

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

**FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION MEETING
April 12, 2013**

CONCISE EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

WAC 232-28-286 2013, 2014, and 2015 Spring black bear seasons and regulations.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose for amending the 2013-15 spring black bear hunting seasons is to expand opportunity in the north Puget Sound. Spring bear hunting helps address commercial tree damage issues and provides recreational hunting opportunity. The spring black bear season allows recreational hunters to better target the areas receiving damage and allows hunters rather than contractors to harvest bears.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- Addition of Longview Timber Lands to the portion of GMU 418 that is designated as the hunt area by DNR, Sierra Pacific and Grandy Lake Timber Company. This is due to Longview Timber Lands requesting their lands be included in the bear hunt.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Comments	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I am writing to oppose the expansion of spring bear hunting season in the northern Puget Sound area. I am skeptical of the need to kill bears to protect trees. It seems that any excuse to expand hunting seasons is entertained by WDFW whether or not there is sound biological science supporting it.	Thank you for your comment. The use of hunting to address tree damage caused by bears is a socially sensitive issue. Knowing that, WDFW used a comprehensive public input process, including an EIS process for the Game Management Plan for bears and a public opinion survey to determine if it was publically supported activity.
With as many black bears we have in Washington will we ever be able to use other methods of hunting them again. Such as baiting and or using dogs.	Thank you for your comment. The use of bait and dogs to aid in the hunting of bears is prohibited by Washington State statute, not Commission rule. So, the State Legislature would need to pass a bill changing the statute.
Every year I hunt Roslyn and Cle Elum, WA, and every year increasing number of bears are spotted coming down into town and getting jumped close to town. These bears are coming down into town to eat all the apples and plums, but many times they get into garbage. My question is can Unit 335 and 336 please have a spring bear season?	Thank you for your comment. The Department will review the trend on bear damage in the area for potential inclusion in the spring bear damage hunt for the next 3-year hunting season package.
I believe spring bear season should re-open in the Capitol State Forest. I have seen an increase in the numbers in the last 5 years and the harvest hasn't even begun to slow it down. Thank you for your time.	Thank you for your comment. Department of Natural Resources owns and manages the majority of the Capitol Forest and has not requested a spring bear damage hunt to address tree damage in the Capitol Forest.

WAC 232-28-342 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 Small game and other wildlife seasons and regulations.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of amending the 2013-2015 small game seasons is to add GMU 145 to the late fall turkey season, modify the fall turkey bag-limit language, and remove the Washington Dungeness pheasant release site reference. GMU 145 was inadvertently omitted during the three-year season-setting process. The bag-limit language pertaining to fall turkey permit seasons was modified to clarify that hunters who kill a turkey during the permit seasons may still participate in the other fall seasons open to all hunters.

References to the western Washington Dungeness pheasant release site are also removed under the western Washington pheasant seasons, as the landowner has decided to no longer allow use of the area for upland bird hunting.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Why is extending coon season just for pursuit not one of the proposals the DFW is looking at changing? We, in Eastern WA, have to fight with weather (snow); can't even get into wooded areas because of snow and groomed snowmobile trails. Our season starts Sept. 1st then we basically lose Oct. due to elk and deer season; then a few weeks in Nov.; then were covered in deep snow until March. So let's get a fair season for us that do enjoy treeing coon with the aid of dogs. Don't believe anyone would oppose a season change to dates we can get into the woods. I was also led to believe that this was going to be one of the proposals we would be looking at changing.	This proposal did not move forward in the three year season setting process due to concerns with pursuit while young may still be dependent on the parent and disturbance to other species with the same concerns. Potential conflicts with other forms of recreation also exist. A pursuit season during the month of August may also cause enforcement concerns in some parts of the state where bear seasons would overlap.
We are in favor of the changes noted, but we would also like to see turkey fall damage hunts be extended into modern firearm seasons like was done for muzzleloading, even if it was by special permit only.	The effect of recent expansion of fall turkey general season needs to be monitored further before considering longer seasons. Also, safety concerns exist, unless turkey hunters would be required to wear blaze orange clothing during overlaps with modern firearm seasons.
I have read over the proposed hunting regulation changes and support all of them to be implemented.	Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on the proposals.
I support this proposal.	Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on the proposals.
I support all the changes listed.	Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on the proposals.
I agree with all recommended changes to the proposed hunting rules for 2013-2014	Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on the proposals.

