin Rd; S on Marble Valley Basin Rd to Zimmer Rd; S on Zimmer Rd to Blue Creek West Rd; E on Blue Creek West Rd to Dry Creek Rd; S on Dry Creek Rd to Duncan Rd; E on Duncan Rd to Tetro Rd; S on Tetro Rd to Heine Rd; E and S on Heine Rd to Farm-to-Market Rd; S on Farm-to-Market Rd to Newton Rd (also known as Rickers Lane); E on Newton Rd to US Hwy 395; N on US Hwy 395 to McLean Rd and Twelve Mile Rd (also known as Old Arden Hwy); N on McLean Road and Twelve Mile Road to US Hwy 395; N on US Hwy 395 to Old Arden Hwy (again); N on Old Arden Hwy to US Hwy 395; N on US Hwy 395, thru the town of Colville, then W on US Hwy 395 (SR 20) to SR 25 and the point of beginning.

- **Deer Area 1060:** Created new deer area to address high populations of white-tailed deer around the greater Spokane Metropolitan Area.

New Boundary Description Reads:

That part of GMU 127 beginning at the intersection of Spokane River and Barker Rd Bridge, Barker Rd S to 24 Ave., 24 Ave. W to Barker Rd, Barker Rd S to 32 Ave, 32 Ave W to Linke Rd, Linke Rd S and E to Chapman Rd, Chapman Rd S to Linke Rd, Linke Rd S to Belmont Rd, Belmont Rd W to Hwy 27, Hwy 27 S to Palouse Hwy, Palouse Hwy W to Valley Chapel Rd, Valley Chapel Rd S to Spangle Creek Rd, Spangle Creek Rd SW to Hwy 195, Hwy 195 N to I-90, I-90 E to Latah Creek at I-90-Latah Creek Bridge, Latah Creek NE to Spokane River, Spokane River E to the Baker Rd Bridge and the point of beginning.

- **Deer Area 1070:** Created new deer area to address high populations of white-tailed deer around the greater Spokane Metropolitan Area.

New Boundary Description Reads:

That part of GMU 130 beginning at the intersection of I-90 and Latah Creek at I-90-Latah Creek Bridge, NE to Hwy 195, S on Hwy 195 S to Paradise Rd, Paradise Rd W to Smythe Road, Smythe Road NW to Anderson Rd, Anderson Rd W to Cheney Spokane Rd, Cheney Spokane Rd SW to Hwy904/1st St in the town of Cheney, 1st SW to Salnave Rd/Hwy 902, Salnave Rd NW to Malloy Prairie Rd, Malloy Prairie Rd W to Medical Lake Tyler Rd, Medical Lake Tyler Rd N to Gray Rd, Gray Rd W then N to Fancher Rd, Fancher Rd NW to Ladd Rd, Ladd Rd N to Chase Rd, Chase Rd E to Espanola Rd, Espanola Rd N turns into Wood Rd, Wood Rd N to Coulee Hite Rd, Coulee Hite Rd E to Seven Mile Rd, Seven Mile Rd E to Spokane River, Spokane River S to Latah Creek, Latah Creek S to I-90 at the Latah Creek Bridge and the point of beginning.

- **Deer Area 1080:** Change the first sentence to read: That part of GMUs 139 and 142 beginning at the intersection of Hwy 195... This corrects an oversight in the boundary mapping.
- **Elk Area 4601:** Replace the entire description to provide a clearer description language for a new Elk Area. The new language has been confirmed on site by Regional staff and will be more readily discernible for hunters.

Elk Area No. 4601 North Bend (King County):

That portion of King County within the following described boundary. Beginning at the interchange of State Route (SR) 18 and Interstate (I)-90; W on I-90 to SE 82nd St, Exit 22, at the Town of Preston; N on

SE 82nd Street to Preston Fall City Rd SE (Old SR 203); N on Preston Fall City Rd SE to SE Fall City Snoqualmie Rd (SR 202) at the town of Fall City; E on SE Fall City Snoqualmie Rd to the crossing of Tokul Creek; N and E up Tokul Creek to its crossing with Tokul Rd SE; S on SE Tokul Rd to SE 53rd Way; E on SE 53rd Way where it turns into 396th Dr SE then S on 396th Dr SE to SE Reinig Rd; E on SE Reinig Rd to 428th Ave SE; N on 428th Ave SE to where it turns into North Fork Rd SE; N and E on North Fork Rd SE to Ernie's Grove Rd; E on Ernie's Grove Rd to SE 70th St; N on SE 70th St. to its ends at Fantastic Falls on the North Fork Snoqualmie River; SW down the North Fork Snoqualmie River to the end of Moon Valley Rd SE; S and W on Moon Valley Rd SE to where it turns into SE 87th St; W on SE 87th to 436th Pl SE; S on 436th Pl SE to 436th Ave SE; S on 436th Ave SE to SE 92nd St; W on SE 92nd St to 428th Ave SE; S on 428th Ave SE to the crossing of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River; S and E up the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River to SE Mt Si Road; E on SE Mt Si to the "School Bus" turnaround at SE 114th St; S on 480th Ave SE to SE 130th St; S and E on SE 130th St to its end; SSE overland from the end of SE 130th St, over the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River, to the end of 486th Ave SE; S on 486th Ave SE to the intersection with SE Middle Fork Road; Due S, from said intersection, up Grouse Mountain toward its peak, to the logging road adjacent to Grouse Mountain Peak; S down the logging Road to Grouse Ridge Access Rd; W on Grouse Ridge Access Road which becomes SE 146th St; W on SE 146th St to 468th Ave SE (SE Edgewick Rd); S on 468th Ave SE (SE Edgewick Rd) to the boundary of the Iron Horse State Park; W along the boundary of Iron Horse State Park to the boundary of the Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area; W along the boundary of the Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area to Cedar Falls Rd. SE; N along the Cedar Falls Rd. to SE to 174th Way; W on SE 174th Way to SE 174th St; W on SE 174th St to SE 173rd St.; W on SE 173rd St to SE 170th Pl; W on SE 170th Pl to SE 169th St; W on SE 169th St to 424th Ave. SE; N on 424th Ave. SE to SE 168th St; W on SE 168th St to 422 Ave. SE; N on 422 Ave. SE to 426th Way SE; S on 426th Way SE to SE 164th St; E on SE 164th St to Uplands Way SE; W on Uplands Way SE to the crossing with the Power Transmission Lines; W along the Power Transmission Lines to the Winery Road; NW on the Winery Rd to SE 99th Rd; W and N on SE99th Rd to the I-90 interchange, at Exit 27; SW on I-90 to the interchange with SR 18 and the point of beginning.

- **Deer Area 5064:** After "Cottonwood Island," add "and Howard Island." This change corrects an omission to the original boundary description and will help direct hunters to the entire area intended for the hunt.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None

WAC 232-28-342 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12 Small game seasons

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The proposed changes provide small game hunting opportunities as well as additional turkey hunting opportunities in areas where turkey populations are expanding or are at higher levels than desired.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Add "2012" to the season dates for Bobcat, Raccoon, and Fox. The seasons run through March 15, 2012, and the 2012 date was an omission.
- Add "Male turkeys" to the definition of Legal Bird for spring seasons. The intent of the regulation is to harvest male turkeys and turkeys with visible beards. In the original draft, the term "gobblers" had been removed and not replaced by "Male turkeys."

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Upland Birds</p> <p>Propose setting General eastern Washington pheasant opening for October 10, 2009.</p> <p>I believe this was the approach used for many years. There was a survey that showed that hunters preferred this approach and it removes the concern that Quail hunters hunting between Oct 3 and Oct 23 are shooting and or spooking pheasant.</p>	<p>Pheasant season is proposed to begin the first weekend after the general deer season opens. In 2003, the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopted this timing to avoid conflicts with deer hunters who experienced conflicts with pheasant hunters who had hunted the same areas as the deer hunters were targeting prior to or during opening day of deer season. At the time, this concern was especially prevalent in southeastern Washington. The current proposal is designed to add consistency to the pheasant season after many years of moving season dates.</p>
<p>I have hunted the same areas in southeastern WA for birds for over 35 years and generally went out 30-40 times a season from 1973-2004. After moving, I go back twice per year. I hunted for 6 days in Oct. and saw lots of pheasant and over 100 quail. I went back again in Jan. of this year. While I saw a decent number of pheasants, the quail have almost disappeared. You may wish to reduce the bag limit for one year.</p>	<p>Quail can produce many chicks each year, and young of the year typically make up the majority of the year's harvest. Between 2003 and 2007 hunter harvest averaged between 9 and 10 quail per person per season. In 2007, hunters averaged 1.64 birds per day. A decrease in the bag limit will not likely affect overall population numbers since hunters harvest such a small percent of the population.</p>
<p>Contrary to the written comment "proposed hunting seasons do not change from recent years" I noticed that the proposed pheasant season shown on page 7 of the Revised Rule language starts on October 24, 2009 to January 18, 2010 for Eastern Washington. This past years season went from October 18, 2008 to January 19, 2009. This change results in a significant loss of opportunity, almost 10% fewer days. Why? It would seem reasonable, considering the past few years seasons, to start the pheasant season two weeks after the quail/chukar season, currently scheduled for October 3, 2009. This would start the pheasants on October 17, 2009 closing on January 18, 2010 for the exact number as this past year.</p>	<p>While this is a change in days, it is not a change in the timing of the season. Since 2003, the eastern Washington pheasant season has started on the first weekend after opening weekend for general deer season. In 2009, that date is later in October due to calendar date shifts.</p> <p>A change has been made to the "Green Sheet" to clarify that the timing of the season has not changed.</p>
<p>Opening day for quail, pheasants and grey partridge -- October 3</p>	<p>Since 2003, the eastern Washington pheasant season has started on the first weekend after opening weekend for general deer season and quail and gray partridge started on the first weekend in October. This is done to avoid conflicts with deer hunters who experienced conflicts with pheasant hunters who had hunted the same areas as the deer hunters were targeting prior to or during opening day of deer season. The current proposal is designed to add consistency to the pheasant season after many years of moving season dates.</p>
<p>The only change I would like to see for the upcoming hunting season is a shorter eastern Washington pheasant season by starting later in October or early November.</p>	<p>When the current pheasant season structure was approved by the Fish and Wildlife Commission, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Fish and Wildlife Commission wanted to make sure hunters did not lose opportunity. A later start date would decrease hunter opportunity.</p>
<p>Upland Game: No changes – good move a few years ago to have pheasant end at the same time as quail/chukar/huns.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I have seen a steady decline in the pheasant population in Southeastern Washington, especially in the Hay and Lacrosse areas. I think one thing that might help is to close the season the first Monday after Christmas or at the end of the year.</p>	<p>Hunter harvest is a small part of annual pheasant mortality, so reducing the season length will reduce hunter opportunity with no substantial impact on overall population levels. In addition, the numbers of hunters in the field during the last part of the season are far fewer than in the earlier weeks, so overall hunter pressure is much lower.</p>
<p>I would strongly recommend a shorter season on pheasant and quail and would like to see the season end by Dec. 20.</p>	

Forest Grouse	
Oppose increasing the limit on forest grouse to four. There are fewer grouse in the forest today and an increase in the bag limit does not seem warranted.	Between 1985 and 2007, Washington grouse hunters averaged harvesting fewer than ½ a grouse per day and fewer than 3 birds per season. While some grouse hunters do harvest a limit of grouse in a day, the vast majority do not. While public perception is that an increased bag limit will impact populations, hunter harvest trends indicate that it should not. Public perception of this proposal is that an increased bag limit is an indicator of an increasing population. However, the recommendation is not based on that notion.
I think that grouse season should be shorter. Three to 4 months is just too long. I've seen a big decrease in the amount of grouse in the last several years	In general, hunting does not limit annual grouse populations. In addition, most of the grouse harvest occurs before and during the rifle deer season. Removing the latter months of the season would eliminate opportunity without having a positive impact on the grouse population.
Turkeys	
Youth turkey hunt in the spring of 2008 and the youth waterfowl hunt in September of 2008. I urge the WDFW to do everything possible to keep all of these youth hunting opportunities available. I believe these youth hunts make the difference between kids gaining a life-long interest in hunting or no interest and future support of hunting.	Youth seasons, as represented in the proposed small game rule, are planned to continue for turkey, pheasant, quail, chukar and gray partridge. Most waterfowl seasons are set at the August Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting.
Extend the fall turkey permit season for at least two weekends. I would like to see the season last at least 9 days from Sat-to the following Sunday	In 2009, the early fall season is proposed to be extended to 14 days and include 2 weekends, an extension of 7 days and 1 weekend from the 2007 season.
Remove the wording of Gobbler and only have visible beard as a legal turkey.	The intent is to allow harvest of male turkeys in the spring, whether they have a visible beard or not. Some females have beards, so the "visible beard" language is also used.
Turkey season is open for shotgun shooting #4 shot or smaller, archery, and muzzleloader shotgun shooting #4 shot or smaller. Why is it necessary to have any shot restriction for turkey? If there is a restriction on shot size, why not start at #1 shot size (turkey is not a native species of Washington)? There are manufactures that make effective turkey loads in non-toxic shot in size #1 and smaller. By 2011 the department is requiring non-toxic shot on all of the land they own, why have the shot size restriction? Why become more restrictive on shot size but more liberalized on harvest and Damage Prevention Permits?	A national task group on wild turkey hunting safety has recommended turkey hunting using #4 shot or smaller. This recommendation is directed at the use of lead shot, not non-toxic shot. The proposed rule to regulate the use of lead shot is only for upland birds (pheasant, quail, chukar, and gray partridge), mourning dove, and band-tailed pigeons and does not propose to limit the use of lead for turkey hunting. The shot size restriction is not intended to be related to damage prevention permits.
Please consider allowing dogs to hunt turkeys in the fall.	Discussions with turkey hunters in Washington have not revealed very much support for allowing dogs to hunt turkeys in Washington.
Coyotes	
The Department should not be disallowing coyote hunting unless there is a biological justification for doing so. Non-biological public opinion should not drive the Department to restrict hunting. Science and species sustainment should be the primary if not sole basis for any amendment to the DFW regulations. No game or resource use will long stand when subjected to general public opinion.	The Department is recommending making it unlawful to hunt coyotes with the use of dogs. The recommendation is based on input from the public via the Washington State legislature. Even though the recommendation is not based on the biological status of coyotes, the Department is bring this issue before the commission due to our desire to address social issues with hunting during the Commission process rather than legislative process.

Under coyote hunting with dogs needs to be clarified in the regulations. Proposed says no hunting coyotes with dogs. If this is adopted does it mean just running dogs that kill coyotes? Some people me included have a dog with me when I am calling coyotes to decoy or take the coyotes attention away from me. They are not to kill the coyote thats my job.	Hunting includes any use of dogs during your hunting activity; including decoying.
Other	
Start Duck and Goose hunting November 15th or the closest Saturday to that day and extend the hunting season for Waterfowl to February 28 or the closest Sunday ending the end. This would give hunters a season that would not start until after most of the big game seasons were over.	These comments relate to waterfowl seasons set at the August Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting. These seasons are not addressed in the small game rule.
I'm not opposed to eliminating the September hunt, which doesn't seem to get much attention anyway. However, I would recommend more liberal hunting rules in Goose Mgmt Area 4 - increasing the number of hunting days to four a week (Saturday-Sunday-Tuesday-Thursday) to provide more opportunity for hunters - and to get more hunters out in the field in a time when hunter numbers are declining.	These comments relate to waterfowl seasons set at the August Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting. These seasons are not addressed in the small game rule.
It is unfortunate that you are proposing the elimination of the early goose season. I would probably agree that it wasn't reducing the goose population around cities or other sensitive areas. However, the overall goose population is still increasing and it isn't clear what positive effect the elimination of this season will create. In my judgment, why not allow the hunting for a couple of days in Sept., it helps sell more licenses, allows some of us seniors to hunt in warm weather and it isn't creating a significant negative impact on the overall goose population.	The Canada goose breeding population in eastern Washington has declined to a threshold level established to discontinue the September season. At the August Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting, the Department will propose increasing the regular season by two days to compensate for the loss of September season opportunity.
Ducks and Geese: No changes – good move to get back to ducks and snow geese opening the same day.	These comments relate to waterfowl seasons set at the August Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting. These seasons are not addressed in the small game rule.
I would like The waterfowl season to never end. No but in reality I would like it extended to at least the very last day in January. Not the 25Th of January. Possibly a spring snow goose hunt, maybe 2 or 3 weeks long. There are so many of them what could it hurt. Buy up more farm land that is getting bought up by rich private hunters that don't like to share with the poor working man. Ask for donated land so the farmer or land owner is not paying taxes on the land he don't use.	These comments relate to waterfowl seasons set at the August Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting. These seasons are not addressed in the small game rule.
Has consideration ever been given to allowing the use of airguns for the hunting of small game?	This has not been a significant issue during public outreach and subsequent public meetings.
My preference for the 2009-2011 hunting seasons is to maintain the status quo.	Thank you for your comment.
Coyotes	
I am not aware of anyone who uses dogs to hunt coyotes. It is a non-issue. We don't need more regulations.	The recommendation is based on input from the public via the Washington State Legislature. The recommendation is not based on the biological status of coyotes. The Department is bringing this issue before the Commission because they have been authorized by the Legislature to address hunting issues.
More people are beginning to hunt coyotes with dogs. Don't restrict it.	

WAC 232-28-351 2009-2011 Deer general seasons and definitions

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Under **GMUs Closed to Deer Hunting**, reinstate 490 (Cedar River). Further discussions are being conducted with the land manager. An open season for deer is being delayed until 2010.
- Under **Modern Firearm, General Season, Black-tailed Deer**, Oct. 17-31, any deer, add Deer Area 6020. This change corrects an omission in the CR 102 filing.
- Under **Modern Firearm, Eastern Washington White-Tailed Deer**, GMU 379 appears in both any white-tailed buck as well as any white-tailed deer. Delete GMU 379 from any white-tailed buck. This correction removes a redundancy. The Agency is not managing for white-tailed deer in this GMU and wants to retain a liberal season for any white-tailed deer.
- Under **Modern Firearm, Eastern Washington White-Tailed Deer**, delete GMU 381 in any white-tailed buck and insert GMU 381 in any white-tailed deer. The Agency is not managing for white-tailed deer in this GMU and wants to retain a liberal season for any white-tailed deer.
- Under **Modern Firearm, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, GMU 388 appears in the time period Oct. 17-25 and the time period Oct. 17-30. Delete GMU 388 from the time period Oct. 17-25, mule deer 3 pt. min. The last line for this time period should read 372 through 382. This removes a redundancy with GMU 388 appearing in two time periods.
- Under **Modern Firearm, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, delete “through 382” and add GMU 379, 381 listed in two time periods.
- Under **Modern Firearm, Late General Season, Black-tailed Deer**, Nov. 19-22, any deer, add Deer Area 6020. This change corrects an omission in the CR 102 filing.
- Under **Modern Firearm, Late General Season, Eastern Washington White-tailed Deer**, delete GMU 101 from the late modern season. With the change, the line should read 105-124, any white-tailed buck. This change is in response to public input from archery hunters and returns the late general modern firearm season in GMUs 105-124 back to status quo.
- Under **Early Archery, Black-tailed Deer**, delete GMU 560 from the line with season dates Sept. 1-25, Sept. 1-24, Sept. 1-23. This change corrects a redundancy for GMU 560 appearing in two places. GMU 560 should appear in the line with dates Sept. 1-20, Sept. 1-19, and Sept. 1-18, “Any deer”.
- Under **Early Archery, White-Tailed Deer**, delete GMU 251. This corrects a past held error from previous years. There are not enough white-tailed deer in 251 to list a white-tailed deer season.
- Under **Late Archery, Black-tailed Deer**, the dates for 437, 636, 654, 681 should be Nov. 25-Dec. 8 for 2009, Nov. 24-Dec. 8 for 2010, and Nov. 23-Dec. 8 for 2011. The date change provides dates that were omitted. The legal deer change clarifies and remains consistent with the rest of the WAC.
- Under **Late Archery, Black-tailed Deer**, the dates for 460, 506, 530, 560, 572 should be Nov. 25-Dec. 15 for 2009, Nov. 24-Dec. 15 for 2010, and Nov. 23-Dec. 15 for 2011. The legal deer for this line should change from “Buck only” to “Any buck.” The date change provides dates that were omitted. The legal deer change clarifies and remains consistent with the rest of the WAC.
- Under **Early Muzzleloader, Black-Tailed Deer**, Sept. 26-Oct. 4, any deer, add Deer Area 6020. This change corrects an omission in the CR 102 filing.
- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Black-tailed Deer**, Nov. 26-Dec. 15, any deer, add Deer Area 6020. This change corrects an omission in the CR 102 filing.
- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Eastern Washington White-Tailed Deer**, delete GMU 379 from the Nov. 26-Dec. 8 time period for any white-tailed deer and create a new time period Nov. 20-Dec. 8 for GMU 379, for any white-tailed deer. The Agency is not managing for white-tailed deer in this GMU and wants to retain a liberal season for any white-tailed deer.
- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Eastern Washington White-Tailed Deer**, Nov. 20-30 for GMU 381, change the legal deer from 3 pt. min or antlerless to any white-tailed deer. This was revised from the original recommendation from Regional staff. The Agency is not managing for white-tailed deer in this GMU and wants to retain a liberal season for any white-tailed deer.

- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, for GMU 382, 3 pt. min., change the date from Dec. 1-15 back to Nov. 20-30. This is consistent with the Regional recommendation and corrects a date error.
- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, change the date from the Dec. 1-15 time period back to Nov. 20-Dec. 8 time period for GMU 379, 3 pt. min. This is consistent with the Regional recommendation and corrects a date error.
- Under **Early Archery General Deer Seasons, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, reinstate GMU 178 in the 3 pt. min. or antlerless category. This change restores status quo for the general seasons in this GMU based on public response and concerns.
- Under **Early Archery General Deer Seasons, Eastern Washington White-tailed Deer**, reinstate GMU 178 in the 3 pt. min. or antlerless category. This change restores status quo for the general seasons in this GMU based on public response and concerns.
- Under **Late Archery General Deer Seasons, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, add the following line to the table. This change restores the late archery season in four GMUs that were originally proposed to be closed or changed to special permit only. The reinstated units have a shorter time frame, which will lessen the impact to the deer population when it is vulnerable.

Nov. 21-30	Nov. 21-30	Nov. 21-30	209, 215, 233, 243	3 pt. min.
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- Under **Early Muzzleloader General Deer Seasons, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, delete GMU 178. This change restores status quo for the general seasons in this GMU based on public response and concerns.
- Under **Early Muzzleloader General Deer Seasons, Eastern Washington White-tailed Deer**, delete GMU 178. This change restores status quo for the general seasons in this GMU based on public response and concerns.
- Under **Modern Firearm, Late General Season, Western Washington Black-tailed Deer, Any Buck**, the first line should read 524 through 560, 568 through 572. This change eliminates the redundancy of GMU 564 appearing in two categories.
- Under **Early Archery Black-tailed Deer**, move GMU 636 from Sept. 1-25, Any buck, to Sept. 1-20, Any deer. This change avoids overlap with special permit modern firearm elk hunts.
- Under **Early Archery, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, delete GMUs 154 and 172 from the time periods Sept. 1-25, 2009, Sept. 1-24, 2010, and Sept. 1-23, 2011. This was a floor change at the March Commission meeting that corrects a clerical error and avoids an overlap with a modern firearm elk special permit season in these two GMUs.
- Under **Early Archery, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, Sept. 1-25 delete “through 251” and replace with “250”. This change corrects a redundancy with GMU 251 appearing in two places. GMU 251 should only be in the Sept. 1-20 time frame to accommodate the rifle rut hunts for elk in the same GMU.
- Under **early Archery, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, delete GMU 329 from Sept. 1-20, 3 pt. min. This historically has been a limited entry special permit hunt and corrects a clerical error.
- Under **Late Archery, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, Nov. 25-Dec. 8, 3 pt. min. or antlerless, reinstate GMU 178. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Late Archery, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, Nov. 21-30, 3 pt. min., add GMU 250. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Early Archery White-tailed Deer**, move GMUs 166 and 169 from Sept. 1-25 to Sept. 1-20, white-tailed 3 pt. min or antlerless. This change avoids overlap with elk modern firearm permits.
- Under **Late Archery, Eastern Washington White-tailed Deer, GMU 101, Any white-tailed deer**, restore the original dates to Nov. 10-Dec. 15. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Late Archery, Eastern Washington White-tailed Deer**, Sept. 1-25, move GMU 127 from “Any white-tailed deer” to “3 pt. min or antlerless white-tailed deer.” This was a floor change made at the March Commission meeting that corrects a clerical error.
- Under **Late Archery, Eastern Washington White-tailed Deer**, Nov. 25-Dec. 8, 3 pt. min. or antlerless, reinstate GMU 178. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.

- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Eastern Washington Mule Deer**, change the date for GMU 130, antlerless, from Nov. 20-30 to Nov. 25-Dec. 1. This change makes the mule deer and white-tailed deer seasons concurrent.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Deer – In support of these proposals, especially the following items: Opening of the general season on October 17th Opening 101 to the late whitetail season with modern firearm</p>	<p>Thank you for the support.</p>
<p>Early Archery deer General Season: Lists GMU 560 as Sept. 1 – 25th <u>and</u> Sept. 1 – 20th. Which is correct?</p>	<p>Sept. 1-20 is correct.</p>
<p>Late Archery deer General Season: GMU 460, 506, 530, etc. reads (buck only). It should read <u>Any buck</u>.</p>	<p>Thank for the comment. We have corrected the error.</p>
<p>I AGREE completely with the proposed new seasons Deer and Elk seasons.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I would like to see a change in the 3 point or better restriction on mule deer. I don't believe the rule achieves the goal it was intended to. I have found more than one dead 2 point in the field when hunting, and I believe that what actually happens is that frustrated hunters take a shot at any animal that they see antlers on, and then they run up and check to count points. When the animal does not have a third point, the hunter runs away and leaves the animal. What I think would be a much better alternative, if they goal is to achieve a 'quality' hunt is that for two years the restriction should be spike only. Then on the third year allow any buck. This way a spike that survives his first hunting season will go on to have more points, and be fully developed when any buck is permissible. The more ambitious and proficient hunters will hold out for the "monster buck", which will by then be legal, and the less proficient hunters will be able to harvest their spikes and 2 points, and not waste them.</p>	<p>This was an issue that we brought before the public and our own staff. The public was mildly in support of a change but our staffs were insistent on more outreach with landowners before pursuing this. The three point regulation has improved the number of bucks surviving the hunting season. Although some people would like to reduce the harvest of older bucks as well.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>CHANGES TO ARCHERY DEER SEASONS. Unless otherwise noted, the following Agency Response applies to all comments related to the proposed changes to the archery season.</p>	
<p>As an avid and passionate outdoor sportsman, I am very concerned about the 2009-2011 proposed rule changes regarding archery hunting in Washington State. While I agree with many of the proposed minor adjustments to increase opportunity for muzzleloaders and special permits for modern firearm, The proposed rule changes for archery represent such a dramatic and wide scale reduction in hunting opportunities and quality hunting experiences for archers, I see very little substantiating rational, and no statistical reasoning for such an extreme departure from the current (nearly balanced) harvest statistics. The elimination of late archery mule deer opportunities in North Central Washington will negatively affect the local communities and greatly increase hunter overcrowding into other areas. Also, if there is a biological reason for the change, than it must also be closed to modern firearm and muzzleloaders (rather than lengthening and moving their respective seasons closer to the rut in those same areas as proposed)</p>	<p>The general season deer hunting success rates in District 7 have been highest for archers in recent years. In 2007, 15.4% of archers were successful compared to 14.3% for modern firearm and 7.25% for muzzleloader hunters.</p> <p>The changes to archery seasons in the recommendations are driven by three primary management objectives. The first was to provide late season opportunity by special permit to all three user groups in as much of Chelan and Okanogan counties as possible. In order to do that, five GMUs with late archery general seasons were converted to special permit seasons and one GMU that had an disproportionate number of late season permits was made available to all three user groups which reduced the number of archery special permits. The proposal also provides 5 new GMUs as late archery special permit opportunity that were not open to any late archery season until now.</p> <p>The second aspect of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>The third aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>I fully support the proposed changes to the 2009 hunting season. I am a resident of Chelan County and live in some of the best Mule Deer country in the state. I have seen firsthand the decline in the number of quality bucks in the Entiat unit. I spend a lot of time viewing the deer on their winter range and have hunted them during the special permit seasons. I feel the State has done a disservice to the herd by allowing too many archery hunters a chance to pursue these animals during the peak rut season. When the State first opened the Entiat unit to archery, approximately six or seven years ago, it started the decline of the mature bucks. The archery hunters were then forced to apply for a special permit, but I feel too many permits were still issued. The Entiat unit is vast and open with easy access. I agree with the State that the permits need to be decreased and the season offered later, after the rut.</p>	
<p>Looks like to me the archery are taking all the hard hits on the recommendations. Just because we are out seeing the game doesn't mean are getting shoots off.</p>	

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Why do we keep getting more and more complicated on the hunting seasons? This unit is open and that one is not. As a big game Archer it is frustrating that there are many unites in the North Eastern part of the State that are not open to late season for Deer or Elk. If you look at these areas the archery success rate is very low and to severely limit the time one can spend in the field. If you look at most Western States Archery is open for the month of September for Elk and Deer and yet the state of Washington limits' the dates and also as a result puts more people in the field at the same time. The average hunter only has so many days that they can get out and by shortening the days available will put more people in the woods at any one time. As for a rifle hunters complaining that they do not get to hunt the Rut and that is unfair is very poor reasoning and for Washington to give in would be wrong.</p>	<p>The rationale for many of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>Another aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>After reviewing the proposed hunting changes, I am amazed to see the direction that we are heading. How can you take opportunities, and hunting days, away from archers and give them to modern weapon hunters, aka muzzleloaders and rifle hunters. You should be going the exact opposite way. Give opportunities to the people that use more primitive weapons, like bows. Limit muzzleloaders to traditional weapons for their general seasons. The inline weapons can still be used during modern firearm seasons, if they so choose. Also, you have taken opportunities away in the Peola/Lick Creek areas for archers. This is wrong. The herds are healthy, and archers do not account for a large harvest.</p>	
<p>Do not shorten the archery season in Stevens County. If you give muzzleloaders that week of the 19th of November it will drastically affect bowhunters success. Less deer will be breed as well. If you must give them a week at the end of the season when the rut is over.</p>	
<p>I noticed on the proposed changes for archery hunters as far as allowing more hunting days for the muzzle loader and cutting into the Archery days. Why don't you add onto the other end of the season for the Muzzleloaders and shift all seasons a little later as we archery hunters have to deal with a lot of days in the 80's and 90's as is. If we harvest an animal, we have a good chance of it souring before retrieval can be accomplished.</p>	
<p>First of all the only winners in the proposed changes are the rifle hunters. This pretty much confirms that money gets the prize since they are the majority of the hunters. This same proposal goes for rifle deer hunts in Northeast Washington for special rifle deer hunts during the previous archery season. These dates are the peak of the rut for both species.</p>	

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>If anything, archery hunting opportunities should be expanded in Eastern Washington. I am constantly hearing people complain about high whitetail deer numbers (especially doe populations) in Eastern Washington, especially near the urban areas surrounding Spokane County. Frankly, there is no better or cost effective method for controlling urban deer populations than allowing increased archery opportunities within Eastern Washington. As a result, I find it ludicrous that the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife would decide that it's a "good idea" to shorten both the early and late archery whitetail deer seasons in Eastern Washington. Like clockwork, whitetail bucks in Eastern Washington usually exhibit peak rutting activity between November 10th – November 24th. By eliminating the first 5 days of late archery whitetail deer season in Eastern Washington, the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife is essentially removing the peak rutting period from the late archery whitetail deer season.</p>	<p>The rationale for many of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>Another aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>Hello, in regards to your 2009-2011 hunting season proposals, I have few concerns. My first concern is with the cut back in nearly all Western Washington black-tail opportunities for both archery and special permits. It concerns me greatly that in an age of continued increase in modern firearm restricted areas that archery opportunities are also being cut back.</p>	
<p>I am a concerned license holder in Washington. Rifle Deer: Moving the season back in October is a risky move. The deer are starting to migrate, and they are starting to rut. If a snowstorm comes early, you have the possibility of killing more deer than you had planned for. Why do the late permit mule deer hunters need 24 days to hunt, when 10 days would be plenty. I would be happy to hunt any 10 days in November with a rifle. I would have my opportunity, and the deer would have a better chance at survival. ARCHERY DEER; Actually, I'm glad you are going to permit only for late archery mule deer tags. There were too many people out there, and it lessened the hunting experience. But there needs to be more tags given out. You say archery hunters are killing too many deer, but if you take out the does, archers are going to have a success rate of under 10%, so you can give more tags.</p>	<p>The general season deer hunting success rates in District 7 have been highest for archers in recent years. In 2007, 15.4% of archers were successful compared to 14.3% for modern firearm and 7.25% for muzzleloader hunters.</p> <p>The changes to archery seasons in the recommendations are driven by three primary management objectives. The first was to provide late season opportunity by special permit to all three user groups in as much of Chelan and Okanogan counties as possible. In order to do that, five GMUs with late archery general seasons were converted to special permit seasons and one GMU that had an disproportionate number of late season permits was made available to all three user groups which reduced the number of archery special permits. The proposal also provides 5 new GMUs as late archery special permit opportunity that were not open to any late archery season until now.</p> <p>The second aspect of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>The third aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I can understand leaning out the permits for the late archery in the Entiat and I don't think it should be any buck. I think that should be treated as a trophy tag at three point or better. I don't like the number of tags still being 50 or so for rifle and only 17 for archery? How can you justify the number of rifle tags not decreasing if you are taking away the archery tags? If this was truly a matter of declining numbers the amount of rifle tags has to decrease! The late archery tag in the Swakane is a mistake too. I hope if this is the final decision it is only for one year at most, otherwise you have just made the state a rifle tag fiasco. Every archery hunter I know will more than likely become a rifle hunter this year. I hope you have enough people to patrol that increase in hunters!</p>	<p>The general season deer hunting success rates in District 7 have been highest for archers in recent years. In 2007, 15.4% of archers were successful compared to 14.3% for modern firearm and 7.25% for muzzleloader hunters.</p> <p>The changes to archery seasons in the recommendations are driven by three primary management objectives. The first was to provide late season opportunity by special permit to all three user groups in as much of Chelan and Okanogan counties as possible. In order to do that, five GMUs with late archery general seasons were converted to special permit seasons and one GMU that had an disproportionate number of late season permits was made available to all three user groups which reduced the number of archery special permits. The proposal also provides 5 new GMUs as late archery special permit opportunity that were not open to any late archery season until now.</p>
<p>I have been an avid hunter for most of my life and have enjoyed some success as such. I have been Bow hunting for over half of that time, and the reason I chose to do so was because it was more challenging and less crowded. Your proposal to take away 10 days of our season is ob surd, how can you justify taking our season away when Modern season hunters harvest 80% of the animals? The harvesting that bow hunters account for is roughly 10% of the statewide harvest. You and I both know that the Modern season hunters enjoy the best hunting time as they are hunting when the Bucks are in the most active period of the year. I agree the Muzzle Loaders get slighted on their seasons, but why take away from the Bow hunters who already play second fiddle to the Modern hunters already. I can tell you this, it appears any more that the WA F&G is out to make great opportunities for the wealthy non residents, while I and other residents are left to get lousy seasons already, shortened or taken away. I am very disappointed at this recommendation, although the Modern hunters are probably pleased as punch. In closing, if you don't want people to hunt with a bow, why not just say so, instead of eroding our already lousy season.</p>	<p>The second aspect of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>The third aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>I have reviewed your proposed changes and have several misgivings, however the proposed "Any Buck" hunts (Modern Firearm) in November in the Sinlahekin, Pogue and Wannacut Units that I am familiar with because I live in Okanogan County on the North end of the Wannacut Unit along the Similameen River, would be a disaster if that many permits are issued. I agree that the archery hunt for Mule Deer Bucks in those units needed to be scaled back a little bit when the actual rut is on, but don't wipe out the mature bucks in the local herds by allowing so many rifle permits. Many years, last year as an example, the migrants don't show up until the 2nd week of December.</p> <p>The areas around Fish Lake in the Pogue Unit, the Toats Coulee, mainly Quartz, Rattlesnake and Juniper Mtns in the Sinlahekin Unit and the lands north of the Loomis Oroville Road in the Wannacut Unit will see an unnecessary slaughter of what few local bucks are left. Outfitters have leased up so much private land including access to public land in the north portion of this county that people that can't afford the big prices all concentrate on these public land areas. In Unit 209 (Wannacut) vast amounts of public land are available to rich clients only because of these leases. The Sinlahekin and Pogue Units aren't getting any better.</p>	<p>The general season deer hunting success rates in District 7 have been highest for archers in recent years. In 2007, 15.4% of archers were successful compared to 14.3% for modern firearm and 7.25% for muzzleloader hunters.</p> <p>The changes to archery seasons in the recommendations are driven by three primary management objectives. The first was to provide late season opportunity by special permit to all three user groups in as much of Chelan and Okanogan counties as possible. In order to do that, five GMUs with late archery general seasons were converted to special permit seasons and one GMU that had an disproportionate number of late season permits was made available to all three user groups which reduced the number of archery special permits. The proposal also provides 5 new GMUs as late archery special permit opportunity that were not open to any late archery season until now.</p> <p>The second aspect of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>The third aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I have spent some time going through the recommended changes and thought things looked pretty good. The only thing that seems very drastic is the late Mule deer hunts for archery. I have always agreed that there were too many late Entiat archery tags, but cutting from 240 to 17 is enough to have archers give up. In my opinion, 50 tags for the B and C hunts was a better number and in a good year, maybe 40 or 50 bucks would be taken. This gives the archers a reason to put in for the draw. With over 1000 applying, it is nice to have a chance. I can't see the science behind the shutting down of the Swakane completely. I realize having it open was entirely too much pressure on those deer, but 15 permits is also a shot in the face to most archers. Most hunters that draw those tags will not be successful where as the rifle hunters in both Entiat and Swakane will kill nearly 100%. Thank you for listening and working to keep our deer herds in good shape.</p>	<p>from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>I have thought this through for many days before responding. I believe I can now do this without having a fit. Obviously you are getting an ear full. So, I am going to make this as straightforward as I can.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The three User groups are <u>PARTNERS</u> in Resource Allocation and should not be at each other's throat. 2. Resource Allocation has worked and is FAIR! IF figures used are TRUE numbers and the rifle group is behind in mature animal take, a small adjustment with special permits makes sense. However the wholesale reduction of Archery and the opening of General rifle tags later in the 100 units doesn't fit the TRUE harvest figures 3. The WAC as it is should stay evenly divided. The user groups get their rightful representation through Resource Allocation. If 75% of hunters are Modern Firearm, they take 75% of the animals, while the WAC recommends changes to keep success rate equal among the 3 user groups. If Modern Firearms had 75% representation on the WAC, the chance of equal success being kept in line would be in much doubt. 4. The proposal of dropping all 4 units in northern Okanogan in the late Mule deer season for archers is an absolute travesty. Here is why. Currently these units host 2000-3000 archers in the late season. Your proposal is to close them down to general and then give archers about 100 permits in their place. Closing the Swakane Unit and giving a few deer permits puts several hundred more archers on the sidelines. Much lower archery success rates and many businesses in Loomis, Tonasket, Oroville and Conconully will lose thousands and thousands of hunter dollars that are being spent there now. If passed as it stands now, in 3 years the figures will show that Archery is way behind Modern and Muzzy and another BIG change will be needed to correct it. Imagine taking away huge areas and shortening Modern season to make up for the shortfall. Then all the Modern hunters will be up in arms and hammering on you about the proposals. <p>No need to 'rock the boat' wildly. Let's just lean a little. Make the wise, small changes needed to balance the groups according to the CORRECT numbers.</p>	<p>The general season deer hunting success rates in District 7 have been highest for archers in recent years. In 2007, 15.4% of archers were successful compared to 14.3% for modern firearm and 7.25% for muzzleloader hunters.</p> <p>The changes to archery seasons in the recommendations are driven by three primary management objectives. The first was to provide late season opportunity by special permit to all three user groups in as much of Chelan and Okanogan counties as possible. In order to do that, five GMUs with late archery general seasons were converted to special permit seasons and one GMU that had an disproportionate number of late season permits was made available to all three user groups which reduced the number of archery special permits. The proposal also provides 5 new GMUs as late archery special permit opportunity that were not open to any late archery season until now.</p> <p>The second aspect of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>The third aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>Please leave the archery deer season in unit 154 as it was. As a senior hunter it provides me an area of easy access and sometimes success.</p>	

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Thank you for making the proposed changes available for comment. I generally support your recommendations. Although I do not support shortening the deer archery season in September to accommodate the deer muzzleloader season. It would be more equitable just to shorten the antlerless tags for white-tailed deer in NE Washington muzzleloader season. I do support using second antlerless permits.</p>	
<p>With regard to the upcoming changes to the seasons and permits I recommend that the WDFG concentrate more on quality of hunting experience with regard to "trophy" potential. While we do not have the deer populations of Colorado, I recommend that we use their management practices as a guide to achieving more "quality" animals. They set the bar for all you game managers in my opinion! While I'm not an archery hunter I have some "qualms" with the number of archery tags that have been reduced in the mule deer areas of our state. I would rather hunt every few years in a quality area where someone can have a "reasonable" chance at taking a nice 4 pt. buck than hunt every year for "dink" buck with way too many people in the field. Since I mostly mule deer hunt that is what I'm most interested in and all I can say is that your changes are going to result in a slaughter of our herd's further reducing quality and experience. It may be great for 1-2 yrs, but after that I see a big reduction in the older age class bucks.</p>	<p>The general season deer hunting success rates in District 7 have been highest for archers in recent years. In 2007, 15.4% of archers were successful compared to 14.3% for modern firearm and 7.25% for muzzleloader hunters.</p> <p>The changes to archery seasons in the recommendations are driven by three primary management objectives. The first was to provide late season opportunity by special permit to all three user groups in as much of Chelan and Okanogan counties as possible. In order to do that, five GMUs with late archery general seasons were converted to special permit seasons and one GMU that had an disproportionate number of late season permits was made available to all three user groups which reduced the number of archery special permits. The proposal also provides 5 new GMUs as late archery special permit opportunity that were not open to any late archery season until now.</p> <p>The second aspect of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>The third aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>There should be the same opportunities for archery hunters as there are for rifle hunters in the Blue Mountains. There should be a few mule deer doe permits for unit 117, for archery and other. Archers should be able to carry a side are for defense.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. We do try to balance opportunities for all three users; however, not in every GMU.</p>
<p>I am writing in regards to the proposed hunting seasons beginning in 2009. I do have a few areas of concern, or opposition. These areas are as follows: There is no archery deer season in GMU 178 (Peola). It should be noted that there are general modern firearm and muzzleloader seasons in this unit, as well as modern firearm doe permits. I suggest allowing early season archery deer hunts in this unit. There is no archery deer season late in GMU 175 (Lick Creek) I love hunting this unit late, although I have been somewhat unsuccessful, the opportunity and experience is always welcome.</p>	
<p>The archery hunters take some major hits in opportunity with severely limited replacement opportunities. The muzzleloader user group fared quite well in this proposal. Essentially shutting down the Entiat, Swakane, Manson, and Pogue units to general late archery was completely unfair. The rifle and muzzleloader hunters were allowed more numbers in these units. The Alta unit cannot sustain the number of late season tags recommended Unit 101 with unlimited rut hunts will be a slaughter that cannot be sustained</p>	<p>We have proposed to make the GMU 101 opportunity a special permit opportunity rather than a general season. The other answers to your concerns are provided above.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Just wanted to applaud the proposal to provide limited late season archery hunt to GMU 250 (Swakane) and to greatly reduce the archery hunt in GMU 247 (Entiat). Both units were receiving so much pressure from hunters that the quality of the hunt was not what it will now be. Archery hunting is a solitary sport; hunter vs. game. It did not work well having a crowd of other hunters in the area. More importantly, the deer were being disturbed at a time when they should be breeding and preparing for winter. I am somewhat concerned about the proposal to move the General Season (modern firearms) toward the end of October. Having the season end on October 25th pretty well assures that the high mountain migratory bucks will be showing up in areas with road access. If we get an early snow in the mountains, harvest rates on those big bucks could be way above the harvest goal.</p>	<p>The general season deer hunting success rates in District 7 have been highest for archers in recent years. In 2007, 15.4% of archers were successful compared to 14.3% for modern firearm and 7.25% for muzzleloader hunters.</p> <p>The changes to archery seasons in the recommendations are driven by three primary management objectives. The first was to provide late season opportunity by special permit to all three user groups in as much of Chelan and Okanogan counties as possible. In order to do that, five GMUs with late archery general seasons were converted to special permit seasons and one GMU that had an disproportionate number of late season permits was made available to all three user groups which reduced the number of archery special permits. The proposal also provides 5 new GMUs as late archery special permit opportunity that were not open to any late archery season until now.</p>
<p>Then to take all those late season Eniat tags away and the Swakane I can't believe it. How to solve the problem I don't know but for starters how about making archers choose trad. or modern and starting trad. deer say Aug. 15 this would have no impact on the deer herd then maybe 1 additional week in Jan for elk. so the trad. tag holders would hunt during general archery + the additional 2 weeks in Aug. and the one week in Jan for let's say most west side units and a couple of low impact areas east This would do a few things some folks would switch to trad. bows for more time in the field which would lower success rates for archery overall Also many archers are two bow hunters using maybe a recurve for elk and a compound for mule deer most of these fellas would by a trad. tag as well I think it would work well it not like a different season for a different weapon just a extension of a season that already exist to reward those that put the hunt before the kill</p>	<p>The second aspect of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>The third aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>I was disturbed to see a proposed reduction in the late archery season for mule deer and elk in many eastern Washington units. It looks like the Sinlehekin and surrounding units are possibly going to have their late bow season completely eliminated. I hunt primarily in the Nile unit 352, where we are potentially losing 5 days next year, including one weekend.</p> <p>With the closure of the Sinlehekin areas, those hunters are going to migrate somewhere and my fear is that we will have horrendous hunter concentrations in a shorter season in unit 352. I don't understand what is causing these reductions in opportunities for bowhunting.</p> <p>With the information that I have so far, it is impossible for me to support the changes. In fact, I strongly disagree that any change to the season structure was necessary at all.</p>	