<p>1. No problem with proposal.</p> <p>2. Do not forget to make a similar update to the regulations that were omitted last year and added by a change notice (Added Jun 29), adding GMUs 124 -142 to early fall either sex. Ranchers and farmers do not read change notices. Omissions concerning date changes are confusing and add lots of extra problems for hunters including lost opportunity. Same for the (Added May 24) change.</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on the proposals.</p> <p>The pamphlet errors were unfortunate and we are taking steps to minimize the need for changes like this in the future.</p>
<p>First of all I would like to compliment the fish and game department on a very well run system. There are only a couple suggestions that I would like to make:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The odd/even pheasant hunt is difficult at times for folks that can't predict their weekends. As a surgeon, I love to hunt with my dad but my schedule is so topsy-turvy, I don't have an odd or even schedule. How about offering a tag for the alternate day but at a premium price? 2. Any chance in future of offering a limited number of swan tags? Again, this could be a premium price similar to tags in Montana that would raise revenue for the department and not injure the population, say 10 tags at \$500.00 each? Just a thought. 3. Lastly, when are we going to make our beautiful trout streams (Yakima etc.) catch and release only and get them back to Montana style rivers, this could be a huge industry if we let it. <p>Thanks again for all you do, I love it here!</p>	<p>The odd/even requirement only applies prior to 10:00 a.m. on sites with this designation. Hunting later in the day is an option you have available. The additional license for the opposite day would require a change by the legislature and we may consider this in the future.</p> <p>Waterfowl seasons are set later in the year and this comment has been forwarded to the Waterfowl Section Manager. This proposal would first have to be approved through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) flyway process.</p> <p>This comment has also been forwarded to the Department's Fish Program.</p>

Oral Public Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>The pheasant release program in eastern Washington is being slowly reduced by 10% per year until dissolved to move more money to habitat work. Habitat work is important, but the small plots in the Columbia Basin don't accomplish much. The pheasant population has declined over the past 30 years due to Mt. St. Helens, increased hunting pressure, predators and farming practices have decimated the population.</p> <p>Hunters were not told about the reduction in bird releases and thought 10% of the money would go to habitat. We would be willing to pay for the program with a punch card for hunting release sites. Please do not cancel the Pheasant Release Program.</p>	<p>The state legislature changed the law regarding how the Eastern Washington Pheasant Enhancement Fund is apportioned, giving WDFW more flexibility in determining how expenditures are split between habitat and bird release. The law still states that WDFW will have a pheasant release program.</p> <p>Agency staff developed a plan, through gradual reductions, to attain an approximate 50% split. We are now close to that level and still will maintain a release program as the law requires.</p> <p>The long term success in maintaining or enhancing our pheasant population depends primarily on improving habitat conditions. The change to this fund, and other new resources, are helping us slow the tide of habitat degradation and provide more access for pheasant hunters, which is also an important priority.</p>

WAC 232-28-273 2012-2014 Moose seasons, permit quotas, and areas.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

This amendment clarifies that the exemption from the once-in-a-lifetime moose restriction is also applicable if the hunter applies in the future for a hunt in the permit categories of antlerless moose, raffle, auction, or master hunter. Additionally, this amendment reduces the number of master-hunter moose permits and reflects the expected number of hunters needed in 2013 and beyond, based on the experience of recent years.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Public Written Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>The wording of the proposal is very confusing. In the past, Dave Ware had stated that a hunter can only obtain one permit for "any moose," but they could still be selected to harvest a moose under an "antlerless-only" permit.</p> <p>The use of "previously" in the proposal causes confusion. The way the proposal reads, if a hunter previously harvests a moose using an "antlerless only" permit, then the hunter can still harvest a moose under an "any moose" permit. However, if the hunter harvests a moose using an "antlerless-only" permit first, then they are not allowed to harvest another moose.</p> <p>Recommend removing the previously requirement.</p> <p>The proposal reads:</p> <p>However, this restriction is waived for hunters who have previously harvested a moose under an antlerless-only, master-hunter hunt, raffle, or auction permit, as well as for applications for an antlerless-only, master-hunter, raffle or auction permit.</p> <p>CHANGE the proposal to READ:</p> <p>However, this restriction is waived for hunters who have previously harvested (harvest) a moose under an antlerless-only, master-hunter hunt, raffle, or auction permit, as well as for applications for an antlerless-only, master-hunter, raffle, or auction permit.</p>	<p>Current Department regulations are that hunters who have harvested a moose under an "antlerless-only" permit are still eligible to apply for another moose permit. We believe the revised language clarifies this. We do not agree that the language suggested precludes a hunter who has harvested a moose using an "antler-less only" permit from harvesting another moose.</p>
<p>I have read over the proposed hunting regulation changes and support all of them to be implemented.</p>	<p>Thank you.</p>

Public Written Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
If you can shoot a ewe, nanny, or cow moose then still get your ram, billy, or bull tag, then you should be able to do the opposite. You made the separate categories of tags knowing full well what you were doing. Fair is fair.	The Department agrees; this is the intent of clarifying the language.
How about the sheep, moose, goat, and quality deer and elk hunts have a minimum amount of points to be drawn for these hunts?!!!! Too many people have the maximum amount of points and never getting drawn for any of these hunts. Have a minimum of 10 points for some of these hunts and people with a few points might have to wait a few years to get one. Also, on these hunts, why not give hunts to each user groups also? That way not all people are putting in one pot with max amount of points. Common sense approach could ease some of these problems and rotating these hunts from year to year would also help on the stress of the animals too. We need to get our herds in good shape so there are trophy animals to hunt. Also, one user group should not be allowed all the days and better hunts each year because they have a bigger voice in the game commission. On the front page of the game regulations, you talk about hunter ethics and being fair - that would mean all user groups.	We have considered allocating some permits to a category that requires some minimum number of points; however, it is important to understand that when we have looked at the strategy statistically, it may not improve the odds of drawing much for popular (hard to draw) hunts. Too many hunters have lots of points in the popular categories.
I would like the WDFW to allow hunters who have been drawn for 2 special permits (of the same species, such as antlerless elk and quality elk) to return one of the special permits and still maintain the points they have built up. Hunters (including myself) spend a lot of money on permits and would hate to have to waste a permit that I had been applying for, for many years. Hunters are not trying to take advantage of the system, but keep it fair in regard to the amount of money we put in. The WDFW could also adopt this policy should a person get drawn for any "once in a lifetime hunt." Clearly, a hunter would rather dedicate himself to harvesting this one animal, and return other permits to hunt for at a later date, should they be selected again. The WDFW could also select a certain amount of alternates for each category that could be called upon if hunters return permits. The hunter wishing to return a permit would have to do so within 2-3 weeks, to keep the process going. If the WDFW is not aware of how make this process happen, please refer to the other states in the western US for direction in implementing this process.	Under our current system, the timeframe and workload required to actively collect unwanted permits, restore points in the appropriate categories, and engage in multiple communications regarding request status and point totals would be excessive. Additionally, in the interest of fairness, we restrict the restoration of points to very select circumstances, such as hospitalization, military deployment, etc., that are beyond the control of the hunter. Alternatively, we encourage hunters to use discretion when applying, utilizing the point-only option to continue to accrue points, or plan so that if they draw multiple permits, they would have some opportunity to use them both.
I support this proposal.	Thank you.
I am in favor of reducing the number of "Master Hunter" moose permits.	Thank you.