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>In review of the proposed hunting season recommendations for 2009-2011, and I have a concern about the number of hunting users for the GMU's that encompass the states finest mule deer herd; GMU 247, 245 & 250. If I calculated correctly there are one hundred and twenty days of hunting in these GMU's. This does not take in the harassing effect buy antler hunters in late winter. My concern is, can this herd stand this much pressure? When do we reach the point of possibly stressing out this fine mule deer population? I would prefer to see this herd managed for quality rather than quantity for all user groups. I would also like to see a restriction on antler gathering similar to the Oak Creek Wildlife area.</p>	<p>The general season deer hunting success rates in District 7 have been highest for archers in recent years. In 2007, 15.4% of archers were successful compared to 14.3% for modern firearm and 7.25% for muzzleloader hunters.</p> <p>The changes to archery seasons in the recommendations are driven by three primary management objectives. The first was to provide late season opportunity by special permit to all three user groups in as much of Chelan and Okanogan counties as possible. In order to do that, five GMUs with late archery general seasons were converted to special permit seasons and one GMU that had an disproportionate number of late season permits was made available to all three user groups which reduced the number of archery special permits. The proposal also provides 5 new GMUs as late archery special permit opportunity that were not open to any late archery season until now.</p>
<p>I've never felt the need to write you on setting seasons always thought they made a pretty fair judgment, since we started 3 year plans (resource allocation).I see very little in proposals that address our resources, mostly what I see and read here is to increase opportunity for some user group, when will the wdfw start managing game and stop managing people! If the resource can't handle pressure or numbers are down, cut it, don't just reshuffle and increase pressure (SWAKANE 250)! Totally disagree with these proposals; please do not pass these for the sake of our resources.</p>	<p>The second aspect of the changes involves providing more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>The third aspect of the changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>I would like comment on the proposed closure of the late archery season for unit 250. I am strongly against this closure and have not witnessed the reported crowding reported of in the explanatory statements.</p>	<p>From 2005 to 2007, archery hunter numbers increased in this unit from 425 up to 728 and hunter-days increased from 2,276 to 3,883.</p>
<p>GMUs 101-124, including 3 pt. for white-tailed deer, Region 1 Unless otherwise noted, the following Agency Response applies to all comments in this section</p>	
<p>Thanks for your time. Please do not change the season in unit 101 as archers we feel it is one of our last really bright trophy spots and it will never be the same with a rifle rut hunt.</p>	<p>The recommendations provide more general deer season opportunity for muzzleloaders and separating the deer muzzleloader season from the elk muzzleloader season.</p> <p>They also include changes to the archery seasons results from trying to provide more, late season opportunity for modern firearm special permits, including GMUs like 101 where modern firearm opportunity has not been offered in the late time period for a long time.</p>
<p>After reviewing the proposed changes to the 2009 deer seasons I want to voice my approval for the proposed late white-tail buck hunt proposed in GMU 101. As I understand the proposal it would be open for modern rifle hunting from November 7-19. A general late season white-tail buck hunt for modern rifles is long overdue. For many years archers and muzzleloaders have been given preference for these hunts during the rut when the opportunity to bag a mature buck is much higher than in October. I applaud the proposed change and urge the Commission to adopt the proposal. Thank you for listening to our concerns and suggestions for change.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment, but we are no longer proposing a late general season for modern firearm but rather some special permits.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I have perused the proposed hunting seasons for deer and elk. I urge the Wildlife Commission to reject these proposals and provide a mule deer general buck season lasting no fewer than 15 days in Okanogan, Ferry, Chelan and Kittitas counties, and abolish the 3-point antler restriction in all but a few units. I encourage the Wildlife Commission to reject proposed whitetail deer hunting dates and instead set a general whitetail buck season in Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille and Spokane counties to run from Oct. 17 through Nov. 22, all dates included.</p> <p>The restriction on harvesting branch-antler bulls must be abolished except in select units. I also recommend that the Wildlife Commission abolish immediately "Resource Allocation" and in its place establish a system under which any hunter who does not fill his/her tag during a general season can replace that tag with either a muzzleloader or archery tag, or both, upon presentation of the unused tag to a license vendor. For an additional fee of \$10, they can obtain a muzzleloader or archery tag to extend their time afield and opportunity to actually harvest an animal, PROVIDED that no hunter may harvest more than (1) one deer or (1) one elk during a hunting season/calendar year.</p>	<p>Thanks for your comments. The long seasons you suggest would likely result in excessive harvest. The other suggestions and/or similar ideas have been discussed, but we aren't ready to pursue them until hunter numbers decline further.</p>
<p>I understand the decrease of the number of Anterless deer permits because of last year's winter kill but, you do not have to decrease the number of days seniors, youths, and disabled hunters would have to hunt. We need to be especially careful limiting the youth hunters to any more restrictions. In fact, WDFW should be looking at any possible way to increase the youth hunting experience. Extending seasons, adding permits, adding damage hunts etc. They are the future of hunting.</p>	<p>We agree that antlerless opportunities for young hunters are very important. We are only recommending reducing the timeframe. The early season antlerless opportunity will be retained.</p>
<p>There are just too many people in Washington that hunt, to support a general season in all GMU's. I hunted in Units 121-111 with a disabled hunter this last year (2008) and the year before (2007) for White-Tail Deer. My proposal would be to go to a four point minimum on bucks. If you feel there are too many Doe's than increase the doe tags to meet objectives. We need to stop killing all the one and a half, and two and half year old Buck's. Of the five farmers that we had had permission from to hunt in 2007 only one would allow us to hunt in 2008. The reason for not allowing us to hunt from the other four farmers was that the winter of 2007 had killed fifty percent Going to a two deer tag limit in that area for the next three years will destroy that herd. I strongly urge you not to do this to our game in Northeast Washington.</p>	<p>The total antlerless opportunities for northeast Washington have been dramatically reduced. The concept of the 2nd antlerless tag received strong support, and we are recommending a conservative number of those permits. The idea of a 4 point restriction was not well supported, and the biologists don't believe it is necessary.</p>
<p>OUR Deer herd is having a very hard winter I am a logger I'm out there every day and I see them struggling this toughing and freezing make a very hard crust on top so getting to food is nearly imposable and it make it very easy for all predators to kill them if you think last year's winter kill of 60% was bad this one will be much worse I am a avid hunter and I love it but we need to close the season or make some drastic changes for a couple of years> I also herd you were thinking of opening up GMU#101 for late gun hunt please tell me this is some kind of a sick joke and not a way to just build \$ it needs to be about the deer please make their best interest your # 1 concern THEY need our help and you can make a difference and only you can let's do what is rite please for our deer.</p>	<p>The Department is proposing a variety of reductions in antlerless opportunity to respond to your concerns. Regarding the archery season proposed changes, see the previous answer.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>My concern is why are we limiting the number of Archery days in the late season in Unit 124 when there isn't even a muzzleloader season that corresponds? We need those days (Nov. 20th – 25th) at the end of the rut to be able to hunt trophy/older deer that typically are not out during daylight past those dates. Why is our only chance at a true trophy being taken away from us??? Please do not take away the most important days of our season.</p>	<p>The Department is proposing a variety of reductions in antlerless opportunity to respond to your concerns. Regarding the archery season proposed changes, see the previous answer.</p>
<p>First off, the white-tailed deer season in GMU 101. I am an avid archery hunter and this is one of the only units that was open in the late season during the rut, for pretty much archery only opportunities as it was currently opening on November 10th. One of the benefits of this, it limited rifle hunters from slaying the herds, and allowed us archery hunters a better opportunity at taking a nice buck as they weren't spooked and scattered across the country and forced on to private grounds! It was also a chance to get out in the late season 10 days earlier than surrounding units. For the public land archery hunter, if the rifle hunters get in there and hunt until the 19th, there will be a very limited opportunity for archery hunters to harvest animals as the rifle hunters will have taken a good portion of them and spooked the rest... From what I, and several others have found, the peak of the rut is around the 20th of November, therefore giving rifle hunters the opportunity to hunt "over the counter" for whitetails during the pre rut and rut, and a far better opportunity at taking a respectable animal. I am not saying I want to be the only one with the opportunity at a respectable animal, but I feel us archery hunters are already at a disadvantage as we are limited to how far we can shoot, and effectively kill etc. Furthermore, representing several archery companies myself, they depend on the photographs and materials presented by my success. So, being able to have an extra 10 days, i.e. opening November 10th, allows us more time to hunt and an ability to hunt animals that are not spooked to death by gun hunters. I can see the next state record buck coming from GMU 101 next year if rifle season is open until the 19th. After that, GMU 101 will be worthless and the gene pool will be shot therefore creating yet another poor animal quality unit in our state!</p>	<p>We have modified our recommendation to a permit season rather than a general season for modern firearm hunters. In 2009, we are recommending 50 permits for 3 point or better bucks. The archery season in the other northeast Washington GMUs comes after the modern firearm season and archers do fairly well.</p>
<p>Timing of Seasons</p>	
<p>As a new bow hunter and one that has been invited to hunt with a longtime hunter in GMU388 Grayback, I would like to suggest that hunting antlerless mule deer be allowed in a shorter time period. One suggestion would be to open the season from 12/1 to 12/8 rather than for a longer period as planned of 11/25 to 12/8. Hearing that there are very few three point bucks in this area at that time, it would allow hunters to still have a chance to hunt for antlerless in the area by reducing the allowable time by half.</p>	<p>We agree with you; however the Department has proposed a more aggressive approach and is only proposing to allow 3 pt. min. buck hunting in the late season.</p>
<p>I hunt modern firearm deer in the 101 unit. It was disappointing last year to go up a week early to set up camp and see all the muzzleloaders running around in the woods which had just opened. Even worse was to find out that their season went right up to Friday the day before our season opened. I just think it there should be some space between seasons, at least a week if not more. I believe and so do a lot of people this should apply to all big game hunting seasons.</p>	<p>It would be nice to provide that "space" between seasons, however all user groups want more and more time and it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide any more time buffers between seasons.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I am very disappointed to see the muzzleloading season get moved to these early dates in September, this is such an early date and butts right up to the Archery dates. There will be no rest in between for the wildlife to settle down. I realize that the Archers don't disturb the deer as much as modern firearm hunters do but it is not like they go unnoticed either. I also think that the landowners will have no rest from the continual influx of hunters, and it may cause some landowners to decline hunter requests for permission to hunt</p>	
<p>I would encourage a longer modern firearm Deer season for Youth Hunters in Eastern Washington. Specifically around GMU 142. Or, give youth hunters in the area an extra antlerless season later on in November similar to Spokane County and North. Give them time to actually go out and hunt, rather than having to do it in such a hurry.</p>	<p>We have provided longer time periods in the past but parents have complained that youth can only hunt on the weekends and we need to reduce antlerless harvest for a while.</p>
<p>Looking at the changes in deer hunting, I see that you have removed or severely reduced the number of special tags, the number of hunting days. I can't believe you are doing this based on hunter comments, instead it looks like you are well on your way to eliminating hunting in Washington. First you mismanage the herds, then you restrict hunting, and reduce opportunities wherever possible. I have decided to spend my hunting dollars in Oregon, and, I hope you cause enough hunters to quit hunting in this state, as this will put your jobs, and funds to zero. Extremely poor management!! I hope you suffer, lose your jobs, and move to new York city where your kind should be!</p>	<p>Special permit numbers are adjusted in response to deer population numbers</p>
<p>I would like to express my strong opposition to the removal of the "Over 65 and Youth" hunt for white-tailed deer in unit 181. I am very familiar with unit 181 and have a substantial landholding there. I KNOW the white-tailed population to be very strong. Please revise your recommendation to continue to allow this unique and valuable hunt opportunity for our elderly and youth hunters in this unit. Thanks for your consideration.</p>	<p>Most of the WT antlerless harvest occurs during this season. Declining white-tailed deer populations and EHD die-offs observed by our District Biologist justify closing some units and hunts to antlerless take, and reducing season length in other units.</p>
<p>I am liking the new outlook, however I would like to see Dayton Unit 162 An Early Muzzle Loader season. Also Washington state should let us hunt all three seasons or till we tag out.</p>	<p>An early general season for 162 was considered but a new permit hunt was proposed instead. Allowing hunters to participate in all three seasons would result in overcrowding especially during the modern firearm season. That is why the restriction was put in place.</p>
<p>If the state feels that the early season must be shortened, then the attempt should be made to open the season later. This would allow there to be less interface of the non-hunting public (often out camping on labor day) and the actual hunters. It just seems much safer. Also a major incentive to hunting archery the possibility of harvesting a female deer (mainly mule deer), with this incentive gone many hunters may switch to modern firearm, which will then cause a major decrease in the levels of mature mule deer. It may also cause many other hunters (including myself) to hunt in other states with more hunter friendly atmospheres. This may cause a large decrease in state income from Hunting sales, which may further increase the state's economic crisis and hiring freeze.</p>	<p>The proposal to shorten the early archery deer season is to accommodate the longer early season being provided to muzzleloaders which would open on the last Saturday of September and runs for 9 days. This still gives early archery deer hunters 25 days to hunt in 2009, counting any additional days available during the late seasons.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>You are proposing to REDUCE the number of days that you can hunt white tailed deer in the late season. This is not a good idea. A lot of us like to hunt for two weeks, 14 days in this area if possible. The reason for this is because the game department is closing the season earlier, and the deer are not in the rut as good. I suggest keeping it 14 days long, and instead of closing on the 19th, please close the season on the 30th. I would propose a season of November 16th until the 30th of November. If you are wanting to lower deer harvest, please limit the amount of ANTLERLESS tags, 2nd deer, and deer for disabled, over 65's any deer, etc. Give the average Joe a chance at getting a white tailed buck! You might want to consider this year's record snow-falls in NE Washington (where I live), and look at the winter kill rates. It just might be a good idea to shut down doe tags for the year if necessary. Maybe keep bucks open, but if needed, shut down all of the other "perks" for does in this area. You cannot reproduce without does. One buck can take care of a lot of does. Please think about this.</p>	<p>This topic was discussed as we went through the process but the time period you have suggested would likely result in an overharvest of bucks.</p> <p>The Department has responded to the winter conditions seen last year and this year and you will note that the number of antlerless permits as well as antlerless general season opportunity has been greatly reduced.</p>
<p>I write to you seeking support to change the modern firearm deer-hunting season in the Methow Valley. I am certain it is common knowledge the main mule deer migration occurs during the last week of October and the first week of November prior to the rut. The migration is dependent on freezing weather and/or snow in the Saw Tooth Range and the Pasyaten Wilderness. The modern firearm deer-hunting season used to start the second Saturday of October and ran through the first week of November and spikes were legal.</p>	<p>This topic was discussed as we went through the process but the time period you have suggested would likely result in an overharvest of bucks.</p>
<p>In regards to date set for eastern WA. deer hunting especially mule deer during modern fire arms, with only one week of open season the dates for Oct. 17- 25 is too early. It would be better for the 24-31 of Oct. this is the beginning of mule deer migration. GMU 250, 251, 328,329 have not migrated from Stuart Mt. and the Icicle ridge on the earlier dates. Other than the few 50 locals There are no signs of deer activity.</p>	
<p>Klickitat county hunting is hard enough to hunt anymore because of private property and the gating of hunting land, which discriminates against disabled hunters. Now you want to eliminate white tail hunting and put 3 point minimum on black tail. I've been hunting down there for 40 years and have had to put up with shrinking hunting areas because of private ownership and greedy logging companies.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I believe that some of your ideas like limiting weapon choice to the season that is open are a good, but it should be that if you have an archery tag, or a muzzleloader tag you can also have a rifle for these animals only if you have a tag that coincides with the season.</p>	<p>In general, Washington requires that you pick one weapon type, except for multi-season permits. We have no plans to change that structure.</p>
<p>In reviewing the season dates and GMU looks like rifle guys' won out again. To make things more fair you need to open up more GMU for Muzzle and Archery. Very poor distribution in opportunities for all 3 systems. I am sorry to hear that you are proposing to do away with hunters over 65 taking any deer during the late season hunt in November.</p>	<p>Archery hunters have 90% of the GMUs open. Muzzleloaders had 58% of the GMUs open to some general season opportunity but the proposed changes should bring them up to between 80 to 90% open GMUs. Senior hunters and hunters with disabilities do harvest a fair amount of antlerless deer. The proposed closing of the late season was done to provide the biggest reduction in antlerless harvest.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>There are a few things that bother me with the new proposals, but nothing as bad as the starting of late archery on Nov 25th! It's all ready pushing the boundary of even getting to hunt all of the rut, this pretty much eliminates all of the archery hunters to hunt the post rut now, the tail end. The rifle hunters already get almost all of November, and from what I see, we are going to have to start the season 5 days later than normal for 5 guys with guns in a unit</p>	<p>The later start date was put in place to accommodate newly proposed modern firearm special permits.</p>
<p>In particular, the proposed change to the Late Archery Seasons for Whitetails in Eastern Washington. Based on your proposal, you are delaying the late season archery opener by 5 days. These 5 days you wish to remove from our season are 5 of the most productive days for an archery hunter in Eastern Washington. With limited shooting ranges, late November normally provides archery hunters with an opportunity to get close to mature bucks in the peak of the rut. Keep in mind, in areas like Spokane County archery hunters are allowed to hunt within city limits so the lowered success rate will only lead to higher suburban deer populations. On that same note, delaying the late archery season in order to give the deer a break between seasons will have no effect in these areas since "firearms" are not permitted. It is my opinion that Units 124 & 127 have very strong whitetail populations so at a minimum I recommend "not" delaying the opener for these (2) Eastern Washington units. I thank you for your time and only ask that you seriously consider my aforementioned concerns.</p>	
<p>Why take away the late season White Tail hunt for persons over 65 and the disabled? Do not believe closing the late season to this group would affect the harvest greatly, but it cuts in half the opportunity to fill their tag. Speaking for myself, I only take a doe if I haven't been able to see a buck. This rule change severely reduces my opportunity to take a buck.</p>	<p>Senior hunters and hunters with disabilities do harvest a fair amount of antlerless deer. The proposed closing of the late season was done to provide the biggest reduction in antlerless harvest.</p>
<p>I recommend that all legal bucks west-side (black-tailed) are 2-point or better, unless the hunter is 13-years and under or 67-years and older. If this plan were implemented it should increase the average size and number of mature bucks.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I look forward every year to archery hunting due to the November 19th late hunt in this GMU (437). Now you are proposing not only to cut our early hunt by 1 week which make no sense at all but also take away any opportunity for harvesting a decent buck in the late season which is the tail end of the rut after most does have already been bred! Isn't archery hunting in the brush choked western Washington terrain difficult enough without you taking away this only opportunity we have to harvest a buck? I totally disagree with both proposals especially the late hunt change. This GMU is a huge and rugged area with large inaccessible areas for bucks to hide and escape in. You are not allowing late modern firearm or muzzle loader at all in this GMU.</p>	<p>We have corrected that error. Thank you.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>The rifle rut hunts for deer may be a tad bit too long it would allow far too much time to get on some of the very few true monster deer we have in this state. Besides if you cannot find an acceptable deer in 10-15 days in those units, with a rifle, then you have no business being in the woods.</p> <p>The opening of 101 to general season rifle also is not a good alternative. If the population is too great simply increase the tag numbers to accommodate. I have witnessed firsthand the decimation that can happen when an area is open to general season and remains open. The Umtanum unit was great the first year it opened, but now it is hard to even find a legal buck. The genetics aren't the greatest out there but I have seen some big bucks prior to it opening as a general hunt.</p> <p>Last but not least. The further restriction on archery. The archers from what I can see are at their objective for harvest statistics so why the shortening of seasons.</p>	<p>If the rifle rut hunts are too long we will have to adjust the length in the future. We have adjusted the proposal for GMU 101 to special permit for modern rather than a general season as you have suggested. The answers to your archery season comments appear at the beginning of this document.</p>
<p>At the very least allow archery hunting more hunting time on the westside. I know that modern weapons are an issue due to the larger populations of people and the safety hazard they pose. The archery season doesn't pose as much of a safety issue like modern weapons and thus would be the better season of the three to give an extension and second tag opportunities. I think you could easily even add second tags in areas like 407. You probably wouldn't even put a dent in the number of black-tail harvested.</p>	<p>We are still considering additional permits in Whatcom and Skagit counties, but likely wouldn't be proposed until later based on upcoming survey work and/or research.</p>
<p>I just hope we don't have a large movement to muzzleloading and then run into an issue of overharvesting in areas which can't support such a high success ratio with that type of weapon. I don't think you have to be as concerned with archery due to the percentage of successful archers is much lower.</p>	<p>That is something we will have to monitor, but if we spread the hunters over a larger landscape it will be less likely to happen. If we do observe higher than desired harvest we will have to adjust seasons accordingly.</p>
<p>The Game Dept. is allowing way too many late hunt permits for all weapons, be it rifle, bow, or muzzleloader. You have got to stop giving out this many permits for late season hunts when the deer are the most vulnerable. I believe it was 52 for the Entiat late rifle hunt that is way too many permits. Five permits is plenty for all types of weapons. Hunting is not about Revenue it's about preserving this tradition for all to enjoy. Sure not as many hunters would buy permits, but the herds would increase as would the buck to doe ratio. I do put in for those and still would if it were only five as I and my son and friends use that hunt as a Trophy hunt, not kill a deer hunt. When the rifle hunt is done in comes hundreds of bowhunters. That is all wrong the animals are trying to breed to continue on, but the Game dept doesn't seem to see it that way. You can't harass these animals until late November or later that is just wrong.</p>	<p>These are issues that we are trying to address through the proposed changes, but we don't feel they need to be quite so drastic.</p>
<p>I like the idea of Black Powder deer season opening up Sept. 26 It would give me a chance of hunting an area other than my elk hunting area for deer. I don't like the idea of changing the dates for late Black Powder deer in unit 382 from Nov.20-30 to Dec. 1-15th. My problem with that date is it's too late and most of the area is Hunting Club anyway what little land there is to hunt the deer will already have passed through. Nov.20-30th was late enough now you have made it even later. The clubs will be happy because they are much lower and that's where deer will end up eventually. Please leave it (late season) where it is. I know you have probably had pressure from clubs to change it but you shouldn't cater to the "Fee Hunters" but listen more to the "Free Hunters".</p>	<p>These dates were moved to accommodate late special permit hunts for modern firearm.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Moving the General Modern Firearms season to late October raises a concern about extremely high harvest rates on years when we get an early migration out of the roadless back country. Our concern is mitigated somewhat by the modest reduction in late season "Special Permits" for both modern rifle and archery.</p>	<p>You may be confusing the elk opener. The "tradition" has always been the first Saturday after the 10th. This year the opener will be the 17th.</p>
<p>Traditionally, deer season opens on the second Saturday of October, but occasionally, you guys change it to the 3rd weekend; I do not understand why? I can tell you this: When you change from the "traditional" date to another date, it screws up hunters who must set their vacation the first week of January! It has happened to me when I was working! Why can't you set the proposed hunting season date earlier, say, November of 2009, for hunting season in October of 2010?</p>	<p>The "tradition" has always been the first Saturday after the 10th. This year the opener will be the 17th.</p>
<p>Grayback and the Gorge Unless otherwise noted, the following Agency Response applies to all comments related to the proposed changes to the archery season.</p>	
<p>I have been bow hunting deer in the Grayback section for years. I am very disappointed that you are considering drastically reducing the area open to bow hunters in Grayback. Area and time for bow hunters are being restricted more and more. You are encouraging the use of guns more and more by weighting the time and area this way. Considering rifles and muzzle loaders different is artificial. The modification that has been made to modern muzzle loaders make them so similar to rifles the distinction is no longer relevant.</p>	<p>The intent of the proposed changes is to improve deer survival by reducing or eliminating the seasons in the most vulnerable periods where a bulk of the harvest is taking place.</p>
<p>Previously Grayback unit 388 late archery season was three point buck and antlerless. The proposal is to make this a permit only hunt for antlerless.</p> <p>I am 71 years old, have hunted with a bow and arrow for 45 years and probably only have a few years left to hunt. My two friends and myself have hunted continuously for the last 35 plus years in the GMU 388 late archery season, to the extent that I wrote and published a book, Hunter's Camp, on our escapades and hunts in that GMU. It would be a devastating loss to us to not be able to hunt our few remaining years in this area ... almost hallowed hunting ground to us. Chances of winning a special permit for antlerless are usually 1 in 10, thus if we're lucky we might have one remaining chance to hunt there for antlerless! Yes three point buck season is still allowed in the SHORTENED late season. Please allow antlerless deer to be legal in GMU 388 for the late archery season.</p>	<p>The intent of the proposed changes is to improve deer survival by reducing or eliminating the seasons in the most vulnerable periods where a bulk of the harvest is taking place.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I respectfully request that you do something that would allow archery hunters to continue to hunt for deer in that section of the proposed unit change to unit 388 between the fisher hill road and the Klickitat River. Even if the area is only open from the start of the late archery season for 388 and closes November 30. I purchased property in the proposed area that will be changing as that area has been open to late archery deer hunting for over 40 years. To make a change at this time eliminating the late archery season is just not right. Giving the rifle hunters an additional week to hunt deer in this area will only serve to exacerbate the problem of low buck to doe ratios. Please reconsider your stance on this issue. I am not asking to allow the harvesting of does by the late archery hunt. I am only asking to be allowed to hunt bucks during the week or week and a half from the opener of the late archery season to November 30. This would still allow for late muzzleloader hunting without competition from the archers if that special permit is drawn.</p>	<p>We are still proposing a late archery buck season in this GMU.</p>
<p>Please leave the Grayback 388 area as is. It seems that Archery hunters are always the ones giving up time of hunting or area</p>	<p>The intent of the proposed changes is to improve deer survival by reducing or eliminating the seasons in the most vulnerable periods where a bulk of the harvest is taking place.</p>
<p>Miscellaneous</p>	
<p>As an avid Washington rifle hunter for Deer and Elk; and a RMEF committee chair and MDF member, I totally agree with the new proposals being made to the 2009, 2010, 2011 regulations. Thank you for moving the dates back a week.</p>	<p>Thanks for your comment.</p>
<p>I would like to see unit's open for late muzzleloader in the Stevens county area. Let the resident hunter buy an A and B tag over the counter per year for whitetail deer. This state and especially Stevens County hold enough deer to allow us to do so, in my opinion. Lower the prices of our resident license and tags. This state is one of the highest and I'm tired of being gouged. Thank you for your time.</p>	<p>Our fees are competitive with other states. We try to balance the general season over-the-counter opportunity with deer populations and hunter demand. At this time we couldn't meet your request.</p>
<p>I would like you to consider allowing the disabled hunter to harvest any deer without a special drawing, or at least be able to harvest any antlered deer. It isn't always easy to make that 3 point identity before the buck passes beyond the capability of the hunter.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment</p>
<p>Thank you for making some changes that will benefit the muzzle loader hunters and benefit the wild game. The problem I am still seeing is that you are still over loading the early season, even worse you took one of our areas away. I am local to the 530 area and I really see a overcrowding problem.</p>	<p>The proposal does not remove GMU 530 from either the deer or elk muzzleloader season.</p>
<p>You should seriously consider limiting/curtailing deer seasons and special permits in Eastern Lewis County! Having lived here my entire life (62 years) I can attest to the obvious decline in deer numbers and sightings. This past winter has been especially stressful and decimating to those that remain. If present trends continue you will find yourself without a resource to manage.</p>	<p>Our District Biologists do not agree that this drastic of an approach is necessary.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Management should use their judgment to encourage archery rather than slowly squeeze it out of existence. Archers harvest way less game for the same amount of hunting time. The amount of "hunting time" the industry gets from archery for every animal harvested is way better. All hunting forms can exist together with everyone winning. I sometimes hunt with rifles and sometimes with bows. The choice often depends on how the rules are pushing me. It is my observation that the rules are pushing people strongly toward firearms, and I don't think that is right or fair or the best way to manage the stocks.</p>	<p>Thanks for your comment.</p>
<p>Please do not schedule modern season back to back with muzzle. The modern hunters are in the woods up to a week early cutting wood and shooting up the woods making muzzle season much less enjoyable.</p>	<p>It would be nice to provide that "space" between seasons, however all user groups want more and more time and it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide any more time buffers between seasons.</p>
<p>Specifically, open a late Archery season in GMU 130 Cheney consistent with other Eastern Washington GMU's. There is an over abundance of both does and bucks in this rural urban interface area. This is evident as the volume of road kill collisions are up tremendously and over-browsing is becoming an issue.</p>	<p>Our Regional staff will consider this for the future although it is not part of the proposal at this time.</p>
<p>I REALLY don't like the way your proposed rules were listed on the e-mail/website! I am an educated man and even I had a difficult time filtering through the "legalese" in your rule-making documents to simply find the actual rule being proposed. Very disappointing! Should have been a simple bullet-point list of the actual changes versus the entire consultant-documents modeling crap.</p>	<p>Once you get used to reading Washington Administrative Code (WAC) it becomes second nature. Be patient and keep trying.</p>
<p>More open units for Muzzleloaders, More open units for Muzzleloaders. I hope that is a hint. There are too few units open for muzzleloader season as compared to general firearm.</p>	<p>We are proposing more open units for muzzleloader deer and elk.</p>
<p>Due to the last two harsh winters, I feel that the hunting seasons of white tail deer need to be severely restricted. As it is now, there is constant hunting pressure of some form on them from 1 September thru 1 December. I feel that being a Senior Citizen myself, the seasons for Youth and Sr Citizens are way too excessive and too many permits are issued for antlerless deer. All seasons need to be shortened and clarified and easily understood. There are too many special hunts and exceptions to the general deer season.</p>	<p>If you look through the proposed rules you will see that we are recommending just such restrictions.</p>
<p>The disparity between the deer and elk rifle (very short) season and the archery and Muzzle loading season needs to be corrected. Rifle tags account for nearly 80% of the tags sold but their days in the field is 12% of the days allotted where the Archery hunters have 53% and the Muzzle hunters have 34%.</p>	<p>Yes, but modern firearm always leads in total harvest and number of participants.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Now the Muzzleloaders get crap to hunt in Southeastern Washington, yea you extended the season but only give us unit 142 to hunt for antlerless deer and then make it whitetail only!! Have any of you ever been to that unit? It is all sagebrush and wide open and has more Mule deer and maybe two or three whitetail, now you do know that a muzzleloader is a primitive weapon and not capable of more than a 100 yard shot right? Man, talk about a tough hunt plus a needle in the haystack!!.</p> <p>One only needs to read the local papers and see how many deer vehicle collisions take place in a given week in units 154,162,163,149 these areas have a healthy population of deer for that many collisions to take place !. Is the game biologist in Southeastern Washington skewing the numbers on the population counts to justify not allowing muzzleloaders to hunt these units or is he just biased to the user group?</p>	<p>You are mistaken. The proposed seasons include general season opportunities for both mule deer and white-tailed deer 3 pt. min. bucks in GMUs 145, 149, 175, 178, 181, and 186. Special permits are offered in 162, 166, 169 and 172 for bucks as well. Special permits for white-tailed deer bucks are offered in 154 during muzzleloader season.</p>
<p>I'm writing this letter as a third class citizen, (yes I am a Southeast Washington muzzleloader hunter), to try and find answers to obvious inequities in the muzzle loading seasons and lack of GMUs available to muzzleloaders in Southeast Washington. All I ask is that muzzleloader hunters in Southeast Washington be allowed to hunt at least the same Game Management Units the rifle and archery hunters have. Is that too much to ask? I have tried conveying this through WDFW polls and input requests, most recently for the 2009-2011 seasons. I have just received the 2009 - 2011 hunting season recommendations. As I expected, muzzleloader hunters still are not allowed to hunt GMUs 154 and 162. Why?</p>	<p>The proposed seasons include general season opportunities for both mule deer and white-tailed deer 3 pt. min. bucks in GMUs 145, 149, 175, 178, 181, and 186. Special permits are offered in 162, 166, 169 and 172 for bucks as well. Special permits for white-tailed deer bucks are offered in 154 during muzzleloader season.</p>
<p>I understand you may be changing back the western late muzzle loader season to Nov. 25- Dec 8th. I am 100% for this change. The season has been terrible since they started closing it at the end of November. This is my one and only request.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>We would like to see the modern rifle permits in GMU 247 (Entiat) reduced. It is also disappointing that the Commission has proposed "any buck" for, Special Permit holders, rather and "any deer." We prefer what some hunters were beginning to do; "Harvest a Trophy or take home a doe."</p> <p>Thanks you for reducing the pressure that the Chelan herd has felt from constant hunting pressure during the breeding season and early part of the winter.</p>	<p>There were very few hunters taking antlerless deer under the any deer designation.</p>
<p>I would like to see more areas for muzzleloader or keep the modern and archery out of the muzzleloader areas and a little more outdoor ethics in the hunting and fishing pamphlets like leave no trace.</p>	<p>We are proposing opening more GMUs for muzzleloaders.</p>
<p>In general I believe your changes are good. I wish you would restrict the muzzle loaders to buck only or doe by permit in the late season especially in the more mountainous areas where the deer herd up when it snows early. I own property in the Mill Creek/Middle Creek area of Pend Oreille Co. between the muzzleloaders, cougars, wolves, the deer are getting hit real hard the last few years.</p>	<p>Thanks for your comment.</p>
<p>Please consider implementing a muzzleloader season in GMU 272. There currently is not a season.</p>	<p>We have already proposed that. It is in the draft rules that were provided to you.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Given the falling numbers of hunters (especially youth hunters) each year, are there considerations to allow youth to shoot either sex deer again?	There are still some opportunities for youth hunters to take either sex in both general season and special permit hunts depending on where you hunt in the state.
I live in Unit 111. Last winter's deer kill was very bad as you know. It appears this winter's kill is going to be a big one again. I would suggest that no doe permits be issued and that nobody is allowed to kill a doe, i.e., seniors, youth or special permits, archers, muzzleloaders. The surrounding units are in the same shape in my opinion and should be looked at.	Although we have cut back dramatically on the antlerless opportunity, we are still proposing some antlerless take be allowed.
I think we need more opportunities for muzzleloaders.	Okay. Check the proposed deer seasons. We have lengthened the time period and added more open GMUs.
Our overall guaranteed deer hunting opportunity is being greatly reduced by these proposals, this is unacceptable! Some GMU's will lose over 40 previously guaranteed General Seasons hunt days with these proposals. Traditional hunting areas, private land owners, leasers and local business can't just pick and move to another GMU. GMU 178 : EARLY HUNT: Return some Early GENERAL Seasons for Archery. LATE HUNT (DURING RUT): Return a short GENERAL Archery season first, then a shorter GENERAL Muzzleloader and then Modern Firearm (by permit) last. GMU 215 : LATE HUNT (DURING RUT): Return a short GENERAL Archery season first, then a shorter GENERAL Muzzleloader and then Modern Firearm (by permit) last.	WDFW does not, nor have they ever, guaranteed any specific hunting seasons. As hunter desires change we do our best to respond to those changes without over-harvesting the resource. Private landowners and the hunters they lease their lands to can still take advantage of the special permit and general season opportunities that remain in the GMUs listed.
Master hunt deer season (Dec 9 – 15, GMU 130-142) does not specify what weapon type(s) can be used and is <u>any</u> master hunter, regardless of weapon choice, able to participate if they have not filled their tag.	This hunt is listed in the Modern firearm season and therefore would require a modern firearm tag.
I would like to have a unit that is only open for traditional archery equipment. You could charge more and only allow real bows.	We think there are enough different seasons and timeframes now. Adding more user groups would only create more complexity and animosity among hunters.
Keep Sherman 101 the same. It is the only rut hunt. Don't lose archery opportunity.	We have made that change. Thank you for your comment.
In GMU 388 don't take away late season doe hunt. At the very least provide youth opportunity.	Our Biologists have determined that the restriction on antlerless harvest is necessary to maintain the deer population. Antlerless harvest is strictly regulated for deer and elk and is only allowed when the resource can support it or when we are trying to implement population control through hunter harvest.
Chelan mule deer population is fine. Don't go to a permit system. Changes are only being recommended for revenue purposes.	The changes proposed were recommended to insure the sustainability of the deer population. The Agency has changed its recommendation as a result of the public input at the March commission meeting which may impact the deer population especially the post-hunt buck population.
Leave archery status quo.	The Agency has changed its recommendation as a result of the public input at the March Commission Meeting. Although not status quo, some of the more contentious restrictions on archery hunting proposed in Regions 1 and 2 have been removed.
Don't close Swakane to archery.	The Agency never proposed closing the early archery season, which in 2009 will last 25 days and will allow both 3 pt. buck harvest as well as antlerless harvest. We have reinstated the late general season for 3 pt. min, only. Thank you for your comment.
Don't eliminate late archery in the Swakane.	The Agency has proposed reinstating the late general archery season for 3 pt. min. only for the last ten days of November in GMU 250.

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Eliminate antlerless opportunity in Swakane. This will relieve the pressure.	We have made that change in the late general archery season. Thank you for your comment.
There is no user group equity in this proposal. Displacing 700 archers is not maximizing recreational opportunity. More reasonable plan is needed.	The Agency has proposed reinstating the late general archery season for 3 pt. min. only for the last ten days of November in GMU 250.
Use the branch antlered bull formula for deer allocation.	For those special permit opportunities that are offered to all three user groups, we already use the permit allocation formula and have done so since its inception.
Wants 4 pt. antler restriction in GMUs 117 and 121 as a pilot program. Population is in decline. Older bucks needed to breed does earlier to produce larger fawns in spring. Youth, seniors, and disabled should be exempt. (petition supporting this comment: 100 signatures received).	There is no biological reason to implement a more restrictive hunting season in these GMUs; the current buck ratios are adequate for breeding. Most hunters do not support the restriction.
The GMU 101 late firearm season makes no sense. The population is in trouble.	The late firearm season was proposed to be for 50 permits. Although we do not think the deer population in GMU 101 is in trouble, we have returned the season structure to status quo.
Don't eliminate the late archery season in the Manson Unit.	As mentioned in the presentation made on Saturday, our recommendation will reinstate the late archery season in Manson.
Don't turn NE corner of the state into 3 pt. or better. GMU 117 has a good gene pool. Do 3 pt. there if need be.	There is no biological reason to implement a more restrictive hunting season in the NE Washington GMUs.
Does not support antler restriction 3 pt. or better in NE Washington. Will result in waste from people not properly identifying antler points.	The testimony is consistent with the Department's final recommendation.
Remove all general deer hunts in Kittitas County. Population is down at least 50%.	The Commission has already reduced the deer seasons accordingly through a reduction in special permits. A complete removal of general seasons is not warranted at this time.
Make GMU 329, 3pt. or better at the very least.	GMU 329 is already a special permit only GMU. Adding an antler restriction is more restrictive than it needs to be.
LT Murray still has a lot of deer. Return GMU 342 back to permit only. Too many does in the area.	This more restrictive approach was not deemed necessary by the Regional staff and not presented as a proposal for this 3-year package.
Don't let rifle hunters hunt during the rut. It will decimate the herds.	Rifle hunters as well as archery hunters have always hunted some portion of the rut either through general seasons or special permits. We monitor the seasons and the harvest to ensure sustainable population levels.
Opposes unit boundary changes to 578 and 388. Recommend creating new unit 588.	The proposal to create a new GMU was critically evaluated by the Region 5 staff. Creating a new unit will not resolve the concern regarding deer management and the need to reduce harvest.
Supports the Department's deer hunting proposal, specifically as it provides additional opportunity for muzzleloader.	The testimony is consistent with the Department's final recommendation.
Archery proposals will impact small business operators, so keep status quo archery seasons.	Several of the archery late general seasons were restored. In addition, the recommended archery changes are to accommodate added opportunity for muzzleloaders and modern firearm hunters. Therefore this should not impact small business operators.
Concerned that the Department's deer season proposals don't focus enough on conservation.	There are biological and social issues within the Department's proposals. The Department's proposals place conservation as the highest priority. Hunting seasons and harvest management are designed to ensure conservation. After considering conservation needs, social preferences are incorporated into hunting season structures.

WAC 232-28-352 2009-2011 Elk general seasons and definitions

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Under **GMUs Closed to Elk Hunting**, reinstate “and 490.” Further discussions are taking place with the land manager and an open season is being delayed until 2010.
- Under **Early Archery, Western Washington**, delete the line for Elk Area 4941. This is a damage hunt that is being moved to the late season to better address the damage problems.
- Under **Late Archery, Western Washington**, add the following line:

Elk Area 4941	Nov. 1-Jan. 20	Nov. 1-Jan. 20	Nov. 1-Jan. 20	Any elk
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This change moves the damage hunt to the late season to better address the damage problems.

- Under **Early Muzzleloader, Western Washington**, delete GMU 663 from the 3 pt. min. or antlerless section. This change corrects a redundancy. GMU 663 should only appear in the 3 pt. min. section.
- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Western Washington**, delete the line for Elk Area 4941. This is a damage hunt that is being moved to the special permit section to better address the damage problems.
- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Western Washington**, the last line covering GMUs 550, 601, 618, 658, and 667 used to run from before Thanksgiving to mid-December. This time frame should be restored to Nov. 25-Dec. 15 for 2009, Nov. 24-Dec. 15, 2010, and Nov. 23-Dec. 15, 2011. The need to make room for another season and shorten the existing season did not develop.
- Under **Early Archery General Elk Seasons, Eastern Washington**, the season dates for GMUs 328, 329, and 335 should be Sept. 8-20, 2009, Sept. 7-19, 2010, and Sept. 6-18, 2011. This change corrects an omission in the CR 102 filing.
- Under **Late Archery General Elk Seasons, Eastern Washington**, delete GMU 373 from the time period Oct. 31-Nov. 15. This change corrects a redundancy with GMU 373 being listed in two places for late archery. GMU 373 should be in the time period Nov. 25-Dec. 8.
- Under **Early Muzzleloader Eastern Washington**, move Elk Area 2051 from the “Spike Bull” line and enter on the “True Spike Bull” line. This change corrects a clerical error that filed in the CR-102.
- Under **Late Muzzleloader, Western Washington**, GMUs 574 and 578, change the end date to Nov. 30. This change corrects a typographical error that was filed with the CR-102.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE						
I am not a bit happy about the proposed hunting seasons and regulation changes for 2009-2011. You are taking away opportunities of bowhunters by shortening the regular season by one day. And shortening the late archery season by up to 5 days. Bowhunters still have by far the lowest success rates, and you are taking more opportunities away. Also by floating the season opener back one day each year, it is not giving the animals much time between labor day and archery opening. The date should remain Sept 8-21 for all years, with late season opening Nov 20 as it has for the past 6 years.	<p>Actually in recent years, archers have the highest success rate among the three user groups. In 2007 the elk harvest success rates were:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Archers</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Muzzleloaders</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Modern Firearm</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> </table>	Archers	11%	Muzzleloaders	8%	Modern Firearm	7%
Archers	11%						
Muzzleloaders	8%						
Modern Firearm	7%						
I took the time to complete the 2009-2011 questionnaires in 2008 and responded with my opinion of the current early archery seasons. I also explained in my comments why I feel that the early archery permit holder is very unlikely to harvest an elk with the chosen method used and suggested a revised early archery season than ran through the end of September or at least through the 25 th of September to allow for a better opportunity to harvest an animal during this time. I see by the revised seasons, my opinion did not matter resulting in a decreased ending date from September 21 st to September 18 th , again decreasing an elk harvest opportunity. With the steady	<p>We sincerely thank you for your participation in the surveys. Your comments are important to us. It is also important to understand that many people provide comments and it is our responsibility to balance all of them when making our recommendations.</p> <p>As you can see from the previous response, archers are quite successful at harvesting elk. In fact, archers also tend to take a greater proportion of mature bulls than the other two groups as well as have higher success rates. It is likely that the greater harvest of mature bulls is because of the timing of the early</p>						