Public Written Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
We are in favor of better clarification language on once-in-a-lifetime moose restriction, but are not in favor of reducing Master Hunter moose permits, unless the resource protection data shows the need. We currently have 4 certified master hunters in our club.	The recommendation to reduce the number of master hunter moose permits came from the Enforcement Division in Region 1. The rationale is that many holders of master hunter moose permits are never called because there is no need. The Department prefers to offer master hunter permits based on an estimate of the number that will be needed in any given year. In recent years, only a few moose permits under the Master Hunter program have been available.
I also would like to suggest that it would be nice to see the once-in-a-lifetime tags (moose, sheep and goat) be limited to only two GMU unit choices, not four. I feel this will increase your chances by not saturating the top four GMU units.	This is a suggestion we can consider further in future years. It is unlikely that making this change would appreciably increase the odds of being drawn, however.

WAC 232-28-622 2012-2014 Bighorn sheep seasons and permit quotas.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The change in language reduces ambiguity regarding who may apply for a bighorn sheep permit. The reduction in hunting permits for the Blue Mountain area will reduce pressure on a herd that is experiencing a disease problem, and increase the chances for a high quality ram taken from this herd by the winner of the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep raffle.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- The number of permits for Cleman Mountain A hunts was changed from 6 to 5.
The number of permits for Cleman Mountain B hunts was changed from 6 to 5.
The number of ram permits for the Cleman Mountain herd has been temporarily high over the past few years, as a strategy to balance the sex ratio (which had, because of previous translocations of ewes, been imbalanced toward rams). That strategy is now evidently working, and the ram: ewe ratio is becoming balanced. Thus, it is appropriate to begin gradually reducing the ram permits to that in line with the Game Management Plan.
- The number of permits from Mt. Hull A has changed from 1 to 2. The Mt Hull A herd has increased; recent counts suggest it is fully capable of sustaining an additional ram permit.
- The Tieton A and Tieton B hunts were removed. Due to a pneumonia outbreak, the Tieton sheep herd population will not be able to sustain any harvest.
- The Sinlahekin hunt was removed. The removal of the hunt is due to the documented harboring of Psoroptes mites. This appears to have had a role in reducing lamb recruitment in 2012.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Input	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
If you can shoot a ewe, nanny, or cow moose then still get your ram, billy, or bull tag, then you should be able to do the opposite. You made the separate categories of tags knowing full well what you were doing. Fair is fair.	The Department agrees; this is the intent of clarifying the language.