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>increase of animals due to the season changes during the last several years, I do not understand why the early archery season continues to be modified to reduce the chances of harvest. To me, this is nothing more than more bureaucratic crap that does nothing more than decrease a hunter's willingness and right to continue hunting in this state with his/her selected weapon of choice.</p>	<p>season. In 2007 the numbers were:</p> <p>Archers made up 22% of the elk hunters and took 31% of the mature bulls harvested; Muzzleloaders made up 14% of the elk hunters and took 15% of the mature bulls; and Modern Firearm hunters made up 64% of the elk hunters and took 54% of the mature bulls. A mature bull was considered greater than five points for this comparison. It was for these reasons that we are recommending an adjustment to archery season timing and length.</p>
<p>Please explain the advantage/intent of changing the definition of spike bull elk in certain game management areas. Game management area 335 will require spike elk to not have any branches on either side that is above 4 inches from the base of the horn. It seems that this rule will complicate the identification of spike elk. How does one measure 4 inches on game at a distance? I'm sure you must have a very good reason for this change. Please inform me. It better be good or you can count me against this rule change.</p>	<p>Anytime you use antler restrictions for managing deer or elk harvest, you will have issues with identification and mistakes. Over all however, antler restrictions can be effective at helping manage bull survival while maintaining general hunting seasons. The change recommended for the Colockum is because spike survival is poor; we are not seeing much recruitment into the older bull age classes.</p> <p>The language change regarding "four inches" is because that is more definitive than "above the ear" which was the previous language.</p> <p>The Colockum yearly bulls tend to have more branching than other herds so requiring both antlers to be a spike should result in an increase of about 10% of the yearlings surviving the hunting seasons.</p>
<p>First let me say thank you for taking the time to read this. Second, I commend the commission in the proposal to allow archery hunters to be able to carry a side arm for protection. I think this is an outstanding rule.</p> <p>Most importantly, the gradual cuts of archery hunting are very concerning. In addition, I mainly hunt the Colockum for elk (archery). Again, I see NOTHING is going to be done in regards to the blatant tribal slaughter of this herd. For shame.</p>	<p>The rationale for the shift in archery elk seasons is explained above.</p> <p>We are working with the Yakama tribe on their members' tendency to harvest older bulls. But it is important to understand that state licensed hunters take over 150 bulls each year and our best guess at how many they are taking is 30 to 40.</p> <p>We plan to continue working with the tribes to improve our cooperation in the management of elk harvest.</p>
<p>I hunt the west side of the state and most of issues with elk are the ones that I am concerned with. I am not a supporter of the change in season length in modern and archery. Most of the animals taken are during modern firearm and I also understand that those that hunt with a firearm think that it is not far that archery gets a much longer season than them. The facts are that modern is much more effective and after hunting modern most of my life I think making the season longer will increase the kill on a herd that is already too low in numbers. I don't think a change in the length of the season for archery is needed but if it is shortened that is fine. I really am against a longer rifle season on the west side.</p> <p>I know one of the major concerns for the Saint Helen's elk herd has been winter kill in the Toutle river valley. The department's actions to control this has been increased cow tags in the surrounding units such as the Lewis river unit. Why would you increase the kill in units such as the Lewis when the problem is in the Loowit where the elk are over populated. After the harsh winter this last year much of the Lewis river unit experienced a large winter kill but the department did not lower the number of cow tags because of it. All I ask is that the resource be managed based on the problems at hand rather than the revenue it will bring to the department to pay the wages of its employees.</p>	<p>The rationale for the shift in archery elk seasons is explained above.</p> <p>We are gradually reducing the antlerless permit levels in areas like GMU 560 as we see a reduction in the herd. However, the success rate for antlerless permit holders last year appears to have been pretty poor due mainly to weather conditions.</p> <p>In addition, we have just started a new project to improve our population estimates for elk in the Saint Helen's elk herd. The counts next month should begin to give us a much better picture of what's going on with elk numbers and the results of our increased permit levels.</p>
<p>The new "True Spike" rule should not pertain to the archers'.</p>	<p>Having different rules for archers versus muzzleloaders and</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>The majority of spikes being taken are directly from the General Season. The rule may have the intended effect if just enforced during the general season. Finally. For GMU 328 and 329. My experience in those GMU's has always been very positive, or in other words while hunting I always see a large amount of elk. It seems that issuing special permits for cow elk would seem appropriate, because the trouble that the State is having with the declining amount of spikes that live through their first year, might actually slightly improve if a few people were giving the option to harvest a cow, instead of another spike.</p>	<p>modern firearm hunters is something that can be considered in the future to address equity among the three users. However at this point we have been consistent in our application of antler point restrictions for all users.</p> <p>The population objective for the Colockum herd has not been achieved, therefore we plan to continue protecting antlerless animals until we reach objective.</p>
<p>I have been a Bow hunter since I was thirteen years old. I hunted in Idaho till I was eighteen and joined the Air Force. I moved to Washington in 1955 and have hunted in this state ever since. I have been active in past years in Archery clubs and Washington State Bow hunters. I am now 72 and I still hunt every year although I have now limited my hunting to Elk and Turkey. I regularly study your posted game statistics on the website and I think you have done a good job. What I don't understand is why Bow hunters are restricted to one area of the state either West or East. Because the early bow Elk season starts in relatively hot weather, many of us prefer to hunt the higher elevations. Those GMUs fall mainly in the East side. Since we live on the West side and most of our East areas are snowed in and inaccessible during the Archery late season, we would like to hunt the West side. Prior to the split state ruling, we were able to hunt either side during the Archery Seasons. If an archer failed to fill his or her tag during the early season, it's been my experience that their chances won't increase much during the late season after the guns have been there. From all the statistics I have studied, It shouldn't hurt a thing to make the late season Archery Elk season open for both sides of the state. You could still specify that the Early Season must be hunted in the East or West as specified by the hunters permit, but would be accepted on both sides for the late hunt. I know making that concession would do a lot toward meeting the hunters half way.</p>	<p>As described in previous responses, archers are quite successful compared to other groups. Allowing archers to hunt on both sides of the state would only make the inequity greater.</p>
<p>One suggestion I have is to have a youth elk hunt in unit 342.</p>	<p>At this point we have limited youth hunts for elk. We have been focusing on small game and deer.</p>
<p>I applaud the modern firearm general elk season (Oct 31-Nov 8) (It's about time!).</p> <p>The "special hunt" seasons and permit quotas for elk are acceptable to me.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>I have been an avid hunter for over 30 years. Hunting is very important to me, or at least it used to be. Over the last 5 years I have watched a lot of negative things and very few positive things happen.</p> <p>Don't get me wrong, all and all I support the game department and their efforts to maintain a healthy and huntable herd. The cost of our license and tags continue to increase every year and we seem to be getting less for our money. The past 9 months or so I was excited to hear there were possible changes coming, but it turns out that they are not at all what I expected. As a matter of fact they were disappointing. As a muzzleloader elk hunter we lost three times as many permits as what we gained, our new GMU's are unwanted archery units, and our equipment regulations leave many animals fatally wounded that are never found. I am sorry for all the negativity and I know you folks are trying to do the best you can to keep all 3 user groups happy.</p>	<p>We have made many recommendations this year that benefit muzzleloader hunters. Permit levels are generally based on the health of elk populations and so they fluctuate every year.</p> <p>Also as a point of clarification, license rates have not changed since 1999.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Maybe it's time for me to give up hunting and take up golf.</p> <p>I think you are heading in the right direction make GMU 328 into a true spike unit, but my personal opinion is that you need to close this unit completely. I have been hunting this unit for 8 years now and I think it would be the proper thing to do to make the herd correct.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support for the true spike regulation. We considered more drastic measures (e.g. permit only), but wanted to try a regulation that continued a general season. If we go to permit only, those hunters who don't draw a permit will go elsewhere and cause further crowding and potentially excessive harvest.</p>
<p>We all know that the true problem with the Colockum elk herd is tribal slaughter the Coffin reserve was donated to the WDFW with the understanding that it was and would always be a safe place for elk now you are confusing non tribal hunters even more with this "true spike theory". If you are so afraid to manage the herd the right way by stepping on some tribal toes then give the reserve back to private ownership so that the people trespassing on the GAME RESERVE can be arrested and fined and the elk will once again have a true safe haven. Start messing with their right to hunt and they will do just what I have done and a lot of people that I know are doing not buying Washington JOKE tags and spending our money in other states where they actually care about hunters, the people that pay for their jobs and put management above money think about that just for a min. I know I will get absolutely zero response from this email because the WDFW has already proven many times that they turn their back on confrontation unless it makes them money.</p> <p>" Sorry about the typos but it is hard to type when you are so pissed "</p>	<p>The Federal treaties with the tribes and the rights granted by them are not subject to state regulation.</p> <p>As mentioned previously, we are working with the Yakama tribe to address the issues.</p>
<p>In respect to a spike bull horn regulations, I feel errors can be made innocently. I once saw a spike with a very, very small nubbin of a horn emerging from it's right antler, which nobody could be expected to see through a rifle scope. But that miniscule nubbin could have resulted in a ticket. I think it should be specified that a "branch" under a (some fraction of measurement) inch, doesn't land a spike bull hunter in the pokey. Or give wardens clear instructions to forgive human error. Some wardens just seem like that aren't respectful, compassionate civil servants (yes, I know there are a lot of creeps out there they have to deal with) but just out to throw the rules in your face when you are trying to be an ethical hunter. The assumption from the game department should be most people are ethical hunters, and should be forgiven for understandably small errors. It will generate more respect, admiration and support for the department if wardens are compassionate, and act as educators instead of traffic cops towards hunters. I've seen bad attitudes from both hunters and wardens. Mostly good wardens though.</p>	<p>The spike with a small horn would be protected with the current recommendation. We always council hunters to make sure of their target and when in doubt, don't shoot. The result with this recommendation is that we would have greater yearling survival and would be able to increase branch bull permit levels.</p> <p>We also recognize the concern about mistakes in antler point recognition. That is the reason for the infraction language for small mistakes.</p>
<p>If you truly want to create a good hunting experience with plenty of animals and no overcrowding of hunters, allow the elk to spread throughout the state. If you would stop trying to kill off the few elk that roam through Lake Wenatchee the Entiat and farther north, and start building herds in those areas. The hunters would spread out and the overcrowding of hunters into relatively small areas would cease. This would also allow more elk to survive the hunting season because they would not be penned up in a relatively small area with no place to go when the shooting starts.</p>	<p>Expanding elk into quality deer ranges or agricultural areas is not feasible at this point. When elk are allowed to colonize mule deer areas, mule deer populations usually decline.</p> <p>When elk colonize intensive agricultural areas, we end up paying damage claims and spending time and money addressing property damage.</p>
<p>I do not understand why WDFW is looking at changing or closing unit 506 during late Archery Elk. I have spent at least \$10,000.00 in gas alone over 10 years to learn this area. If</p>	<p>The changes proposed were intended to reduce total harvest on bulls in that GMU and focus more on antlerless.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>you are closing it during the late season then I have to go to units I don't know very well. During early season we have to deal with most of areas being closed because of fire danger. Half the time we can't even get in to the areas you want to go because Weyerhaeuser has locked the gates. I am asking that you not eliminate any days during early or late Archery season unless you are extending it. I also ask that you not close unit 506 Willapa Hills during late archery season. The recommendations should be to leave that unit open from November 20 to December 15. There is no reason to close it when you have all these permits and damage hunts from January to March.</p>	<p>Fire closures during the early hunting seasons are something that we must continue to address. In recent years, it has not been much of an issue.</p> <p>We have worked out an agreement with Weyerhaeuser to improve vehicle access to their properties with the help of many volunteers.</p> <p>The damage hunts are designed to target the elk causing problems. Providing antlerless harvest opportunities throughout a GMU only reduces the overall population and may not address the property damage.</p>
<p>As far as the "true spike" elk areas. It is just another regulation to make things even more complicated. Even during the archery season where you need to get up close to an animal it can be difficult to tell if that "extra" point isn't just velvet rubbing off. All of these new proposals make me think more and more of taking my hunting to Idaho.</p>	<p>The rationale for true spike regulations has been explained previously. Idaho has had a "true spike" regulation for all their areas under spike only restrictions.</p>
<p>I have been a Washington state hunter for many years, 25 plus, look at any other state around us, the game is more plentiful and the rules are not so messed up they don't divide the state for east or west. The elderly that have hunted and paid their dues for many years get the break on licenses if not free, not the youth who would have many years to go if managed right. Trust me from my scouting above Liberty there are plenty of elk in that unit; you need to do your surveys away from the feeding grounds. You have definitely lost the income of this hunter I will be glad to spend all of my money and hunting in another state, one that they manage to have their regulations available Jan 1 not the middle of the year, this also shows incompetence. Keep up the good work in declining the number of hunters in the field by your mismanagement. You multiply the average of \$2000 a year that I used to spend here on tags, gas, food, and lodging by the thousands that have quit hunting here because of the stupidity in charge, plus give yourselves a big bonus for doing such a good job. Soon the anti's will have won and no one will need your services.</p>	<p>The number of elk licenses sold in Washington has been increasing in recent years even though there are long-term declines in hunter participation. We currently sell over 100,000 licenses and only have 50,000 to 60,000 elk.</p> <p>We do have a limited resource and hunters have consistently said they want to retain general seasons rather than go to permit only, which Oregon is using. So, we provide fairly restrictive general seasons using antler point restrictions, season timing, and east/west splits to manage harvest rates.</p> <p>Nation wide, hunters are aging and young hunter recruitment has declined. That is why we have not asked the Legislature to provide reduced rates for senior licenses. The number of seniors (over 70 years of age) who are purchasing licenses has increased significantly over the past few years, so the impact to funding needed for wildlife conservation would be impacted with reduced rates for seniors.</p> <p>In addition, we are moving up our release of the pamphlet and permit application deadlines by nearly one month in 2009.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I THINK THAT THE FEES FOR NON-RESIDENT HUNTING OF ELK SHOULD BE GREATLY INCREASED !</p> <p>WASHINGTON STATE HAS ELK HUNTING POSSIBILITIES THAT ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN MOST OTHER STATES, AND THOSE OUT-OF-STATE HUNTERS WISHING TO TAKE PART IN THOSE OPPORTUNITIES; SHOULD HAVE TO HELP PAY FOR THE PROGRAMS THAT CARE FOR THE ELK: AND ENABLE THE FEEEDING STATIONS, AND PAY THE LANDOWNERS FOR BROWSE DAMAGE, ETC.... TO A GREATER DEGREE THAN THEY DO NOW; AND ON A PAR WITH OTHER STATES.</p> <p>I KNOW OTHER ELK HUNTERS WHO FEEL THE SAME WAY; MOSTLY ARE ALL MUZZLELOADER, ARCHERY, OR HUNT BY SPECIAL PERMIT/DISABLED HUNTER; AS IN MY CASE.</p>	<p>Washington is not very attractive to out of state hunters and generally sells less than 5000 out of state big game licenses. These licenses cost about ten times what a resident license costs, and the price is fairly consistent with other states.</p>
<p>It seems like the hunting department is doing everything it can to lessen the chances of a successful hunt or harvest. Why is hunting season right around daylight savings so half you hunting trip is screwed up. Also, specifically for elk.....If the rut is in Sept/Oct then why do DFW keep pushing back the hunting time for modern firearm. In 08 it was moved from the first week of November to the last week of October. This has a big negative impact on east side hunters. Weather conditions are more favorable later on in the year. So moving it back a week really sucked. Even above the 4000 ft range I was mid to high 50's. If they don't want us to harvest then why sell hunting licenses in the first place?</p> <p>Also for east side hunts. The Yakima area has a million cows. The cows are good eating. Why don't DFW relax the impossible spike only system once in a while and let hunters harvest cows every other year or every third year? You shouldn't have to have a special tag or a special draw to harvest a cow there indefinitely.</p>	<p>The rationale for Washington elk harvest management was explained previously.</p> <p>The reason for the season timing in eastern Washington is related to the timing of average snow events and the potential for excessive harvest during early winters. Antlerless harvest greatly influences population levels. Modern firearm general seasons for antlerless elk would result in excessive harvest of elk and significant population declines.</p>
<p>I AGREE completely with the proposed new seasons Deer and Elk seasons.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>As far as I can see you are proposing to eliminate all late bull elk archery opportunity for us folks who live in SW Washington. Why?</p>	<p>We are trying to improve bull survival in many of these units.</p>
<p>As an avid Washington rifle hunter for Deer and Elk; and a RMEF committee chair and MDF member, I totally agree with the new proposals being made to the 2009, 2010, 2011 regulations. Thank you for moving the dates back a week.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I live and hunt in GMU 658. For the past few seasons I have hunted in my area with a muzzleloader, during the muzzleloader season. My home is located in the fire arm restricted area near Grayland. I see that the proposed seasons are eliminating the muzzleloader season. I strongly request that this be reviewed and changed back to allow the muzzleloader season. I have spent significant money on muzzleloader equipment so that I could hunt the elk close to my home. I have a small farm, and the numerous elk are constantly breaking down my fences, and damaging the other local crops in our area. The proposed change puts a burden on me, since I would have to travel a long way to hunt, even though there are many elk in my own area. I am an older man, and I enjoy going out after work to sit in the area right on my own property, but this change would put an end to that. I don't understand why this change is necessary. Please explain why this is being proposed.</p>	<p>You can still use your muzzleloader during the modern firearm season. That should be fine within the firearm restriction zone as well.</p>
<p>Our family only hunts with modern firearms. We have seen over the years how sufficient archery and muzzle hunting has been. We feel that archer hunters and muzzle hunters should use primitive weapons like I believe it was intended. The seasons for those hunters are usually prime times - rut, and bad weather. I have many archery and muzzle hunter friends that fill their tags every year due to sufficient weapons and prime seasons. I feel archery hunters that use the method of re-curve bows and muzzle with flint or exposed cap is what the season was originally intended for.</p> <p>I feel there should be a longer and later season for both deer and elk modern firearms seasons and more tags for antlerless does and cows. Seven day deer season is a week short for the Yakima/Ellensburg area.</p> <p>My 81 year young father and I are a few of the many that did not fill our cow tags in the Wenas and Bumping GMU. I understand the weather for Elk season was unusually warm this past Fall, but the harvest was very low and it looks like we are feeding a large Yakima herd in the Wenas and Oak Creek Feeding Stations.</p> <p>I hope the WDFW will re-issue some of our older faithful hunters, like my father. I hunted hard and saw several elk, but the few I saw were already being pursued! Maybe it would be possible to re-issue tags for unsuccessful hunters 65 (55) years and older and/or give extra points for unsuccessful hunters like myself. I have passed several animals the past few years wounded and left for dead with arrows in them. I am aware no animal goes to waste in the mountains.</p>	<p>Many of the changes proposed for 2009-11 will address your concerns.</p> <p>As far as the antlerless permits, this was a tough year in terms of harvest success, but by policy we do not re-issue permits or points for unsuccessful hunters. It wouldn't be fair to other applicants. Actually, antlerless permit applicants are successfully drawn on average every two to three years.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I would like to see more opportunities for youth only hunts for elk on the west side. If you could make them during the off seasons it would make it a lot easier on the parents (Christmas break, Thanksgiving stuff like that). This would give us the chance to teach safety and accuracy without having an eight year old competing with adults. These kids won't make a big impact on the number of animals but I know from experience that it makes a huge impact on them when they do get something. Please set the seasons a little more than four months in advance, most of us have already selected our vacations without knowing the seasons.</p>	<p>At this point, most young hunter opportunities have been restricted to deer or small game. Elk are at a premium to harvest for general hunters, so it is contentious to allocate such limited opportunity to youth.</p>
<p>I can only say I am very disappointed. Once again in unit 335 archery hunters get screwed! Why is it that Modern firearm is held in such high regard? 100 cow tags? 14 bull permits dec19 -30 1 bull permit sep21-25 Rifle hunters need to hunt during the peak of the rut????? What happened to fair chase???</p> <p>You constantly allow the 3911 hunt to wipe out all the cows in the lower Teanaway! I have waited too long for the chance to hunt a branched antler bull during the normal 335 archery season. I believe I will never get that chance... Please give me one good reason why there is no chance for an early season bull tag for archery??? I have lost all faith in the herd management in unit 335. I am not sure what you have against archery? Maybe I should choose a new hobby? I think from now on I will choose a different state to hunt.</p>	<p>The chance to bugle in a bull is considered a very high quality opportunity. There have been very few opportunities for modern firearm hunters to participate in this kind of special opportunity in the past. The 2009-11 recommendations attempt to provide that opportunity on a limited basis.</p> <p>The GMU 335 seasons for all users have been shifted later in the year to encourage elk to migrate to lower elevations and reduce property damage.</p>
<p>I hunt elk in GMU 560 mod. rifle. Beginning shooting hours are to dark in the morning to distinguish legal from non-legal. Also have driven out at days end with headlights on to see the road and have 15 minutes of shooting time left. It is illegal to use artificial light for big game but if shooting time is left and that bull crosses the road in front of you. Hmm.</p>	<p>All hunters must make decisions on what is legal and what is ethical. We brought up this concern during public meetings and comment periods, and most hunters said that on those days when it is too dark, hunters just would not continue to hunt. These same hunting hour rules have been adopted by nearly all of the western states.</p>
<p>During early Archery season we generally do not get to hunt our normal areas because it is to dry and Weyerhaeuser closes their gates. This ruins our hunting plans every year. If this happens the early archery season should have 3 or more days to hunt based closures. These gates are always open during rifle season. To even this out more considerations should be given to the early Archery Elk season. I would also like to recommend that Early Archery Elk be moved to the last 2 weeks of September instead of the middle 2 weeks.</p>	<p>Allowing archery elk hunting during the last two weeks of September would result in greater mature bull harvest during the peak of breeding. It would also exasperate the proportion of mature bulls taken by archers.</p> <p>Your other issues were addressed in previous responses.</p>
<p>The disparity between the deer and elk rifle (very short) season and the archery and Muzzle loading season needs to be corrected. Rifle tags account for nearly 80% of the tags sold but their days in the field is 12% of the days allotted where the Archery hunters have 53% and the Muzzle hunters have 34%.</p>	<p>Providing equitable opportunity between the three user groups is not easy. Some would like us to look at equitable success rates others say consider equal days to hunt. We have blended many criteria, but do not rely solely on days available.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I support extending the muzzle loader elk season, the season was too short. I used to take my son while he was in junior high and high school. That limited him to one weekend. I don't believe I showed him a good experience (I don't intend to imply getting an elk is required to have a good experience). Spent a lot of time and money preparing to hunt two days a year. Now he is not interested in elk hunting as a young adult.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>As an archer, I can live with giving up September 21 early elk hunt date for modern firearm permit hunters (reluctantly), but not with moving closing date for early archery elk hunt to a Sunday with the effect of removing additional archery hunt days from the peak of the rut, for example in 2011 the close is being moved from Sept 21. to Sept.18.</p>	<p>As stated in previous rationale for shortening the season and moving it earlier to avoid the peak of breeding, we are trying to reduce archery take of mature bulls.</p>
<p>Now what about the Elk hunting, 8 units are open in the Yakima area for the general season and are Spike only, and nothing in Southeastern Washington 154, 163, why ?. With only 5,158 muzzle loaders hunting Eastern Washington (that's only 645 hunters a unit), why not open all of the areas that are open for the archery hunters (14 units) during their season and open them to the muzzle loaders as well (that would be 368 hunters per unit), with as few of us as there are I do not see where it have a significant impact and herd dynamics and would definitely make for a quality hunt by disbursing the hunters even more.</p> <p>I don't expect this to even be read but after hunting in this state for 40 years I am tired of not getting a fair and equitable hunting time as the other users.</p>	<p>We have recommended several significant changes that favor muzzleloader hunters. At this point, not every GMU is available or can be opened. We are balancing three users and maintaining our wildlife population objectives.</p> <p>We will continue to consider additional units in the future.</p>
<p>I am afraid I can't agree with the logic of starting the late general muzzle loader hunt in unit 550 on Dec. 1. For general bull tag holders while allowing antlerless permit holders to have the run of the entire unit for 6 days prior to the general season opening. That's 20 people hunting. Not only is it reducing available hunting days for the majority of the hunters in the unit.</p> <p>All of the other units that are available to hunt open on the 25th. Why is this one unit any different? Is this a typographical error in the proposals?</p>	<p>This was an error that we have resolved in the recommended adjustments.</p>
<p>It is not too late to turn the 550 unit back to spike or better like it was for ever before the 3 pt. or better rule came out. I would also like to see the 556 unit open to 3 pt or better for general season to spread out the Hunters. Please think about this before deleting.</p>	<p>The spike only regulation in western Washington was very unpopular with hunters.</p>
<p>Many of the GMU's will now be open during early archery season for antlerless or 3pt. or better seasons. (681 is one) I sincerely believe that we should do away with the late archery season. Why hunt these animals and stress them any longer than we have to. I like the idea of harvesting cows during the early archery season for a few reasons, reduces pressure on bulls, harvesting cows which bulls have not exuded energy in breeding yet vs. harvesting them in the late season when they are pregnant with calves, just to name a few. Since we will be harvesting the cows for GMU's during an early archery season there will not be any reason to have a general archery late season. (Example GMU's 681).</p>	<p>Thanks for your comment and support. Late archery seasons can be maintained in many areas without impacting our population objectives.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I have hunted Deer and Elk in the state of Washington for the past forty years. I have annually purchased combination Elk , Deer, Bear and Cougar tags and have applied for Moose Tags every year sense they were available. I have purchased numerous special drawing tickets. What I am saying is that I have supported the Game Dept and done my best to insure a quality hunt-'</p> <p>In return for this support I have watched our Hunting System go from a single State Tag to specific area tags to specific Antler Configurations. All of which have detracted from the quality hunting we used to enjoy!</p> <p>I am also part of a hunting camp that donates to the Oak feeding station and have done so for years.</p> <p>Our group has over the years enjoyed to true Spirit of the Hunting Camp and each and every one of us looks forward to the the next Camp!</p> <p>The problem now is the actual season itself. As Modern Rifle hunters we are extremely limited in our hunting window. I know you can say take up the Bow or the Muzzle Loader, however we are all over 60 and unable to get around as well as we would like to pursue our passion. The second part is by the time we are able to get into the hills the Game has been chased for many weeks and are clearly aware of what is going on. To say I feel there is a disparity between the Hunting methods would be a misdemeanor. The system needs to be looked at for change to equal out the hunting seasons.</p> <p>We need a longer Modern Rifle Season or we need to rotate who goes first and give each method the same amount of time. The animals do not need to be pursued from Sept thru Dec!!! How about one season Oct 1st thru Nov 15 the split between the three hunting methods?</p>	<p>We sincerely appreciate your long-term support for hunting and wildlife conservation in this state. Thank you.</p> <p>As mentioned before we have the smallest state in the west, only 50,000 to 60,000 elk and 100,000 elk hunters. The rules have to be restrictive to maintain general seasons.</p> <p>The later the elk season goes in the Yakima area, the more likely you will have boom and bust years for harvest. During early snowfall years, harvest will be high and impact subsequent harvests (and permit levels) for several years.</p> <p>We will continue to look at season timing and impacts of hunting seasons on elk and recommend changes as necessary to maintain healthy elk herds.</p>
<p>In my opinion which is not a professional one but an experienced one. Washington has great territory for elk there is no doubt about it. There is clear cut after clear cut, hill after hill, field after field that could be habitated for more elk. This state could take on 20 to 40 thousand more elk and have the feed and cover to keep them healthy. All of are surrounding states have around 100 thousand elk or plus. But why not Washington? All of my hunts are mainly planned outside of this state because there is simply not enough elk in this state. And here is the truth about are situation. The Indians have killed many of are big herds, I know that they got the short end of the stick with all of their land being taken away but why continue to grant them more land to devastate herds (Cedar River Watershed) All I see for the future of Washington Elk is doom, if they continue to cater to their wounds. They should be an Elk hunter just like everyone else, paying their dues to make it happen so that ONE elk feeds the family for a year. NOT making a business out of Washington elk. I know that this has been taken to court a few times but what can I do to stop this madness??? Please let me know. I want to get involved. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you. I will form a group to write a hand written letter for the next five years if that's what it takes.</p>	<p>We do have quite a challenge in managing elk in this state. The tribal cooperative management issues will continue to be a challenge as well. We have made improving co-management a priority for the next six-year Game Management Plan. We did successfully negotiate a hunting agreement with the Point Elliot treaty tribes for 2008 and hope to expand these agreements into the future.</p>
<p>Why can't the Department of Game start the Early Elk season the 2nd. Monday of September? When it starts right after Labor day, us that take a vacation to hunt that week have to wait for all the Holiday campers to leave the area so that we can set up camp. That leaves us setting up our Elk camps on Monday afternoon.</p>	<p>Scheduling hunting trips can be difficult regardless of season. The later into September that the archery elk season goes, the greater number of mature bulls that are killed, resulting the inequity described previously.</p>
<p>Spike only for modern firearm elk has been in effect for far to</p>	<p>Spike only management continues to be successful in</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>many years, on the east side, originally three years was the plan, has this produced any results other than not many spikes left, what is your plan in the future for this situation, because my fellow hunters are hunting out of state because of this rule which means lost money for this state as I see it.</p>	<p>recruiting bulls into older age classes and helps maintain general season hunting opportunity. This strategy is likely to be continued into the foreseeable future.</p>
<p>The literature stated that there was a goal of providing more muzzleloader opportunity. But as I read the proposed regulations it appears that the Westside late general season muzzle loading elk hunt has a marked reduction in season length.</p> <p>In addition I thought there was a proposal to increase the Westside early muzzle loader elk hunt from 7 to 9 days but that must not be taking place.</p> <p>I don't see this as added opportunity.</p>	<p>The added opportunity came in the form of deer seasons and in the form of some GMUs being open to muzzleloading that were not open before. You are right, we did not move forward with a 9 day muzzleloader season as our biologists in the field did not feel the elk populations could handle that extra hunting pressure.</p>
<p>In 2008 the season closed on November 2nd. With shirt sleeve weather and no elk. Your new schedule looks good. Give it a try and maybe move a few days later into November in coming years.</p> <p>I thing the WDFW does a great job, but would like to see more agents in the field.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support. The shift in the elk season for 2009-11 was strictly a calendar date adjustment, which changes with each three year package.</p>
<p>If the state is proposing making the Colockum area a "True Spike" only GMU's then they should provide additional Cow or Any Bull tags. The Special Hunt draw rate for these areas is already near the lowest in the state.</p> <p>The Spike Only game management strategy seems to be a complete failure. The Colockum herd strength has been in steady decline since this policy was implemented. Each year there are more and more illegal animals killed due to un-informed or unethical hunters. Where is the data on how many illegal kills there are in the Colockum herd and what is the prosecution rate? I believe the Colockum herd would be better off with a shortened Any Bull general season for both Archery and Modern Firearm. There would probably be less illegal and wasted kills.</p>	<p>Most of the rationale to answer your comment was addressed previously. Illegal kills are always problematic, but that is not what is causing problems for this herd in terms of meeting management objectives.</p> <p>Hunters have expressed that length of season is one of the most important aspects of their satisfaction with hunting. So we have recommended further antler restrictions instead of other rules to increase bull survival.</p>
<p>I support extending the muzzle loader elk season, the season was too short. I used to take my son while he was in junior high and high school. That limited him to one weekend. I don't believe I showed him a good experience (I don't intend to imply getting an elk is required to have a good experience). Spent a lot of time and money preparing to hunt two days a year. Now he is not interested in elk hunting as a young adult.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>I also feel there should be a late muzzle elk season somewhere in the Yakima unit somewhere. Use it as a damage hunt or method to reduce overgrazing in a given area. There used to be a late hunt in the Little Naches area but for some reason it was discontinued several years ago. I would like to see it return somewhere in late November similar to late archery season.</p>	<p>We continue to balance opportunities for all three groups while maintaining population objectives.</p>
<p>Do not support the following: True Spike in Colockum – This is too confusing. You better make this very clear with photos so that people can see what is legal vs. not legal. Why not make it a spike with NO branches anywhere. Then it would be clear. Using a number of inches is not realistic in the field as very few guys could tell the difference between 3.5" and 4.5" at 100, 200, or 300 yards with a scope.</p>	<p>We do plan to provide good examples in the 2009 big game hunting pamphlet.</p>
<p>Muzzleloader Seasons – Great job opening up additional units and splitting the MZ deer season to be the end of September and the MZ elk season to be in early October.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>“True Spike Bull” definitions for the Colockum Herd Elk hunts. I consider myself a fairly intelligent person but the description is difficult at best to follow. It would be easier to understand and allow less “hunter interpretation” if something like the following were used: A “True Spike Bull” is defined as a Bull Elk possessing antlers with NO branching points greater than 1 inch in length originating from any part of either antler.</p>	<p>This would be even more restrictive than currently written. While we considered this type of rule, many thought it was too restrictive and difficult for hunters to see small branches at the base of the skull.</p>
<p>I <u>oppose</u> having different Spike Bull Regulations in different GMUs or different regions. I think this will lead to confusion and unintentional violations. If the spike rule needs to be changed to protect the Colockum heard, I suggest you make the changes state-wide or, at a minimum, for the entire east side.</p>	<p>We considered an eastern Washington-wide rule, but that would result in a significant reduction in harvest in the Yakima and Blue Mountains, which currently have adequate yearling survival rates.</p>
<p>After reading proposals and percentages my question is Do you actually pay any attention to what the people want? My example is the Colockum “True Spike” rule. Only 21% of the people were for this idea. That means 79% of the people clearly wanted something else. Maybe the 21% who were in favor of the measure counted more. I can see if the idea is even up between pro and con you would want to keep things Status Quo, but if the opposition is clearly against a change why go ahead and implement it anyway. Does it make any difference what the public wants? I don’t know if I will answer anymore public opinion sheets anymore. I think it would help if you reworded the proposal page to say “We are doing this regardless of you opinion but would like to have it anyway”.</p>	<p>It was obvious from the responses that hunters wanted some change in how the Colockum elk hunt is managed. In weighing the two most popular responses (true spike and permit only), we chose spike only because it continues a general season and would displace fewer elk hunters. If we went to permit only, we were concerned that we would end up causing more crowding in the Yakima area and potentially excessive harvest.</p> <p>If we aren’t successful with improving yearling survival or if the majority of hunters are dissatisfied, then we will consider changes for 2012.</p>
<p>For the damage control hunt that is called the Toledo B (a muzzleloader damage control hunt in Elk Area 5029), please revert the dates of this hunt back to what it was (January 1-16 or so) until this past three year cycle when it was changed to December 7 - 20. I have been fortunate enough to draw this particular hunt at least five times in the past ten or 12 years and can say from direct experience that the quality of hunt and the success rate has been negatively influenced (dramatically so) by the change in dates. As it currently stands, the initial week of this hunt now coincides with the exceptionally popular late archery season in the Winston Unit. The objective of the damage control hunts is to cull animals that are causing damage to farm properties. Competing in the woods...and hunting animals that are more on edge due to increased numbers of hunters certainly doesn't help achieve that goal. Our success rates dropped from consistently filling all of our hunting group’s tags to 1 elk out of 4 hunters in 2006 and 1 out of five in 2007. The majority of the hunters that target this hunt are repeats and upon discussion of this topic have agreed that the change in dates was a poor decision. Please reconsider the re-establishment of the dates for this hunt to the first half of January.</p>	<p>This hunt is not intended to be a quality hunt. It is designed to manage damage. If we are not successful at managing the property damage, we will consider changing the dates.</p>
<p>Of the three options that were put forward by WDFW to help a struggling Colockum elk herd, the most obvious and likely successful option to help BOTH spike survival and limit tribal harvest was road management. Due to a lack of vegetative cover that occurs in a majority of the Quilomene unit, escapement is a serious problem.....road closures would have an immediate effect on this. Not only that, but seasonal road closures is the ONLY way to reduce tribal impact on mature bulls. Easy access to rutting bulls and wintering ground by tribal TROPHY hunters leads to over-harvest.</p>	<p>We plan to continue our work on road management, but the public strongly supported additional efforts to improve yearling survival and elk management in this herd.</p>
<p>First I want to say that at first I did not like the spike only thing for elk but I must say it has improved our big bull count.</p>	<p>We have actually reduced bull permits in the Yakima herd due to lower than anticipated numbers counted during our surveys</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>We now have a lot of very impressive bulls running around, this last year was amazing. I do however believe that we could afford to give out more bull permits in some areas like the GMU 328 and 335. I noticed that there was at least 3 to 4 big bulls in every small herd of cows. I only read a little bit about the new proposal on the spike only thing in the Clockum, if I understand it correctly it will now be spike on both sides only. If that is so I fear that there is going to be a lot of accidents because it is already so hard to determine if one side is a clean spike, especially for the rifle hunters that are shooting from a lot further away.</p>	<p>this month.</p> <p>Thank you for your support for spike only management. The issue of mistake kills was addressed in earlier responses.</p>
<p>Elk – Support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern firearm rut permit hunts during September. • Moving modern firearm season back into November 	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>As a member of the bow hunter group, TBW, I would like to see the bow seasons stay as they are with a couple of exceptions. You could move the muzzleloader early elk season up a bit. The last week in Sept. would be a better match. Most of the bowhunters don't hunt that last week anyway. Also give the mod. rifle elk hunters on the west side a few days the end of October in a few GMU's.</p>	<p>Thanks for your suggestions. At this point, we will have to think about them for 2012.</p>
<p>As a non-resident from CA and who enjoy a two week vacation during Elk Season will hope the change of weeks, that is moving a week back toward Nov. it will feel more like WA instead of CA.</p> <p>I know you would like me to move to your beautiful State but I don't think my wife would move.</p>	<p>Thanks for your support.</p>
<p>I just do not understand why the West side general elk season is so late in the year. As most of the hunting is done in higher elevations we must continually fight winter weather due to the late season. This not only presents difficult and unpleasant hunting conditions but creates a safety issue to the hunters. Snow storms of great intensity can develop very rapidly in these high elevations. I have been there during these events and you literally can face whiteouts and loose the ability to recognize landmarks. Even without the snow the inclement weather can make hunting condition almost unbearable. Oregon normally starts elk season a week earlier than Washington does. I would recommend this for us as well or even better the last weekend of October.</p>	<p>We are continuing a policy of not having an overlap in our deer and elk seasons, so opening the elk season in October is not currently feasible.</p> <p>Weather is very unpredictable in the fall. Conditions as you described happen periodically, but some hunters prefer inclement weather for hunting. Our seasons are timed to accommodate average weather patterns and fit in between seasons for other species or user groups.</p>
<p>I'm writing concerning the new proposed season for the next year. I was born and raised here in Washington and have two little girls whom I am raising to enjoy the resources we have in this state whether it be hunting or fishing. I've been a rifle hunter for years and just recently gotten into bow hunting two years ago. I hunt down in the Raymond area for elk. My concern with the proposed change is the possibility of the damage that will be done to the herds. If you schedule the muzzle loaders and rifle hunters to be hunting during the rut the big bulls and all the legal bulls, for that matter, will be decimated. They're stupid in the rut and if all you need to do is get within rifle range it will be like shooting fish in a barrel. At least with archery one has to get within 35 yards to make an ethical shot. That alone gives these animals a better fighting chance. I don't want to sound biased because I'm a bow hunter that isn't the issue. I hunt and consume what I harvest for food for my family and for the love of the outdoors not for my ego. The issue I have with this season change is the apparent gross miss management of natural resources. Sportsmen in Washington State already have</p>	<p>The modern firearm season during mid-September elk rut will be controlled by permit. We will have very good control on the number of bulls taken and the permit levels will be very conservative.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>to deal with the stigma of being a bunch of uneducated rednecks who don't care about this land. Along with that the agenda of those who don't believe we should be able to hunt at all. I don't think we need our game commissioners adding to the problem. I realize you're probably getting pressure from outside interests but this is a matter of our natural resources in a state where it is a big issue.</p> <p>If I'm over looking some detail or you believe that I'm way off in <u>my opinion</u> please let me know.</p>	
<p>Also change from spike only to less than a three point (spike and fork) this would stop some waste when a hunter mistakenly shoots a fork and has to leave it. There is a whole different look when an elk goes to a three point.</p>	<p>Our concern is that a three point regulation in eastern Washington open habitats would result in most older age bulls being killed every year.</p>
<p>Obviously you do not count or manage South Rainer Elk. Their numbers are down and even in your report you remark about poachers. After October meeting in Packwood, elk were shot in excess as good old boys figured they were going to beat you at your hunt.</p> <p>You will destroy the herd!!!!!!!</p>	<p>The only change recommended to address the property damage expressed by local landowners was an additional 15 permits that will only be used if a landowner complains and the problem can't be solved in other ways.</p>
<p>The Sequim elk herd should be opened to ALL BOW HUNTERS instead of just master hunters. I think this because the elk herd is very big and they do damage to the people's landscape and crops. I say just bow hunters because the people of Sequim are a little worried of stray bullets that could go to far. Bow hunters have a limited range and would not be hitting houses.</p>	<p>The current strategy using Master Hunters seems to be satisfactory with local landowners at this point.</p>
<p>I am a landowner in Elk area 4941. This area is basically ALL PRIVATE LAND. I would like to take this opportunity to comment on this past hunting season. This year we had several instances of hunters hunting outside the boundaries, trespassing to "herd" the elk into open areas ..and basically slaughtering them by running them into groups of waiting huntersjust so you know ..I hunt ...but I choose NOT to hunt this area even though I could fill my tag every year ...WHY..??...because I do not feel that most of the hunters are not allowing "A FAIR CHASE " ...to me it is not sporting to use the methods employed by most of these hunters...MY SOLUTION ..???...As this area is 99% private land ...I would suggest that you use a permit system working with private owners such as myself to regulate the amount of hunters in a given area at any 1 time...I had our lands shut down until 2 hunters that were servicemen from Whidbey filled their tags as they were going to be heading overseas to Iraq and Afghanistan. That was Archery season ...for Muzzleloader season I shut in all down in the beginning except for a couple of local hunters I knewthis proved to be futile as hunters chased the elk from across the river to our lands...and then the trespassing would begin .. so then I took names and let some hunt "WITH CONDITIONS ... I had limited problems but they were minimal...mainly due to my constant patrolling of my land ..and the EXCELLENT work of your game agents Larry Bauman and Worth Allen ...These 2 individuals should be COMMENDED and GIVEN PERFORMANCE AWARDS for their OUTSTANDING SERVICE AND DEDICATION to their jobs ...they could have sat back and did the minimum and let the slaughter just happen ...but they took charge of events and conditions and stopped violations and cited violators before events got out of hand!!!</p>	<p>We are recommending a change to this hunt, but recognize that a permit only hunt might result in landowners not being able to hunt their own property.</p> <p>Thank you for expressing your support for our officers and for allowing hunters on your property.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>After looking at the percentage of success proportionate to the percentage of hunters for deer/elk hunting; muzzle loader, rifle and archery are all proportionate. From 2003-2007, bowhunters took exactly 19.32% of the state's elk harvest while representing 19.12% of the total hunters. While during the same period, muzzleloader hunters took 17.74% of the elk and represented 14.44% of the hunters. And those hunting with modern firearm harvested 62.94% of the elk and made up 66.44% of hunters. The statistics speak for themselves.</p> <p>I believe that a possible way to balance the kill ratios and give the large number of rifle hunters in our state some satisfaction would be to add a permit only season that would be 3-4 days long in selected units around the state between September 22nd and September 30th. The overlapping archery special permit areas would have to be taken into consideration and not overridden. This would allow rifle hunters an opportunity to hunt the rut and increase their success rates on mature bulls. With the current changes, the eventual three day change would handicap archery hunters tremendously. I would like to see the season dates for all hunting types left alone.</p>	<p>We agree that we have been fairly successful on a statewide basis in achieving equity in total harvest. That equity does vary in some areas and for some subsets of the elk harvest. For example you did not consider the in-equity in mature bull harvest among the user groups.</p> <p>Your proposal would impact recommended changes to muzzleloader deer seasons as well.</p>
<p>Would like to see Unit 346 opened for early and/or late muzzleloader elk.</p>	<p>We try to balance opportunity for all user groups and will consider this suggestion in future years.</p>
<p>Why it is the Black powder hunters get none of the good elk hunting available in this state minus a few permit hunts we get squeezed out of areas Winston and so forth another problem for black powder hunters is the rules regarding the ignition system of the firearm.</p>	<p>We try to balance opportunity for all user groups and will consider adding GMUs available to muzzleloader hunters in future years.</p>
<p>Add a general muzzleloader elk season in the Dayton/Blue Creek Area. If I don't get drawn for a cow or bull tag, I don't hunt. Sure there are areas to hunt if I want to hunt in Yakima, Asotin or the Snake River Breaks where you're lucky to get close enough to an elk even with a modern rifle.</p>	<p>We try to balance opportunity for all user groups and maintain healthy elk populations.</p>
<p>The WDFW goal of reducing the Mt. St Helens herd by 20% has been met on the south and east sides of the mountain, and probably a good start on the other sides, too. The late snows in the spring of 2008 did the "work". The high elevation elk herds were reduced by a lot--over 50%--based on my observations during the 2008 hunting seasons and my friends. Don't be so quick to reduce the herds anymore as they are depleted too much already!</p>	<p>We don't think that we have achieved our reduction objectives yet. As mentioned above, we have just started a new project to get a better estimate of the number of elk in this herd.</p>
<p>Next, a few words on Elk in 504 Stella. I realize the elk are thriving here and the timber companies are screaming mad about damage to the young trees. I say tough. Weyerhaeuser has 150 million acres of timberlands in a 100 mile radius of the Longview area, the small Stella area should be of no concern to the timber giants and the amount of antlerless tags and the new proposal to open season for cows in muzzle loader and modern firearm season will bring a flood of hunters into a tiny area that will create mayhem and a dangerous situation for both hunters and landowners. Please rethink this issue.</p>	<p>Actually this increase in antlerless opportunity is to address problems associated with elk becoming habituated to urban environments. We are continuing a dialog with City officials to determine how to best address the problems in the future. For now, we are increasing harvest around the area.</p>
<p>Give more ELK archery handicap areas!!!</p>	<p>We try to balance opportunity for all user groups and will consider this suggestion in future years.</p>
<p>I have been archery hunting for 15 years and believe that shortening the length of our late season on the west side is an ok move. The thing I don't agree with is that we can't harvest bulls in the late season under the proposed rules (GMU's 520 and 530). Harvesting with a bow is difficult in the late season and it just doesn't make since.</p>	<p>We sincerely appreciate your long commitment to hunting and your understanding of the challenges managing wildlife in a heavily populated state.</p> <p>The rationale for changes to the archery seasons were described previously.</p>
<p>I liked everything I seen, except for the late bull hunting</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>opportunities for archers in western Washington.</p> <p>This email is being sent in regards to the changes you are proposing to make to the elk hunting regulations for the 2009-2011 seasons. The hunt I am concerned about is the archery hunt in the Peshastin unit. My brother and I were lucky enough to have drawn that hunt last year and had a great experience even though we did not harvest an elk. We saw elk every day on our 6 day hunt and were hoping to draw this hunt in the future. I understand that you are wanting to manage the elk herd while you also want to protect landowners property. I can't see 15 bow hunters making a huge difference in the elk population knowing that all 15 hunters that are drawn will not harvest an animal. I also realize that you need to keep everything even between the rifle, muzzleloaders and archery hunters, but you are proposing to get rid of the hunt all together. There are a lot of elk in the area and I know that damage is being done by the herd to private property. Please let us help control that by continuing this hunt.</p>	<p>The archery hunt was not very successful at addressing the property damage problem. We are trying some different strategies to see if they work a little better for addressing landowner concerns with elk damage.</p>
<p>I am responding to the WDFW's solicitation for public comment regarding the proposed 2009-2011 hunting season changes. I appreciated the thorough and in depth reporting made available by the WDFW in support of the proposals. It provided facts and data that I otherwise may not have considered. And served as a base line while I reviewed the potential impacts to my own personal hunting areas and seasons. As a result of my review I am submitting the following comments. They are not based on science, but rather my own personal hunting experiences and interactions with fellow archery hunters.</p> <p>I have archery hunted for elk in the Willapa Hills unit since 1998. I've had some success over the years, but not nearly the success I could have. This is due in part to inaccessible hunting areas that are either closed during archery season, or land locked by local landowners ... including Weyerhaeuser. Despite these obstacles I've remained as positive and upbeat as possible during the archery elk hunting seasons. I worked very hard over the past decade to establish good relationships with some of the landowners in order to hunt their lands. But this collective real estate is extremely limited when you consider the size of the 506 unit. In addition to the time and effort I've put in to establish those relationships, I have also pumped thousands of dollars into the local economy. A few archery hunters such as myself can make a notable difference to the success of local small business owners. I've made a considerable investment of time and money in this area. I learned the topography and general landscape well enough that there is little chance of getting lost in the woods. I put all my eggs in one basket ...so to speak.</p> <p>In consideration of my time and efforts, I am adamantly opposed to the WDFW changing the current archery elk hunting seasons in this unit. It is difficult enough to harvest an elk with a bow without reducing season lengths and limiting the harvest to one sex in the late season. I haven't killed an elk in over 4 years. But every year when I show up for the late season hunt, I hear all the success stories of the rifle hunters. For some reason, the same areas that are closed to early and late season archers are opened with welcome mats for rifle hunters. They seem to have no difficulty driving in, glassing a herd, and shooting the legal bulls in the group. It would</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the effort to review the materials in preparation for providing your comments. Previous responses have explained the rationale for shifting some of the bull harvest from archers to other hunters. We did want to maintain some archery hunting opportunity in these Willapa Hills units, so we left them open for antlerless.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>appear that the WDFW is trying to eliminate the late archery season bull harvest in 506 in order to preserve more bulls for rifle hunters. It's a known fact that rifle hunters already harvest at least 90% of the bulls in a season when compared to other hunting methods. So, to limit unit 506 to Antlerless only in the late season, in addition to eliminating a week's worth of hunting time is completely absurd. I look forward to my late season hunts, and in large part is why I continue to hunt in western Washington. I implore you to scrap the proposed archery season changes and look for other ways to sustain or improve elk herds.</p>	
<p>The Elk section shows that Archery Hunters loose a day of hunting time. I don't understand that at all. I can't see where Archery hunters take a substantial number of Elk, at least the ones I know. So why take a day away. There are still no any Bull tags for GMU 175 Lick Creek. I hike and hunt this unit and see Big Bulls on a regular basis. I counted 26 separate branch antler Bulls in Lick Creek during the 2007 Archery season. I didn't have a chance to spend that much time in the field this season, but did see several good Bulls. I know from the Bugling I heard there seems to be plenty of Bulls in the area.</p>	<p>The number of bulls has declined in GMU 175, so we are not proposing permits in there for 2009.</p>
<p>I have already sent in one letter but after visiting with a state biologist I had to send in another so I hope you will include this one also. When I first read the proposed special permit allocation for the Blue Mountain units for elk I was very disappointed to see the drastic cuts in tags for the East Wenaha while all of the other units stayed the same or even received additional tags. I contacted Pat Fowler who has managed the elk herds in the Blues and done a great job of turning it into a world class elk hunt. I asked him why the tags were cut in the east Wenaha and he said that while he supported the reduction in rifle tags he recommended that the tags for archery remain the same as last year. He said there is no reason to go from 3 tags to 2 tags and that Olympia took that upon themselves to do that and it isn't based on a biologist's suggestion. I can only assume that the tag was taken away to allow for the new rifle rut tag you have put in place also against the biologist's recommendation. I think it is very unfair to put in place a new rifle rut tag in a unit that you are reducing an archery and a muzzleloader permit from against the recommendation of the head biologist in the area. I hope you will keep the primitive weapons permits in the Wenaha unit the same as last year. It is a very sought after tag that can be the hunt of a lifetime to those who draw it and I hope you won't reduce this opportunity for those of us who love to hunt. Thank you for listening.</p>	<p>Actually, we use a permit allocation formula that considers proportion of the user group and average success rates. Most of the shifts in numbers you are talking about are the result of applying the formula, except for the September rifle permits. Those were created to provide an opportunity for rifle hunters to hunt during the peak of rut and bugle for bulls. This is a very high quality hunting opportunity that does not exist in very many places in Washington.</p> <p>Thank you for your support of our staff and the work they do.</p>
<p>For the last 3 years archers have not been able to hunt cows during the early season. Now I see that rule is being continued for the next 3 years and yet you offer 100 cow permits to modern firearm hunters.</p> <p>We all know the odds of drawing a branched antler permit and living in the Teanaway Valley I am also aware of the ratio of spikes to cows. I don't have to tell you how difficult it is to harvest an elk of any gender or size with a bow and arrow and now you are further limiting us by definition of a "true spike". The needle in the haystack comes to mind so I ask, is this fair? Is this how to promote the sport? Is this the best way to encourage the residents to hunt in this state? Is this conducive to addressing the issue of game management in farmlands? I</p>	<p>We have also proposed a late archery general season in the Teanaway for true spikes and antlerless.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>think not! Your comments would be greatly appreciated.</p> <p>Turnbull A, Watershed, Clearwater, Matheny, Wynoochee, are listed under “Only modern fire arm tag holders may apply” but all tag/weapon types are listed under the elk prefix column for tag type.</p> <p>Need clarification on what is meant by “<u>any</u> elk tag” vs. EF, EM, EA i.e., Sol Duc Valley B vs. Little Naches C. Can a Westside tag holder apply for an eastern “<u>any</u> elk tag” or vice versa?</p> <p>Multi-season hunts for hunter education instructors should be underlined as new text.</p>	<p>Any elk tag would include both eastern and western Washington designations as well as archery, muzzleloader, and modern firearm. The listed tag types would be more restrictive.</p>
<p>Regarding the issue of 15 any bull elk permits in GMU 172 for modern rifle. All of GMU 172 is private land. The only landowner allowing hunting to the public charges a fee. So the general public cannot hunt in GMU 172. I know this as I own land and a cabin on GMU 172. Why not give those permits to GMU 181 and 175 so the general public can hunt without paying? Several large landowners in 181 allow the public to hunt free of charge, and GMU 175 is national forest.</p>	<p>We allocate permits where the resource is available and GMU 172 has a good number of bulls for harvest.</p>
<p>I have another suggestion in regard to Master Hunter GMU's; 3911 & 3912. Hunt master told me the land owners really do not want Master Hunter’s hunting elk with archery equipment or muzzle loading rifles. They want these problem elk taken with the modern rifle, which is the most efficient method. This might help the problem of hunters not wearing hunter orange. It might not be a bad idea to check with WDFW law enforcement to get their ideas on this.</p> <p>My compliments to you and your staff for doing a good job of scoping public comment. It is a huge job and you’re getting to done.</p>	<p>Thanks for your suggestion; I think a minor change could make this effective. We will talk more with enforcement and make the change as needed.</p>
<p>I live about in the middle of the Stella unit(?).Near the end of Cedar Gates Rd. Yesterday morning, Feb3, I had 27 head in my back yard.4 spikes, cows and yearling calves. My idea is a 6 month archery season done by lottery that wouldn't interfere with a person’s regular elk hunting seasons. 75 tags should be enough. That way there won't be too many hunters up here running around and they could contact residents for permission to hunt on their property. I would give permission for a tree stand and or a blind. But only to someone I thought was an ethical hunter. I would like to take an elk up here myself, if my name were drawn, in addition to my modern firearm season. Hope I made sense.</p>	<p>We are continuing a dialog with the City on how to establish an effective a hunt in the urbanizing areas. But your idea will be considered as well.</p>
<p>My group had received the special tag permits to hunt the Tri-Valley Hunt. This was very tough to get the Farmers to participate. We tracked Elk for days and found them on the posted lands that we thought if we asked they might let us. Well the first ranch we thought we were going to get shot. The Farmer was very mad with anyone that wanted to Kill a animal and told us to get off the land. His front step's. The second ranch that we found Elk on for day we finally went and asked and after 1 minute of pulling up and walking to the house neighbors came screaming down the road to shout get out of here. No Hunters allowed. The third Farmer we ask was the only pleasant one that had about 37 Elk in his property and just said no I enjoy them here. We did see one shot along the side of the road. Possibly someone with a permit saw them and 30 yards off the road took the shot. All we got to see was the gut pile.</p> <p>I hope that the Game Dept does not give these Farmers money to replace fences and repair lost crops. I would hate to see my money go to Farmers that complain but don't let the Harvest</p>	<p>Thank you for your report. We do condition damage claims that are filed with us on allowing access.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>thin the heard out. If we hunted this area for only 3 days I would only blame myself but for 2 weeks from daylight to daybreak the hunt did not pan out as expected. Hopefully these Farmers that complain are not going to be given money to rebuild there fences for damage done.</p>	
<p>Don't extend the general rifle season for elk Get rid of the cow permits you hand out for rifle and muzzle loader hunters. Each cow or doe taken by a cat is killing at least 1-2 newborns each time. Keep your new proposal to eliminate the taking of cows by rifle hunters in the Glenwood area. I have seen a slaughter of cows on opening day each year. Herds are slaughtered by these hunters and on or around land owner properties.</p>	<p>In general, modern firearm elk season days can be provided during the week without adding much harvest. The idea is to provide a few more days and spread out the hunters through the season. Antlerless permits help us manage the elk population levels to meet management objectives. This technique also helps with addressing property damage problems.</p>
<p>1) There is no 'any bull' tag in GMU 175 (Lick Creek) a. Although I am in no way trained to determine herd strength or numbers, I have noticed an apparent and large increase in the number of mature bulls in this unit over the past 7 years. b. I suggest allowing one 'any bull' archery tag in this unit (permit only) I am not opposed to the shortening of archery seasons, and feel it to be a good decision, especially to increase the opportunity for muzzleloaders. Thank you for taking the time to consider these concerns. I would be very interested in learning more about the season setting process, specifically the threshold herd numbers on which decisions are made.</p>	<p>We conduct annual surveys to determine whether bull permits are appropriate and at this point we are not comfortable recommending any permits for 2009 in GMU 175.</p>
<p>I support the public meeting and the process to set hunting seasons. I don't recall any of the archery closures and shorter seasons on the agenda during the public meetings or the on-line surveys.</p>	<p>During the past year, a citizen committee worked with the Department to evaluate the allocation of hunting opportunity between archers, muzzleloaders and modern firearm hunters. They looked beyond past guidelines of hunter participation rates and equitable proportion of harvest. In other words if a user group makes up 20% of the hunters, they should harvest 20% of the elk. The parameters they considered included timing of hunts, days of opportunity, and proportion of mature, antlered, and antlerless deer and elk harvested. There were some inequities among the groups and so the Department looked at providing more days for muzzleloaders and modern firearm hunters and creating some limited special permit opportunities during the rut for modern firearm hunters. Those recommendations surfaced in late January and continue to be modified slightly as we approach the March Commission meeting.</p>
<p>More days need to be added to the muzzleloader season in GMU 368. It is getting harder to harvest an elk in this unit.</p>	<p>When we compare success and harvest among the three user groups, we feel we are very close to achieving equitable opportunity. I think everyone had a tough time last year because of the mild weather.</p>
<p>Right now you have GMU's 652, 653, and 654 open for early archery but not late. GMU 652 is open for late muzzleloader, why can't we have a late archery season in one of the GMUs?</p>	<p>We don't feel that the elk population in GMU's 653 and 654 can support added harvest at this time. Archery harvest in this district is meeting or exceeding what is equitable between users.</p>
<p>The WDFW wants to make the Stella unit open for cows during all 3 seasons without a permit. So modern and muzzle loader and archery would be 3-point or antler less. I think this is dumb and the elk are having a hard enough time with the bad winters and hoof rot already so three years of that open season should just about wipe them all out. I own 2 pieces of property in the Beacon hill area that a herd occasionally resides in and I would hate to see then wiped out. Maybe a certain number of tags for this area would be appropriate.</p>	<p>This is another situation like many across the state where human development is eroding former wildlife habitat. Once development crosses a threshold, there is not enough habitat or social tolerance to maintain large elk populations. The Stella area may be crossing that threshold.</p>