Written Public Input

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>How about the sheep, moose, goat, and quality deer and elk hunts have a minimum amount of points to be drawn for these hunts?!!!! Too many people have the maximum amount of points and never getting drawn for any of these hunts. Have a minimum of 10 points for some of these hunts and people with a few points might have to wait a few years to get one. Also, on these hunts, why not give hunts to each user groups also? That way not all people are putting in one pot with max amount of points. Common sense approach could ease some of these problems and rotating these hunts from year to year would also help on the stress of the animals too. We need to get our herds in good shape so there are trophy animals to hunt. Also, one user group should not be allowed all the days and better hunts each year because they have a bigger voice in the game commission. On the front page of the game regulations, you talk about hunter ethics and being fair - that would mean all user groups.</p>	<p>We have considered allocating some permits to a category that requires some minimum number of points; however, it is important to understand that when we have looked at the strategy statistically, it may not improve the odds of drawing much for popular (hard to draw) hunts. Too many hunters have lots of points in the popular categories.</p>
<p>I would like the WDFW to allow hunters who have been drawn for 2 special permits (of the same species, such as antlerless elk and quality elk) to return one of the special permits and still maintain the points they have built up. Hunters (including myself) spend a lot of money on permits and would hate to have to waste a permit that I had been applying for, for many years. Hunters are not trying to take advantage of the system, but keep it fair in regard to the amount of money we put in. The WDFW could also adopt this policy should a person get drawn for any “once in a lifetime hunt.” Clearly, a hunter would rather dedicate himself to harvesting this one animal, and return other permits to hunt for at a later date, should they be selected again. The WDFW could also select a certain amount of alternates for each category that could be called upon if hunters return permits. The hunter wishing to return a permit would have to do so within 2-3 weeks, to keep the process going. If the WDFW is not aware of how make this process happen, please refer to the other states in the western US for direction in implementing this process.</p>	<p>Under our current system, the timeframe and workload required to actively collect unwanted permits, restore points in the appropriate categories, and engage in multiple communications regarding request status and point totals would be excessive. Additionally, in the interest of fairness, we restrict the restoration of points to very select circumstances, such as hospitalization, military deployment, etc., that are beyond the control of the hunter. Alternatively, we encourage hunters to use discretion when applying, utilizing the point-only option to continue to accrue points, or plan so that if they draw multiple permits, they would have some opportunity to use them both.</p>
<p>FYI – I read the regulations in detail and had no idea that a dead mountain sheep, mountain goat, cougar or bear needed to be reported. I have never harvested these animals, but do not recall reading these instructions in the rules. I did not see anything on this in the 2012 printed regulations (p. 77 Tagging and Transporting Game or p. 73 Violations and Penalties)</p>	<p>The reporting requirement for all of the species mentioned can be found in bold print on the pages detailing the seasons for each respective species. Post-harvest reporting is required for each of species. Currently, there is no requirement for hunters of mountain goats to present the harvest animal to DFW for inspection, as there is for bighorn sheep. However, we will be initiating a voluntary program to encourage this beginning in 2013.</p>

Written Public Input

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>One special permit should be drawn during regular special permit reg. drawing for Asotin Rocky Mountain sheep. Not the raffle!!!</p>	<p>In 2011, 2 special hunt permits were offered for rams in the Asotin population of Rocky Mountain bighorns, in addition to the raffle tag (which could also be used in Hall Mountain). In 2012, 1 special hunt permit was offered for this herd in addition to the raffle tag. The Asotin Herd has declined in the past year due to a pneumonia outbreak, so DFW has concluded that only a single ram permit is appropriate for 2013. Research into ways to assist the Asotin (and other herds) overcome the lingering effects of bacterial diseases continues.</p> <p>From the perspective of population management, a ram permit under a special hunt drawing and from the raffle drawing would have similar consequences.</p> <p>Although not clearly articulated in the letter, DFW surmises that the writer is concerned that he or she would have a lower probability of drawing a permit for Asotin if applying under the raffle program than the regular "special permit drawing." In 2012, there were 2,353 applicants for a single special hunt drawing for a bighorn ram in Asotin; an applicant with no accumulated points would have had approximately a 0.04% chance of being drawn; an applicant with the average number of points among applicants (15) would have had approximately a 9.5% chance of being drawn. By contrast, there were 4,063 raffle tickets sold. Thus a single raffle ticket would have had roughly a 0.02% chance of being chosen as the winner. However, by purchasing 10 raffle tickets, a prospective hunter could increase the odds to roughly 0.24%; by purchasing 100 raffle tickets to approximately 2.4% chance.</p> <p>During the 2 years, 2011-2012, the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep raffle (administered first by WDFW, later by the Washington chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation) has generated almost \$120,000, all of which has been dedicated solely to management and conservation of bighorn sheep in Washington. Thus, in years such as 2013 when there is only a single opportunity to harvest a Rocky Mountain ram, DFW prefers to offer a raffle.</p>
	<p>Should the Asotin bighorn population rebound in future years to the point where additional permits can again be offered, these permits will be awarded as special hunt drawing permits.</p>
<p>We are in favor of clarifications language.</p>	<p>Thank you.</p>
<p>I also would like to suggest that it would be nice to see the once-in-a-lifetime tags (moose, sheep and goat) be limited to only two GMU unit choices, not four. I feel this will increase your chances by not saturating the top four GMU units.</p>	<p>This is a suggestion we can consider further in future years. It is unlikely that making this change would appreciably increase the odds of being drawn, however.</p>

WAC 232-28-623 2012-2014 Mountain goat seasons and permit quotas.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

Changes in language reduce ambiguity regarding who may apply for a mountain goat permit; remove inconsistency between the WAC, pamphlet, and instructional letters sent to permit holders; and clarify hunting unit boundaries for mountain goats in the Mt. Baker area.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- Under subsection 2b, the last sentence was struck because it is a “suggestion” rather than a rule.
- The hunt area description for Goat Rocks was modified to correct boundaries references.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
If you can shoot a ewe, nanny, or cow moose, then still get your ram, billy, or bull tag, then you should be able to do the opposite. You made the separate categories of tags knowing full well what you were doing. Fair is fair.	DFW agrees; this is the intent of clarifying the language.
How about the sheep, moose, goat, and quality deer and elk hunts have a minimum amount of points to be drawn for these hunts?!!!! Too many people have the maximum amount of points and never getting drawn for any of these hunts. Have a minimum of 10 points for some of these hunts and people with a few points might have to wait a few years to get one. Also, on these hunts, why not give hunts to each user groups also? That way not all people are putting in one pot with max amount of points. Common sense approach could ease some of these problems and rotating these hunts from year to year would also help on the stress of the animals too. We need to get our herds in good shape so there are trophy animals to hunt. Also, one user group should not be allowed all the days and better hunts each year because they have a bigger voice in the game commission. On the front page of the game regulations, you talk about hunter ethics and being fair - that would mean all user groups.	We have considered allocating some permits to a category that requires some minimum number of points; however, it is important to understand that when we have looked at the strategy statistically, it may not improve the odds of drawing much for popular (hard to draw) hunts. Too many hunters have lots of points in the popular categories.
FYI – I read the regulations in detail and had no idea that a dead mountain sheep, mountain goat, cougar or bear needed to be reported. I have never harvested these animals, but do not recall reading these instructions in the rules. I did not see anything on this in the 2012 printed regulations (p. 77 Tagging and Transporting Game or p. 73 Violations and Penalties)	The reporting requirement for all of the species mentioned can be found in bold print on the pages detailing the seasons for each respective species. Post-harvest reporting is required for each of species. Currently, there is no requirement for hunters of mountain goats to present the harvest animal to DFW for inspection, as there is for bighorn sheep. However, we will be initiating a voluntary program to encourage this beginning in 2013.
We are in favor of clarifications language.	Thank you.

Written Public Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I have been reading the hunting forecast reports in particular in relation to mountain goats and have seen the Mt. Baker goat tag numbers fluctuate based off of those aerial surveys. What the surveys never mention is flights over units that are not currently open for goat hunting - in particular the old unit 4-1 on the north side of the Mt. Baker Highway. There is a very large population of goats in that area (in particular in the Goat Mountain-Larrabee Mountain-Tomyhoi Mountain area) and I would love to see WDFW continue to monitor that herd until herd size is large enough to support hunting again.	Thank you for this useful comment. It is correct that WDFW currently prioritizes conducting aerial surveys on existing hunting units. This may at times provide a misleading picture of larger trends. WDFW biologists are aware of goat populations in the areas north of Mt. Baker mentioned in the comment, and in fact, are currently planning to conduct a helicopter survey of this area in summer 2013. Based on those results, we will make a decision regarding the value of conducting future helicopter surveys of this area in future years.
The "aggressive goat" news from the Olympic Peninsula is in the news every fall as the goat rut and peak hiking season approaches. I would love to see WDFW look into re-implementing the Olympic Peninsula goat hunts to help cull that herd if needed. There are tons of goats outside of the park (Ellinor Mountain area) that obviously have a viable population for hunting, but no tags are considered at all. What will it take for that herd to be opened up to hunting again?	In cooperation with the US Forest Service, WDFW conducted a helicopter-based survey of mountain goats within identified population units in the Olympic Peninsula, primarily east of Olympic National Park (ONP), in September 2012. A total of 48 goats were observed, from which a sightability model suggested that approximately 50-81 goats were probably actually present. Most of these goats were in the area around Mts. Pershing, Skokomish, Washington and Jefferson, just north of Mt Ellinor; others were further north in the Brothers area. These survey blocks were adjacent to ONP, and a few observed goats were within the ONP boundary when seen. Current WDFW guidelines for hunting mountain goats requires that > 100 goats in identifiable populations be documented by surveys for 3 consecutive years prior to initiating harvest. However, WDFW has begun discussing the value of re-initiating a hunting season for mountain goats in this area to reduce population size in future years.
I also would like to suggest that it would be nice to see the once-in-a-lifetime tags (moose, sheep and goat) be limited to only two GMU unit choices, not four. I feel this will increase your chances by not saturating the top four GMU units.	This is a suggestion we can consider further in future years. It is unlikely that making this change would appreciably increase the odds of being drawn, however.