Start archers on August 25 for black tailed deer to offset giving more opportunity to other groups.	The Agency has traditionally stayed away from August due to other recreationists, heat, and fire danger but we may have to explore that in the future.
Don't take away 8 days from the late season in Willapa Hills. If you have to take away the first early day, not the end days.	We are trying to address some of the inequities that favor archery elk hunters by shifting the early season a little earlier and reducing some of the days in the late season. This should result in fewer mature bulls being killed.
Fix the westside inequity for archers.	We are trying to address some of the inequities for archery elk hunters by shifting the early season a little earlier and reducing some of the days in the late season. This should result in fewer mature bulls being killed.
Fix the overlap of deer and elk season for modern firearm and muzzleloader at the Oak Creek area. People with highpowered weapons show up to set up camp and ruin our hunt.	For 2009, muzzleloader deer ends on Oct. 4 and muzzleloader elk ends on Oct. 9. Modern firearm deer will open on Oct. 17. That should address the problem for the short term but as the calendar shifts; those closing and opening dates will get closer and closer together.
The elk areas hunting is on private lands. Can't get permission. Not really an opportunity.	It's the hunter's responsibility to develop a relationship with the landowner in order to gain access. We cannot force private landowners to allow access to every hunter that asks.
Go permit only in the Colockum. Bulls are down 70% in five years. True spike is not the answer.	There are over 6,000 hunters that hunt the Colockum elk herd during the general season. The Agency is not ready to implement that drastic of a measure at this time.
Opposed to 503, 513, and 516 expansion of cow harvest opportunities. It is not consistent with the Game Management Plans. (petition supporting this comment: 495 signatures received).	The Agency is responsible for addressing damage issues and keeping elk populations at a level that landowners will tolerate.
Doesn't support modern firearm hunt during the rut.	The Agency has received numerous requests for this kind of opportunity over the years. We are starting cautiously as we explore this new idea.
Supports true spike in the Colockum, unless it needs to be closed for conservation.	The Colockum herd is not in a condition that would require a conservation closure at this time. Thank you for the support.
If you need to go to permit for the Colockum, then close it for a year.	The Colockum herd is not in a condition that would require a conservation closure at this time.
In the Colockum and Manastash need to get accurate tribal data so that we aren't guessing about harvest.	Accurate harvest records from all entities has always been the goal of the Department and we will continue to try to achieve that goal.
Look at old hunt for the Colockum (Dec. 1-15). It was a good hunt.	The Colockum herd would likely not be able to support that kind of a hunt, especially in December.
Need a migration corridor. Elk are not migrating the way they used to in the Colockum area.	We'll look into this aspect. Thank you for your comment.
We want our elk season back in Yakima (Rimrock area).	There are special permit hunts in the Rimrock, just like all the Yakima units.

WAC 232-28-353 2009 Deer special permits

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Under **Modern Firearm**, change Desert A from Nov. 15-24 to Oct. 31-Nov. 8 and change the permits from 19 to 15. After further discussions with Regional staff, this time frame better matches management objectives and provides two weekends of opportunity. The change in permit levels allows the establishment of a second time period to be allowed for modern firearm hunters.
- Under **Modern Firearm**, add a new hunt, Desert B, Nov. 21-29, any deer, GMU 290, 4 permits. This proposed change spreads some of the modern firearm pressuring the Desert unit, provides two weekends of opportunity, and avoids hunting in a critical time period per the Regional staff's desires.

- Under **Modern Firearm**, change Desert B to “C” and change the dates from Oct. 17-31 to Dec. 14-27. This date change better meets the management objectives of Regional staff to effect some antlerless harvest.
- Under **Muzzleloader**, change Desert C to “D” and change the dates from Nov. 1-8 to Oct. 17-25. After further discussions with Regional staff, this time frame better matches management objectives and provides two weekends of opportunity. The proposed change also allows fitting all of the Desert hunts into the calendar.

- Under **Archery** add the following two special permit hunts:

Entiat D	Dec. 1-8	Antlerless	GMU 247	60
Swakane E	Dec. 1-8	Antlerless	GMU 250	75

This change is in response to the public input received by archery hunters dissatisfied with losing opportunity in the Entiat and Swakane units.

- Under **Archery**, change Swakane “E” to Swakane D and change the date to Nov. 21-30. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Archery**, end the following hunts on Dec. 8 instead of Dec. 15: Chiwawa D, Slide Ridge C, Big Bend B, and Ritzville C. After further discussions with Regional staff, this time frame better matches management objectives without hunting deer too late in the year on winter range.
- Under **Archery**, change Desert D to “E” and change the dates from Nov. 25-Dec. 8 to Nov. 30-Dec. 13. After further discussions with Regional staff, this time frame better matches management objectives and provides two weekends of opportunity. The proposed change also allows fitting all of the Desert hunts into the calendar.
- Under **Archery**, add a hunt, Miller, Jan. 1-20, 2010, any deer, Deer Area 6020, 30 permits. This change corrects an omission in the filing of the CR 102.
- Under **Disabled Hunter**, change Entiat E to “F.” This change corrects ordering after adding an additional hunt.
- Under **Youth Modern**, change Entiat F to “G.” This change corrects ordering after adding an additional hunt.
- Under **Youth Modern**, change Swakane F to “G.” This change corrects ordering after adding an additional hunt.
- Under **Youth Modern Firearm**, change Desert E to “F.” This change corrects ordering after adding an additional hunt.
- Under **Youth Muzzleloader**, change Desert F to “G.” This change corrects ordering after adding an additional hunt.
- Under **Youth Archery**, change Desert G to “H”. This change corrects ordering after adding an additional hunt.
- Under **Master Hunter**, Special Deer Permits, add the following hunt:

Miller	Jan. 1-20, 2010	Any deer, archery only	That part of Deer Area 6020 east of Sequim Bay	30 permits
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This change corrects an omission in the filing of the CR 102.

- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permit Hunts:**

Change the ending date from Nov. 24 to Nov. 20 for the following hunts:

- East Okanogan A
- West Okanogan A
- Sinlahekin A
- Chewuch A
- Pearrygin A
- Gardner A

This change still gives modern firearm hunters more days than last year, keeps the timing consistent with adjacent 200 series units, and accommodates the late archery season.

- Delete Wannacut A. This change accommodates reinstating the late archery general season in this GMU.
- Change the number of permits for Sinlahekin C from 30 to 5 and change the ending date from Nov. 24 to Nov. 20. This change still gives modern firearm hunters more days than last year, keeps the timing consistent with adjacent 200 series units, and accommodates the late archery season.

- Change the number of permits for Pogue A from 30 to 15 and change the ending date from Nov. 24 to Nov. 20. This change still gives modern firearm hunters more days than last year, keeps the timing consistent with adjacent 200 series units, and accommodates the late archery season.
- Delete Chiliwist A. This change accommodates late season permits for archery and muzzleloader in this GMU.
- Change the number of permits for Alta A from 39 to 20 and change the ending date from Nov. 24 to Nov. 20. This change still gives modern firearm hunters more days than last year, keeps the timing consistent with adjacent GMUs, and accommodates the late muzzleloader season.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permit Hunts:**
Change the ending date from Nov. 24 to Nov. 20 for the following hunts:
 - Manson A
 - Chiwawa A
 - Slide Ridge A
 - Entiat A
 - Big Bend A
 - Swakane A
 - Mission A

This change still gives modern firearm hunters more days than last year, keeps the timing consistent with adjacent GMUs, and accommodates the late muzzleloader season.
- Under **Muzzleloader Only Deer Permit Hunts**, delete Wannacut B. This change helps allocate opportunity among the users. The permit hunt for muzzleloaders was shifted to the Alta unit.
- Change “Chiliwirs B” to “Chiliwist A.” This change corrects a clerical error and resets the alphabetical sequence of hunts in this GMU.
- Under **Muzzleloader Only Deer Permit Hunts:**
Change the number of permits for Alta B from 5 to 20. This change helps allocate opportunity among the users. The permit hunt for muzzleloaders was shifted to the Alta unit.
- Change the date for Desert E to Nov. 30-Dec. 13. This change corrects a clerical error.
- Under **Special Deer Permits – Second Deer Tag:**
Change the boundary description for Colville River from Deer Area 1030 to Deer Area 1035. This change corrects a clerical error.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the end date for Kelly Hill A, Douglas A, Aladdin B, 49 Degrees North A, Huckleberry A, and Mount Spokane A from Nov. 20-25 to Nov. 20-24. This change avoids overlap with archery seasons.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, delete the Sherman hunt. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the date for Palouse to Nov. 7-19 and change the permits from 625 to 750. From a deer management perspective a shorter time period and more permits helps to maximize deer hunting opportunity.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the date for West Okanogan B to Oct. 17-25. This change corrects a date shift error that was filed in the CR-102.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the number of permits in Entiat A from 52 to 30. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the number of permits in Swakane A from 38 to 20. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the number of permits in Mission A from 22 to 10. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the dates for Naneum A, Teanaway A, and L. T. Murray A to Nov. 16-22. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting to correct an error in the calendar date adjustments.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the dates for Quilomene A, Bethel, and Cowiche to Nov. 9-22. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting to correct an error in the calendar date adjustments.
- Under **Modern Firearm Deer Permits**, change the end date for Wind River B and West Klickitat B to Nov. 20. This change corrects a date change error in the CR-102 and also accommodates new late archery permits incorporated in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.

- Under **Muzzleloader Only Deer Permits**, for Roosevelt A, Harrington A, and Steptoe A, add to the special restrictions mule deer. This clarifies the intent of the new proposed hunts, which is to specifically target mule deer bucks with the stated antler characteristics.
- Under **Muzzleloader Only Deer Permits**, change the date for Mission D to Nov. 21-30, and change the number of permits from 2 to 20. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Muzzleloader Only Deer Permits**, change the dates for Naneum B, Teanaway B, and L. T. Murray B to Nov. 9-15. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting to correct an error in the calendar date adjustments.
- Under **Muzzleloader Only Deer Permits**, change Quilomene B to “Any buck”. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting to correct an error in the calendar date adjustments.
- Under **Muzzleloader Only Deer Permits**, change the dates for Bald Mountain to Nov. 9-22. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting to correct an error in the calendar date adjustments.
- Under **Archery Only Deer Permits**, change the date on Entiat C to Nov. 21-30 and change the number of permits from 17 to 55. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Archery Only Deer Permits**, change the date on Entiat D to Nov. 21-30. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting and also keeps the date consistent with Entiat C.
- Under **Archery Only Deer Permits**, add West Klickitat C, Nov. 21-30, 3pt. min., GMU 578, 100 permits. This change is in response to the public input provided at the March Commission Meeting.
- Under **Archery Only Deer Permits**, change West Klickitat C to West Klickitat H. This is to correct a clerical error.
- Under **Special Modern Firearm Deer Permits for Hunters 65 and Older**, change the date for Horse Heaven Hills A to Oct. 17-30. This change corrects a date-change error in the filing of the CR-102 and makes the special permit hunt coincide with the general season dates.
- Under **Disabled Hunter Deer Permits**, change the date for Horse Heaven Hills B to Oct. 17-30. This change corrects a date-change error in the filing of the CR-102 and makes the special permit hunt coincide with the general season dates.
- Under **Youth Special Deer Permits, Modern Firearm Only**, change the date for Horse Heaven Hills C to Oct. 17-30. This change corrects a date-change error in the filing of the CR-102 and makes the special permit hunt coincide with the general season dates.
- Under **Youth Special Deer Permits, Modern Firearm Only**, change the date for Kahlotus E to Oct. 17-30. This change corrects a date-change error in the filing of the CR-102 and makes the special permit hunt coincide with the general season dates.
- Under **Special Deer Permits, Second Deer Tag**, change the late archery start date for Kelly Hill B, Douglas B, 49 Degrees North B, Huckleberry B, Mt. Spokane B, Mica Peak A, Spokane North, and Spokane South to November 26. This change avoids an overlap with the new modern firearm special permit hunts in these GMUs and makes them consistent with the general season dates.
- Under **Special Deer Permits, Second Deer Tag**, change the number of permits for Spokane North from 550 to 450. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting in response to deer population numbers and winter conditions.
- Under **Special Deer Permits, Second Deer Tag**, change the number of permits for Mt. Spokane B from 200 to 150. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting in response to deer population numbers and winter conditions.
- Under **Special Deer Permits, Second Deer Tag**, change the number of permits for Spokane South from 150 to 125. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting in response to deer population numbers and winter conditions.
- Under **Special Deer Permits, Second Deer Tag**, change the end date for Spokane South for modern firearm to Oct. 25. This change corrects a clerical error filed in the CR-102.
- Under **Special Deer Permits, Second Deer Tag**, change the number of permits for Roosevelt B from 325 to 250. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting in response to deer population numbers and winter conditions.

- Under **Special Deer Permits, Second Deer Tag**, add “Modern firearm only” to the dates for Steptoe B and Almota A. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting that corrects a clerical error in the filing of the CR-102.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I just got done reviewing some of your deer special permit draft numbers. You plan to take 93% of the archery permits away from the Entiat! While actually give 5 more to rifle . You joking right? Not only are the original 52 tags for rifle to many you added 5 more! The Entiat was a premium deer unit when it first reopened after the fire. You then proceeded to ruin it by giving out to many tags for rifle and yes unleashing a general archery season in the unit. The rifle guys would still purchase special permit application even if there were only 10 permits not 57!! I agree that 248 permits for archery is too many 20 per season would be plenty.17 for archery 57 for rifle seems a little unequal to me.</p>	<p>Most special permits are issued based on an allocation formula that takes the proportion of the hunter base and the success rate of those hunters. For example if archers make up 15% of the deer hunters then they should harvest 15% of the deer available in the Entiat. So if the objective is to harvest 100 deer, archers would be allocated 15. The number of permits issued would be based on average success rates for archers in this hunt. So if 10% of archers kill a deer in this unit and timeframe, then you would issue 150 permits to harvest 15 deer.</p> <p>In the past this unit was a special situation where archers received a disproportionate amount of the harvest. However, there were other units in the Chelan and Okanogan units that were only allocated to modern firearm hunters. The recommendation now provides permits to all three groups in these units.</p>
<p>My 2nd concern is why would we reduce the number of “second deer” permits available in Unit 124 when we are over run with deer and need to control the populations? Please allow us to take at least more antlerless deer to control our herds and manage our Doe to Buck ratio. Thank you for all your hard work and willingness to listen to your constituents.</p>	<p>We have had a couple of bad winters back to back and deer numbers have declined. White-tailed deer populations do come back quickly, so expect permit levels to increase in the next couple of years.</p>
<p>I recently reviewed the proposed regulation changes for the 2009-2011 hunting seasons and things are looking great. I enjoyed reading about some of the changes taking place and I greatly appreciate the process that allows the hunter to see the changes before they appear in the hunting pamphlets. Modern firearm hunting regulations for deer have also seen quite a number of changes. Most noticeably (for my hunting habits), the changing of antler less permit to "2nd deer" permits. Clarification on "2nd deer" would benefit new hunters and eliminate any confusion as to the number and type of deer that are legal. I've listened to many questions adhering to this topic and I fear there are many more hunters out there not asking the question. Overall I am very pleased with the changes to the 2009-2011 hunting seasons and I will look forward to reading the finalized documents.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments, we will try to make it very clear in the hunting pamphlet what the 2nd deer tag allows a hunter to do.</p>
<p>Regarding the newly created Special Deer Permit - Second Deer Tag area titled "Colville River" (*Deer Area #1035?), it seems this new area is open for any type weapon. If so, I find this unfair to the archery hunter who will be run out of the area due to foot traffic and noise made by the modern and muzzleloader hunters in the same area at the same time. What is the rationale for doing this? It can't be safety because hunter orange isn't required in the Huckleberry B permit area which I believe the Colville River area falls within. I wonder if this is just an error. If it's not an error, I suggest you do away with the Colville River area and move the 25 available permits to the Huckleberry B permit where the permit numbers have been reduced from 150 to just 45 -- counting the 25 Colville River permits.</p>	<p>This is a damage hunt to reduce deer numbers around small farms. The types of weapons used and hunters allowed on some of these farms will depend on the landowner. We wanted to start this new hunt with a modest number of permits and maximize the flexibility for hunters and landowners. It will likely be modified over time.</p>
<p>Why are there no Youth hunts in Western Washington?</p>	<p>There are youth permit hunts because the antlerless harvest</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I noticed that the Northeast unit GMU 105, 108, 121, 124 was taken away and the 121 unit went from 150 tags to 20. Archery hunters went from having 550 available tags in the 121 unit to 20. The 124 unit was changed to 400 tags. 581 people put in for that Northeast unit and a large majority of them hunt in 121. Please consider adding 121 to the 124 unit or keep the Northeast unit but just decrease the number from last years 400 to maybe 200. The 121 unit gives people like me (a meat hunter) the opportunity to put another white tail in the freezer for my family. Drive thru Chewelah at night sometime and you will see there is no shortage of white tail does in the area.</p>	<p>must be controlled with black-tailed deer.</p> <p>We have had a couple of bad winters back to back and deer numbers have declined. White-tailed deer populations do come back quickly, so expect permit levels to increase in the next couple of years.</p>
<p>Commission members, I am writing in response to the proposed late season permit quotas for the 200 series units. I am a firm believer of allowing late permit hunts but feel the quotas proposed are too high. The Entiat unit has seen a drastic reduction in mature bucks being killed. The unit was once a highly sought after tag, with a reputation of harvesting quality mature bucks, but do to high permit levels, the quality has gone downhill. The Alta unit also used to yield mature bucks, with a proposal to allow 39 permits is way out of proportion. Having hunted the Sinlahekin unit for the last 27 years, I was excited to see it open up to a late permit opportunity, but I am concerned with allowing 30 permits. I have applied the last 12 years for a late season permit and am looking forward to having a once in a lifetime hunt during the rut but feel with the new proposals, it will only be a matter of time before these units and all of the Okanogan units will in the end suffer in quality of bucks. A reduction of 50 percent in proposed permits will ensure quality animals in the future. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment, we will carefully monitor harvest success and impact on the deer. These are fairly conservative permit levels that can be adjusted in the future.</p>
<p>I am writing to comment on the proposed regulations. I am in favor of the special deer permits in the NE Washington units that allow deer hunting during late November. In GMU 117 I see that the proposed dates are November 20-25. I would prefer the dates to be November 21-28 so the entire Thanksgiving week would be open for the hunt. Also it seems that 5 permits is a very small number of permits. Please increase it to 10. I am also in favor of the new regulations for multiple season permits. If possible, please reduce the application fee to allow more hunters to apply.</p>	<p>We are starting out with conservative permit levels to monitor impacts on buck ratios. The dates provided already result in a loss of a few days for the late archery season, so we are not recommending any more days for the modern firearm permits. The Commission does not have the authority to change the permit application fee.</p>
<p>In order to lessen the pressure on the winter feed areas along the Columbia (where there is now competition with the mountain sheep) and to reduce the number of auto-killed animals during the winter along highway 97A I would like to see more of a late hunt for modern firearms in GMU 250 and adjoining areas of the Entiat valley.</p>	<p>We have cut back on our harvest objectives in these units for 2009. We are also not convinced that harvesting a few more deer would result in fewer vehicle collisions. Hopefully the fence being constructed will help with a reduction of collisions.</p>
<p>Reducing the number of day's seniors, youth and disabled hunters have to hunter Antlerless deer – I strongly urge the WDFW to avoid this, and I will speak specifically to the youth hunter portion of this. I have two sons, 14 years old and 12 years old. I took both boys out hunting for antlerless deer several times (GMU 142) during the 9 day general deer season in October 2008. We all three had a great time together and it was a positive experience for both boys. The youngest son got an antlerless White-tailed deer and he was ecstatic! At this time in their lives they are excited about the opportunity to hunt deer. With the current antlerless White-tailed deer regulation for youth hunters, they have a good chance to at least get a shot at a deer or two. As you are well aware, the number of hunters continues to</p>	<p>We are strong proponents of the youth, senior, and hunters with disabilities opportunities. As always, we try to balance the allocation of harvest and this year is no different, especially when we are cutting back the antlerless harvest for a year or two.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>decline each year, I believe primarily due to the lack of recruiting new, young hunters into the ranks. Reducing hunting opportunities for youth will serve to add to this decline. I strongly recommend that you look at other options before considering reducing antlerless deer hunting opportunities for the youth.</p>	
<p>While I'm not sure what the game dept agenda is with cutting out the Swakane season, To take pressure off the deer while in their winter range is a poor excuse. While David Volsen (Wenatchee office) saw many bucks during his fly-over of the Burch Mt area, this was done well after the season closed. The deer herd from the Stevens Pass area was still in the Chumstick valley in mid December. Having hunted Burch for as long as we have had the season, I would say the full migration has been in the area two times in the past ten years. Buck escapement is surely not a consideration, after all, the rifle permits that were given out in the Swakane and Chiwawa units were for ANY DEER, while us archery hunters had 3 pt or antlerless. The same was true for the muzzleloaders (any deer). While I realize the permit drawing is a money maker, I think doing away with Swakane will cost the Dept money in a long run. Our season in September most years are usually far too hot to hunt for mules, and I have always optioned for a late hunt. Myself along with many other archers may now be forced to opt for the gun season, or just plan an out of state hunt. The one thing the Dept will accomplish by doing away with the Swakane hunt, will be the increase of deer/car accidents along the US 2 corridor between Monitor and Cashmere. This recommendation is a poor decision.</p>	<p>We are trying to reduce buck harvest to improve our buck ratios. At the same time, the number of archery hunters in the Swakane unit has nearly doubled (400 to 800) in the last four years. We needed to make a change in the harvest and permit levels are now allocated by the formula described previously.</p> <p>The deer regulation for the permits is now consistent for all users.</p>
<p>I think it is ridiculous that you are taking out the antlerless deer hunts in the Mica Peak (GMU127). There is an over abundance of does and very few mature bucks in this area. By leaving this open to 3 point or better and not allowing any does to be taking is not going to help the buck to doe ratio, and then by adding a second deer tag, also for 3-point or better buck is really going to deplete and hopes of having mature bucks in this area. I hope you read this and think about the decision the game dept. is making.</p>	<p>The antlerless harvest issue was addressed earlier.</p> <p>The harvest success rate for late buck permits should be less than 20%. So the five permits allocated should result in two bucks being harvested. We generally harvest over 400 bucks each year during the hunting season. These permits are not expected to have any impact.</p>
<p>What about opening to two doe/cow per tag in GMU 284? It is an overpopulated unit with pockets of intense herds. For more details, we'd be happy to discuss the changes we've seen in 30 years of hunting this specific unit. Additionally, we ranch and farm the land and can graph the impacts of weather trends. Particularly we can describe in migration of deer/elk to these ranges with creeks and lakes. During the past 8 years of severe drought, the game migrates and concentrates in these ranges, causing drastic decline in range plant population. The animal units per acre are greater than the range can support. The stewardship, left then to the rancher alone, requires a decrease in cattle. For the past five years, the annual decrease we've made in cattle numbers has not kept pace as the increase in deer/elk populations have outstripped.</p>	<p>We have tried to liberalize harvest in this are especially for elk. This year we are adding even more days for taking any elk. If that isn't enough, we can add more for next year.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Retain GMU 388 late deer archery rules the same as 2008 (without special doe permits), except shorten the season from 19 days to 11 days (preferably Nov. 28 through Dec. 8). This will lower the doe pressure and kills, without eliminating the hunting opportunity for some of us.</p> <p>I am now 70 years old and have hunted GMU 388 late deer hunting area for 30 years. Our group of three archery hunters normally hunt 4 to 6 days and have only taken an average of 5/8 ths of a deer per year between us all. We rarely see a 3 pt buck and then more likely ever get a shot. We enjoy the outdoor experience of the area even though we are not very successful. We always hope. Going the doe permit route would probably be the end of our late archery deer hunts. There are but a few viable Eastern Washington late season archery hunts.</p>	<p>We are trying to reduce antlerless harvest to rebuild the deer population in this GMU. We encourage you and your hunting party to put in for a group permit. Most antlerless permits are drawn every two to three years.</p>
<p>Please expand the youth hunting opportunities. There are really no options for youth to obtain trophy hunts thru the special permit process, or in my opinion not nearly enough. If we can't give the youth those experiences, we will see a large decline their participation. I personally get more satisfaction watching kids hunt, and be successful.</p>	<p>We appreciate your support for youth opportunities and we will continue to pursue additional permits.</p>
<p>I have 2 Recommendations: I think that doe permits and cow permits should only be available to youth hunters, If you save all of those doe and cow's every year, over time you should produce a lot more animals.</p> <p>I also think that every few years you guys should do a two or three year span of 2 point or better just to let some bucks grow, just because there are not very many big bucks in this area and the Does and Spikes get slaughtered every year!</p>	<p>When we are below our population objectives, we reduce antlerless permit levels.</p> <p>Two point restrictions do not have much impact on recruiting older age class bucks. We have had several such units for many years and the numbers of older bucks harvested are not different from units that allow the harvest of any buck.</p>
<p>I would like to see a late mule deer hunt in the Blue Mountains. Similar to what the Late white tail tag is, and some more areas open late for archery.</p>	<p>The mule deer buck escapement in the Blue Mountains is not good enough at this point to allow a late hunt.</p>
<p>Rifle Deer season: Make all western Washington permit only, let's get some quality. ww late buck needs to be permit only or point res.</p>	<p>This option has not been popular with deer hunters.</p>
<p>Okanogan deer - A little over 10 years ago you had a late archery hunt (I believe it was called the Mallot Unit) that was intended for this purpose. It was taken away after the big storm in 1995 or 1996, because of high kill off. It ran the second half of December to the middle of January. I understood and agreed with this decision. If it is being a problem again maybe this hunt could help out or something like it.</p>	<p>This hunt is no longer needed as a management tool for controlling deer damage in the Mallot area.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Reduce archery permits in central Washington by fifty percent or more for mule deer. High mortality due to poor ethics (robin hood syndrome 120+ yard shots) results in poor shot placement and eventual mortality.</p>	<p>Archery hunting opportunity has been reduced for 2009. In most studies, wounding mortality is similar for archery equipment and modern firearms. It doesn't seem to matter whether you shoot 100 yards with a bow or 500 yards with a rifle, both shots probably exceed most hunters' capabilities.</p>
<p>I am writing to voice my concern for the proposed changes in the 2009-2011 seasons. My most concern is in the Alta unit. I believe that the number of permits should be considerably reduced instead of increased.</p> <p>The past 2 seasons have been very tough on them. I have hunted this area as I was a young kid (35+ years). I put in for points only for special permits last year in the Alta unit due to the high population decrease.</p> <p>After the regular season I like to photograph the deer in the breeding and migration range. It was very depressing to see the lack of bucks this year. On a normal year I would be able to get some excellent pictures of deer in their range. However this year I got one picture of a 3 point where I normally would see 30 + deer.</p> <p>Please take serious consideration in reducing the number of permits. I would hate to see the Alta herd decimated. If someone like me (Master Hunter also) is willing to sacrifice my hunting for benefit of the population then this should be looked at.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and hard effort on trying to pacify all groups of hunters.</p>	<p>We plan to monitor the results of our permit hunts closely to determine appropriate levels for the future. Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>After looking over the new proposals, I do have some concerns. I live and do the most of my hunting in unit 504 Stella. First, I would like to tell you what I have seen happen to our deer in my area. In the 35 years I have lived here I've been fortunate to have great hunting right in my own backyard. Good genetics, good habitat and locked gates have provided me with a quality hunting experience year after year. But since the hair loss problem the deer have dwindled down to so few that I rarely see any in my daily commute, in the past I was dodging deer every night, and in the fall there was never an apple left on the ground. Now I see only a few all year long, and all the homes with apple trees where the deer use to gather have nothing but rotten apples and no deer. Currently Does are fare game in archery and muzzle loader seasons and there are 75 antlerless tags for modern firearm. Please give the deer a break and stop killing DOES so they have a chance to make a healthy recovery.</p>	<p>This area is relatively urban and deer tend to cause problems if allowed to build up too high. These minimal permit levels help keep the population in check.</p>
<p>The Vashon Island Second Deer Permit is once again "Antlerless Only". Why can't it be as most of the other island hunt are..."Any Deer"? We should be looking at methods of cropping the already burgeoning island deer population on Vashon Island as well as others.</p>	<p>We are trying to encourage hunters to take antlerless deer. A buck can be taken with the hunter's primary tag.</p>
<p>Deer – In support of these proposals, especially the following items: Permit levels for mule deer modern firearm New whitetail rut hunts Nov. 21-25 Additional week for the November permit hunts Opening 101 to the late whitetail season with modern firearm Would like to see a 101 late mule deer rut hunt with 5 tags given. Would like to see some any buck tags for the modern firearm general seasons to help thin out those big 2x2 bucks. Perhaps give out 20 per unit or something like that.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>Thank You for the work on the 395 Corridor Hunt. I am not sure that it will help the situation with the cars, but at least it</p>	<p>Thanks for your support.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
effort. I would hope that we can get the area widened to make the area similar to what we had on the map and extend it south to where Highway 231 and 395 intersect south of Chewelah.	
Why does modern firearm get 24 days for their late permits and the archers get nine. The additional GMUs open for archery permits in the north central part of the state in no way makes up for all of the general season closures.	The original intent was to provide some modern firearm opportunity closer to the peak of the rut. However, we are recommending some changes that back off some of the time frame and have the modern firearm permit hunts ending November 20, 2009 in the north central part of the state. Archers would start the 21 st of November through the 30 th . We have also changed our recommendation regarding some of the GMUs that were open for late archery general seasons. Our long term intent is still to manage these late seasons using permits to better control harvest. But we agree that we were making many changes and they were coming a little too quickly. We now plan to phase into the permit season and permit levels for archers over the next few years.
There are too many permits in the Pogue unit for late modern firearm. It would be nice to have more trophy aged bucks in the populations.	We are comfortable with current permit levels for the late seasons. We plan to start collecting additional age data from harvested bucks if funding allows.
We need additional doe permits in Adams county; there are too many deer.	We will continue to monitor the deer population level and increase antlerless harvest when it is warranted.

WAC 232-28-354 2009 Elk special permits

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Provides recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, helps reduce wildlife damage to agricultural crops, and protects deer and elk from overharvest.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

- Delete all of the Turnbull hunts. The federal refuge is still going through the federal register process and will not be completed in time to offer the hunts this year.
- Under **Modern Firearm Bull** permits, change Peaches Ridge A from 142 to 129 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Bull** permit, change Observatory A from 70 to 65 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Bull** permits, change Goose Prairie A from 95 to 77 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Bull** permits, change Bethel A from 54 to 38 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Bull** permits, change Rimrock A from 127 to 117 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Bull** permits, change Cowiche A from 22 to 17 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Bull** Permits, change Toutle A from 60 to 131 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Modern Firearm Bull** permits, change the Olympic B boundary description from GMU 618 to GMU 621, Except for Elk Area 6071. This change is to correct a clerical error. The wrong GMU was listed in the boundary description.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change the dates for Mountain View C from Oct. 25-Nov. 2 to Oct. 31-Nov. 8. This change corrects a calendar-date adjustment omission.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Nile A from 50 permits to 30 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Bumping A from 100 permits to 75 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.

- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Bethel C from 100 permits to 50 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Rimrock C from 200 permits to 150 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Cowiche C from 200 permits to 150 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Klickitat Meadows B from 9 permits to 5 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless**, add the following hunt:

North Bend A	Nov. 7-Nov. 17	Antlerless	WF	Elk Area 4601	5
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This change corrects an omission in the filing of the CR-102.

- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Winston A from 40 to 100 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Margaret C from 25 to 70 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Coweeman A from 65 to 120 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Coweeman B from 35 to 50 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Modern Firearm Antlerless** Permits, change Toutle C from 60 to 120 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Muzzleloader Bull** Permits, change Peaches Ridge C from 23 to 22 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Bull** Permits, change Observatory C from 24 to 21 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Bull** Permits, change Goose Prairie C from 15 to 13 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Bull** Permits, change Bethel D from 15 to 12 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Bull** Permits, change Rimrock D from 18 to 16 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Bull** Permits, change Cowiche D from 10 to 8 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Bull** Permits, change Toutle D from 13 to 29 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless** Permits, change Nile B from 40 to 25 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless** Permits, change Bumping B from 90 to 60 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless** Permits, change Bethel E from 40 to 25 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless** Permits, change Cowiche E from 250 to 200 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless**, add the following hunts:

North Bend B	Oct. 3-9	Antlerless	WM	Elk Area 4601	5
Skagit River A	Dec. 1-Jan. 20	Any elk	WM	Elk Area 4941	15

These changes correct omissions in the filing of the CR-102.

- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless** Permits, change Winston B from 20 permits to 45. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.

- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless** Permits, change Margaret E from 15 permits to 35. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless** Permits, change Coweeman C from 20 permits to 45. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Muzzleloader Antlerless** Permits, change Toutle E from 20 permits to 50. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Archery Bull** Permit hunts, change Teanaway E from 18 to 19 permits. Correction to the permit allocation formula was made.
- Under **Archery Bull** Permit hunts, change Peaches Ridge D from 104 to 107 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Archery Bull** Permit hunts, change Observatory D from 94 to 92 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Archery Bull** Permit hunts, change Goose Prairie D from 127 to 123 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Archery Bull** Permit hunts, change Bethel F from 32 to 28 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Archery Bull** Permit hunts, change Rimrock E from 103 to 111 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Archery Bull** Permit hunts, change Cowiche F from 13 to 14 permits. Aerial survey counts in February indicate a lower harvest target for this hunt.
- Under **Archery** Permit hunts, change Alkali C from Sept. 8-20 to Sept. 1-26. This is the time period that the Region negotiated with the Yakima Training Center, barring any closures due to training.
- Under **Archery Antlerless**, add the following hunt:

North Bend C	Sept. 8-20	Antlerless	WA	Elk Area 4601	7
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This change corrects an omission in the filing of the CR-102.

- Under **Archery Antlerless** Permit hunts, change Margaret G from 15 permits to 35. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Archery Bull** Permits, change Toutle F from 71 to 79 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Archery Antlerless** Permit hunts, change Toutle G from 60 to 50 permits. This change better addresses the need for population control of the Mount St. Helens elk herd to help meet management objectives.
- Under **Master Hunter Second Elk Tag**, add the following hunts:

North Bend D	Aug. 15-March 31	Antlerless	Any elk tag	Elk Area 4601	25 ^{HM}
Skagit River B	Dec. 1-Feb 28	Any elk	WA, WM	Elk Area 4941	15 ^{HM}

These changes correct omissions in the filing of the CR-102.

- Under **Master Hunter, Second Elk Tag Hunts**, add the following language “. unless tag restriction is noted. In those cases where a tag restriction is noted, hunters must use a weapon consistent with their tag.” The second elk license and tag type must be the same tag type as the first one.

So now the category descriptor should read:

Master Hunter, Second Elk Tag Hunts: Only master hunters may apply; these hunts will not affect accumulated points; a second tag may be purchased by successful applicants as needed; and any weapon may be used, unless tag restriction is noted. In those cases where a tag restriction is noted hunters must use a weapon consistent with their tag. The second elk license and tag type must be the same tag type as the first one.

- Under **Youth – Special Permit Hunts**, add the following: “Any weapon may be used unless tag restriction is noted. In those cases where a tag restriction is noted, hunters must use a weapon consistent with their tag.”

So now the category descriptor should read:

Youth – Special Elk Permit Hunts (Must be eligible for the youth hunting license and accompanied by an adult during the hunt.) Any weapon may be used unless tag restriction is noted. In those cases where a tag restriction is noted, hunters must use a weapon consistent with their tag.

- Under **Persons of Disability Only – Special Elk Permit Hunts**, add the following: “Any weapon may be used unless tag restriction is noted. In those cases where a tag restriction is noted, hunters must use a weapon consistent with their tag.”

So now the category descriptor should read:

Persons of Disability Only – Special Elk Permit Hunts. Any weapon may be used unless tag restriction is noted. In those cases where a tag restriction is noted, hunters must use a weapon consistent with their tag.

- Under **Hunters 65 or Older Only – Special Elk Permit Hunts**, add the following: “Any weapon may be used unless tag restriction is noted. In those cases where a tag restriction is noted, hunters must use a weapon consistent with their tag.”

So now the category descriptor should read:

Hunters 65 or Older Only – Special Permit Hunts. Any weapon may be used unless tag restriction is noted. In those cases where a tag restriction is noted, hunters must use a weapon consistent with their tag.

- Under **Modern Firearm Bull Permit Hunts** add the following hunt:

Lick Creek A	Oct. 26-Nov. 8	Any bull	EF	GMU 175	1
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This change is in response to elk surveys conducted in March.

- Under **Modern Firearm Elk Permits**, any elk, change the number of permits for Dayton E from 30 to 75. This change is in response to elk surveys conducted in March.
- Under **Modern Firearm Elk Permits**, antlerless, change Lick Creek “A” to B. This change accommodates new hunts added in response to elk surveys conducted in March.
- Under **Muzzleloader Bull Permit Hunts** add the following hunt:

Lick Creek C	Oct. 1-14	Any bull	EM	GMU 175	1
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This change is in response to elk surveys conducted in March.

- Under **Muzzleloader Permit Hunts**, change the number for permits for Turnbull E and F from 11 to 9. This was a floor change made at the March Commission Meeting that corrects a clerical error that was filed with the CR-102.

- Under **Muzzleloader Permit Hunts**, add the following hunt:

Dayton G	Oct. 3-11	Antlerless	EM	Elk Area 1016	25
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This change is in response to elk surveys conducted in March.

- Under **Muzzleloader Elk Permits**, change Lick Creek “B” to D. This change accommodates new hunts added in response to elk surveys conducted in March.
- Under **Archery Permit Hunts**, change Dayton “G” to H. This change accommodates a new hunt added in response to elk surveys conducted in March.
- Under **Archery Permit Hunts**, add the following hunt:

Lick Creek E	Sept. 8-20	Any bull	EA	GMU 175	1
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This change is in response to elk surveys conducted in March.

- Under **Archery Permit Hunts**, change Dayton “H” to I. This change accommodates a new hunt added in response to elk surveys conducted in March.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I appreciate the opportunity to respond to proposed rule changes. I am generally pleased with the proposed changes save one issue. I am a Master Hunter that has been enjoying the Toledo D Aug 1-7 Special hunt during the past three seasons. I appreciate being in the woods with other archery hunters who share my concern for the ultimate fair chase. I see that moving forward there will no longer be "archery only" special hunts in this Elk Area. Hopefully I am not alone in my desire to reserve one week of the Toledo special	The intent of this hunt is to address elk damage problems. Therefore all tag holders may apply and participate in an effort to remove additional elk.

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE						
<p>permits for archery only. Please consider amending the proposed rule changes to include one week of Archery Only, Master Hunter Permits for 2009, 2010, and 2011. The week of Aug. 1-7 has worked splendidly for me in the past.</p>							
<p>I looked through the recommendations and if I am reading it correctly GMU 653 is still being recommended as a permit only area for Elk. I have hunted this area for about 12yrs about since I was 12yrs old until about three years ago when it was changed to permit only. This year I made sure I signed up for the WDFW email so I could follow the process for the 09-11 regulations. My biggest issue is that I do not understand why this GMU 653 is permit only? Maybe I just don't know where to get the information or it is not available to the public on who, why, and how of this GMU 653. I can understand that an area may be changed to permit only or shut down to bring herd numbers up. But I would really like to see numbers from before 2006 when it was open as 3 pt or better and numbers when it was Spike only? Then what was the affect of turning GMU 653 to permit only?</p>	<p>The intent is to increase the number of bulls surviving the hunting seasons. This is a popular hunting area for state licensed hunters as well as tribal hunters; so managing harvest takes a cooperative effort. We are working together to achieve our population objectives. To get more information, we recommend that you contact Jack Smith in our Montesano office.</p>						
<p>I have hunted the Williams Creek area for Elk for many years, but still continue to be surprised at the strange dates that you select for your antlerless permit hunts. In 2008 the "cow tags" were valid from Nov 8 to Nov 13. The last 3 days were after bull season had closed, and the last 4 days after most hunters had gone home. It makes it nice and quiet, but it is not always easy getting hunting partners to stick around to help take care of a down cow, after bull season is over.</p> <p>Now, for 2009 you are setting dates of October 26 thru 31 for the "cow tags", which will end 6 days before bull season opens, and will overlap with deer season. If its hard to get your hunting partners to stick around for a late hunt, after bull season closes, how will we ever get anyone there 6 to 12 days before bull season to help?</p> <p>I cannot understand the departments thinking on this issue.</p>	<p>In your situation, we recommend that you put in as a group; then your hunting partners will have the same permit as you. We have been experimenting somewhat with the dates to achieve an attractive hunt that works for everyone.</p>						
<p>I read where you want to open the Toutle to general season it would be better to open it to youth and or the handicapped this has been a coveted tag since 1980</p>	<p>If that is an option in the future, you are correct that we would need to phase the change.</p>						
<p>Next on my list are the archery elk seasons..... I am a little curious as to why there is a need for modern rifle hunters to have tags in some of the best big bull units in the state in the Yakima herds and the Blue Mountain Herds?? Having a rifle hunt in these units is only going to diminish the quality of bulls running around as the 21st – 25th is the peak of the elk rut in our state! Of my experience down in the blues, there are plenty of 300 class bulls running around, and rifle hunters are going to thin them out faster than archery hunters could. Granted it is only proposed that 1 tag be available in the Wenaha, Dayton, Tucannon, etc. but each tag adds up...</p>	<p>This timeframe is very attractive for hunters. The ability to bugle for elk results in what many consider a quality opportunity. It also helps address an in-equity in archery harvest of mature bulls on a statewide basis.</p>						
<p>You need to open the Toutle area up to elk hunting during the regular seasons. There is to much area taken away from hunters and the area has grown back up.</p>	<p>That is something being discussed for the 2012 season.</p>						
<p>Modern firearm hunters don't need anymore advantages to make themselves successful by hunting during the peak of the rut. They seem to kill the majority of bulls for special permits without giving them the best time of the year to hunt them, which neither primitive weapons group gets, and our weapons are limited in range and effectiveness making it much more difficult to be successful.</p>	<p>Actually in recent years, archers have the highest success rate among the three user groups. In 2007 the elk harvest success rates were:</p> <table data-bbox="824 1780 1036 1860"> <tr> <td>Archers</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Muzzleloaders</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Modern Firearm</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> </table>	Archers	11%	Muzzleloaders	8%	Modern Firearm	7%
Archers	11%						
Muzzleloaders	8%						
Modern Firearm	7%						
<p>I would just like to commend the Department for staying w/ the special permits in the Margaret Unit and Toutle. I see</p>	<p>The number of permits proposed for these two units has been adjusted upward in our recommended adjustments.</p>						

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>there has been a decrease in tags which should help the trophy quality. My son drew a Margaret Bull tag last year and it was a great experience. He shot a very nice 5x5 but not many "Trophy" bulls were seen. I do realize that a lot of the hunters there were disappointed but I assure you that we saw plenty animals and some very respectable bulls. I do not wish the tags to be increased however and certainly do not want to see it open as a general unit. Thanks.</p>	
<p>For the most part I like the proposed changes, I realize what an undertaking it must be to try and make everyone happy, I don't envy your positions. I think these new proposals make time afield a little more equal between all three user groups. Judging by the comments I've read on certain websites I can see your going to get a lot of opposition from the bow hunters in this state. In my opinion they have been spoiled long enough. The 2 changes that are proposed that don't make sense to me are the reduction of the spring bear hunts in the Blue Mt. GMUs and the reduction of certain cow permits in the Blue Mt. GMUs to me they seem to contradict each other. By reducing the cow tags I gather there is a lack of elk, so it would only make sense to give out more bear permits in the spring when elk are calving.</p>	<p>While it may seem like a logical strategy, we can not show any correlation between number of black bear permits and increased calf survival. We do see increased cow survival when permits are reduced.</p>
<p>I Archery hunt and it is hard enough to harvest an Elk in the best of conditions let alone compete with a muzzle loader that can shoot accurately up to 200 yards or more. I would like to see the seasons separated better. I hunt GMU 520 most of the time. And every year black powder guys mess my hunt up. I don't care if the GMU is open to black powder, just don't overlap it. Give them there own season after Archery. The other thing I would like to see is an area that is only open for Archery, not a special permit hunt but an area just for archery. It is getting so hard to find elk that hasn't been molested by modern and black powder hunters. The elk are more alert and skittish, they won't respond to calls except to flee as fast as they can. I would appreciate a response to my suggestions.</p>	<p>Separating the seasons is something we continue to consider, but so far the majority of archery and muzzleloader hunters have supported keeping this overlap.</p>
<p>After reviewing the proposed regulation and session changes I have great concern of the dates of the session and the number of permits. Last year there were a huge number of elk permits given out to reduce the size of the herds in the St. Helens area. It appears to me that now the permits have been reduced by 60+%. Did all the elk that was to be harvested get harvested to meet the management plan or are there other considerations on the plan not mentioned? Also the amount of permits for the Margaret Unit has been greatly reduced. This cuts down the chances of permits for holders of 13 points to get a quality hunt, me being one. Being a Muzzle loader hunter, I am also very disappointed in the proposed dated for Late season. The proposed 1-Dec start date takes away from the Thanksgiving hunters who, as my grandsons, are youth hunters, whom have been coming to camp for the past three years during their vacation time to spend time and LEARN about the GREAT OUTDOORS. This proposal is not good. Starting the day before Thanksgiving was always a fare start date and many feel the same. Please take this into considerations when setting the seasons. I believe that there has been an enormous effort into establishing the new regulations but some of the changes may be taking too big of a step too soon.</p>	<p>Between the harsh winters the past two years and the harvest resulting from increasing the permit levels, we think we are reducing the St Helen's elk herd. Our preliminary recommendations were conservative based on our projections. However, the current recommendation is for higher permit levels than our original proposal.</p>
<p>I would like to comment on the reduction of archery permits in the Dayton, Wenaha, Tucannon and any other Blue</p>	<p>We have been increasing the bull permit levels in the Blue Mountains for the past three years. They are allocated</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Mountain Units. I have seen many bulls while scouting and hunting in these units. I talked to other archers that hunt in these units. They talk about the number of big bulls they see in a 7 day hunt. I think it would be fair to add a tag or two for modern firearm but don't take away our archery tags to do it. Drawing a tag in those areas is difficult at best. I say leave or increase the number of archery tags. Those units can stand it.</p>	<p>between archers, muzzleloaders, and modern firearm hunters based on their proportion of elk hunters and harvest success rates.</p>
<p>Archery, blackpowder and modern firearm seasons should alternate so each tool for hunting can get in on the rut, cooer temps etc once every few years. just like unit 346 should be alternated between black powder, modern and archery.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We have taken it under advisement.</p>
<p>I oppose the proposal to give rifle hunters hunts during the peak of the rut. This makes absolutely no sense at all. Archery is considered to be the most difficult weapon to hunt with, then muzzleloaders and finally the rifle. The archery and muzzleloading seasons are set to help give them an advantage because they have disadvantages. This means pre rut and post rut seasons and extended seasons. Rifle hunting is the most effective hunting method, yet the special permit season proposed is during the peak of the rut. This is the best time to hunt elk and gives them a very high percentage of being successful. As far as I can tell they don't need that big of an advantage when you are using a modern firearm. The numbers show they are very effective with the special permit seasons they already have. The one post rut they have in the little Naches that runs from October 1-10 each year shows you how effective they will be if you give them a peak rut hunt. This hunt has extraordinarily high success compared to other user groups that hunt pre rut or post rut. I propose the WDFW give them those five days from Sept. 8-12 and then run the archery season from Sept. 13-26 or give them a post rut hunt from Oct. 1-5. No way should the most efficient hunting method be given tags during the peak of the rut where the animals are vulnerable and the easiest time of year to harvest them.</p>	<p>As mentioned previously, archers are quite successful at harvesting elk. In fact, archers tend to take a greater proportion of mature bulls than the other two groups as well as have higher success rates. It is likely that the greater harvest of mature bulls is because of the timing of the early season. In 2007 the numbers were:</p> <p>Archers made up 22% of the elk hunters and took 31% of the mature bulls harvested; Muzzleloaders made up 14% of the elk hunters and took 15% of the mature bulls; and Modern Firearm hunters made up 64% of the elk hunters and took 54% of the mature bulls. A mature bull was considered greater than five points for this comparison.</p> <p>Because of the in-equity in harvest of mature bulls, we are recommending a few modern firearm permits during the September rut timeframe.</p>
<p>My husband and I have a home in the Columbia heights area and want to let you know that it is absolutely ridiculous to think the WDFD would even consider hunting in this area. These are our backyards, with daily gardening and walking in the woods with our children and grandchildren. They would be endangering so many lives. Most of this land has homes on it we believe. We have the herd of elk here at least once a month for a couple of days. The herd has approx. 38/40 head. We even feed them when we have a chance to with our apples from our trees. If you must do something because of the size of the herd then please relocate them. We understand the herd is growing and will keep doing so. BUT PLEASE COME WITH TRAILERS TO MOVE THEM TO A NEW HOME NOT WITH GUNS!!!! NO GUNS IN OUR BACKYARDS!!!! SOMEONE WILL GET HURT OR KILLED BY THESE HUNTERS!!!!</p>	<p>Hunting in urbanizing areas can be successful if conducted carefully. We are using more highly trained hunters to assist us in these situations.</p> <p>Elk that have been habituated to humans are not good candidates for moving. They just tend to get into trouble where they are released.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>In regards to hunting in the Toutle valley and other limited hunting units. I have a concern about the number of hunters that may be allowed to hunt in these areas. My concern stems from hunting in the Coweeman unit and seeing for first hand how elk are corralled in tight areas by hunters in trucks until one or more hunters that had worked their way into the timber can take a shot. I seen this first hand there was three trucks and nine hunters. or large numbers of hunters making a push to get elk in the open so one or two hunters can take a shot. Over the years hunting we have found a number of elk dead from hunters taking poor shots. Also the elk that do survive bow and modern rifle seasons are run down, thin and some limping from being ran so much by the time muzzle loader season comes around. To do this right limit the number of hunters in a group [2 max] and limit the number of total hunters in an given area, or we well end up with another Coweeman.</p>	<p>We have been trying to spread out the timeframes for permit holders to keep the crowding down to a minimum. We have not received many complaints to date, but will continue to address problem areas. Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>Elk season now has too many tags for cows and permits for cows and bulls in the Toutle unit, and the Winston unit. The seasons for those permits run in to January. And that is ridiculous, those elk are hunger and then it snows, what in the hell is wrong w/you folks, please make it right.</p>	<p>The intent is to reduce the size of this herd so it is healthier and more productive. Once the population has been reduced, the wintering population should have less competition for food and we can consider reducing permit levels and the late winter timeframe.</p>
<p>Two thumbs up, you guys are heading in the right direction. I love the rife elk rut hunt opportunities, great for hunters & great revenue producer for the WDFW - love it. I would have like to have seen the population decline in black-tail in SW Washington addressed through regulations though.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>I do agree with the additional special permit hunts in the rut for elk for rifle, but maybe instead of rifle hunts only the successful drawer could pick which weapon. This is not all about complaining, very good job on planning to get out the regs. earlier and moving the dead line for special permits up a month, very, very smart. Maybe even earlier in the future???? Take care.</p>	<p>Actually, modern firearm hunters may choose which weapon they use. They do have to wear hunter orange however.</p>
<p>Reviewing the proposed game regulations for the next three years, the Department has done nothing to address the over population of the cow herd in the Randle/Packwood area. (516) For the last three years the elk herd in the Randle/Packwood area has grown to a size and ratio unprecedented due to the regulations set forth in the preceding years. The only change being proposed is to allow Advance Hunter Education tag holders, by permit, an either sex hunt with any weapon before other hunters have an opportunity. Basically, before archery season begins. This is not equal opportunity hunting and perhaps discriminating to those hunters in the area and the land owners who suffer the most damage to their crops. Additionally, where are they going to hunt, well known the Cowlitz Area is all private property. How does this manage the herd, "either sex"? Bull (mature) to cow ratio is no less than 30-1, documented by over 1000 photos taken in a years time. The herd is off balance already regardless to the numbers being posted by the Tribe in Puyallup. They don't live and see every day the growing numbers of cow population in the Cowlitz Valley.</p>	<p>We are starting a program of addressing property damage directly. If a landowner has a problem with elk and gives us a call, we can assign one of the permit holders to help target the elk causing the problem.</p>
<p>I just want to state that last year I was rewarded with a cow elk tag in Eastern Washington. I hunted the unit for six days, come to find out there was no resident elk in the unit. There was two hundred tags giving out. How can they figure to give out two hundred tags? When there is no elk in that unit. During the muzzleloader season. That's not right I see those numbers two hundred tags I am going to believe that there is elk in that unit. I cant take the time off to scout the unit.</p>	<p>Last year was a tough one in terms of harvest success. The weather did not cooperate and the migratory elk just did not move down until after most seasons had finished. The season timeframe is based on average years, so sometimes harvest is poor and other times it is good.</p> <p>We are continuing to monitor the road management systems and are converting many green dot systems into gate systems.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Plus one really big thing that got me was the fact that other hunters don't follow the red dot green dot rules. They would pass me on roads that are closed. There goes my hunt. I am Obeying the law, hunting the way it should be. And there is no enforcement to stop those people.</p> <p>Unit: 342 Umtanum</p>	<p>Gated systems are easier to manage and take less enforcement.</p>
<p>Seems the elk population in Margaret unit should be thinned, so would like to have more cow permits in the drawing.</p>	<p>We have been increasing antlerless hunting in the Margaret unit over the past few years. We will continue with high permit levels until the population has been reduced.</p>
<p>While you may not have the support to change the Margaret and Toutle elk areas from permit only to open areas, you clearly need to increase harvest and reduce feeding. This feeding program is biologically and sociologically the wrong thing. Leave these decisions to the biologists who understand the damage done by such a feeding program. Please stop the feeding and increase the harvest.</p> <p>My main concern is your proposal to make it easier for handicap hunters. I am strongly opposed to this. As a wildlife biologist and hunter education instructor, I pay close attention to what the hunting public is doing when afield. Your handicap program requires additional oversight. The majority of so-called handicap hunters I have encountered over the last 15 years are very mobile on both legs and have good use of both arms. I have watched a number of them shooting handguns with either hand, climbing over downfall, and then bragging about their ability to go anywhere on public lands on Quads – including anywhere off-trail. The existing abuses of closed roads and the problem with ad-hoc or boot-leg trails do not need to be supported by this policy. Place additional oversight on this program so only the truly handicapped are able to participate and make sure that those legitimate handicapped hunters know the limitations of their privileges. Thank you for the ability to comment.</p>	<p>We are implementing all of your suggestions including the oversight of the hunters with disabilities. There is an Advisory Group to the Commission who reviews our policies and recommends changes where appropriate.</p>
<p>I have read some of the on the Elk issues and trying to take more spikes is not the answer we need to follow the actions of other states that have better management plans than this state. To get the ratio where it needs to be we need to remove more cows nobody likes to hear this but it is a proven method that works sorry but we need to follow in the foot steps of states with successful game plan</p>	<p>We have increased antlerless permit levels and seasons where reductions are warranted.</p>
<p>I live within the city limits of Longview, WA in the Park Hill Development.</p> <p>I moved there in 1995. Till about the year 2000 no elk were ever seen in my neighborhood, only deer.</p> <p>The next year single elk 'visited'. Their numbers increased rapidly. By 2005 up to 30 elk 'camped' on my urban front lawn. Last week, I saw a herd of 10 - 15 elk on a neighbors property. They now come regularly about twice a month. More frequently during the fall when fruit trees are beckoning. I planted 8 dwarf fruit trees on my property. The bottom 6 feet "belong" to the deer, The next 3-4 feet "belong" to the elk, the fruit above is mine. But the trees are not all that high. I do not mind the deer too much because they browse rather gingerly. The elk are destructive. At each visit they break branches as thick as my arms. On their first forage visits, I thoughts a gang of vandals had destroyed my trees. Then I saw the deep hoof-prints. During the wet winter months, the elk 'perforate' my urban lawn with holes up to a foot deep.</p>	<p>This is a situation that we are working on. We have had several discussions with City officials and opted for additional antlerless permits in the surrounding area. Something along the lines of your proposal is being tried in North Bend this year. If that strategy is successful, we may be able to try it in Longview in the future.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Besides being highly destructive to my property, the elk are a health and traffic hazard. My wife is afraid of being gored and trampled by these huge and bold animals. At times, they leave only reluctantly even as we beat with wooden spoons on metal lids. Large game animals are not compatible with urban settings. I encourage you to thin the number of animals of "The Columbia Heights Herd". As I call them; the total herd may be as large as 50 animals. While hunting within city limits is hazardous, it should be allowed for hunters with special permits and training.</p>	
<p>With the new proposal on the Sept hunt for rifles. It would be nice since it only is a 5 day season and only one person per unit can draw, to let the hunter if he does not harvest his bull in the September hunt he can carry his tag over in the general season. I mean I have the maximum number of points and am waiting to get drawn for the hunt of my life and it would be a bummer if it was over in five days. What will it hurt to let the hunter carry over his permit, you are counting that anyway.</p>	<p>This is something that we did consider. We plan to see what the success rates are for the short September season before we consider this idea.</p>

WAC 232-28-515 Trapping seasons and regulations

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Repeals an obsolete WAC.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

None

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None

WAC 232-28-516 Trapping seasons and regulations

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Increase furbearer trapping seasons to help reduce nuisance and damage activity from furbearers within biologically sustainable limits.

B. Changes, if any, from the text of the proposed rule and reasons for difference:

None

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I strongly oppose trapping seasons of bobcat or coyote on the grounds of it being cruel, wasteful, and contrary to the code of the outdoorsman. Trapping for pelts should be outlawed in Washington.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Department provides recreational hunting and trapping opportunities when the hunting and/or trapping are within sustainable limits. The Department and the Fish and Wildlife Commission strive to provide the opportunities in a fashion that is fair, ethical, and within the context of what is socially acceptable.</p>
<p>I support the proposal.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>