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

A. Agency reason for adoption:

This proposed amendment is part of the effort to streamline, reorganize, and update rules in the WAC Overhaul Project currently underway. Anticipated effects are minimal; this project involves merely rewording and clarifying a rule already in existence.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- The first sentence in Section 3(b) was altered to read as follows: "Except for special permits issued by the Department for non-endangered deer and elk, this area is closed to all deer and elk hunting to protect the Columbian white-tailed deer."

This exception was added because the Department is required to issue damage permits to mitigate agricultural damage and also the proper terminology for Columbian white-tailed deer should be used.

- Section 3c was eliminated. Section 3c specifies certain areas of a federal wildlife refuge that were not open to big game hunting. This information is now obsolete. The areas that will be open on the refuge in the future will vary from year to year. Rather than attempt to codify these future closures, over which the Fish and Wildlife Commission has no purview, the Department will direct hunters to contact the wildlife refuge directly to get the most up-to-date information.
- Subsection 4.(c) was altered to read as follows: “Walla Walla Mill Creek Watershed (GMU 157): All lands in the Mill Creek Watershed are designated as a "CLOSED AREA" to the hunting of all wild animals, including wild birds. The only exception is for deer or elk hunting by holders of GMU-157 special deer or elk permits during the established open season.”
WDFW currently offers both deer and elk special permits for GMU 157 so the clarification needs to be made what big game hunting access is allowed.
- Under Island County GMUs 420 and 421 were added. These islands are newly created GMUs, but their firearm restriction designation hasn’t changed, so they need to be added to the firearm restriction section as GMUs.
- Under King County GMU 422 was added. This island is a newly created GMU, but its firearm restriction designation hasn’t changed, so it needs to be added to the firearm restriction section as a GMU.
- Under Pierce County GMU 655 was added. This island is a newly created GMU, but its firearm restriction designation hasn’t changed, so it needs to be added to the firearm restriction section as a GMU.
- Under San Juan County GMUs 411 (Orcas), 412 (Shaw), 413 (San Juan), 414 (Lopez), 415 (Blakely), and 416 (Decatur) were added. These islands are newly created GMUs, but their firearm restriction designation hasn’t changed, so they need to be added to the firearm restriction section as GMUs.
- Under Skagit County GMU 419 (Guemes) was added. This island is a newly created GMU, but its firearm restriction designation hasn’t changed, so it needs to be added to the firearm restriction section as a GMU.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Input	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>As a hunter, without reservation, I believe that safety is paramount. It is also my belief that the current firearm restriction boundaries in GMU 681 & GMU 684 are antiquated and need to be revised. Many homes have been built in areas that are currently open to modern firearms in the GMU's mentioned above. I happen to own one of them. When the current boundary was established these areas were not as densely populated. It is my understanding when the Lewis Unit reopens in the fall of 2013 for big game hunting, it has already been designated as a firearm restricted area do to legitimate safety concerns. I believe that this would be the right time to review and make changes to the current GMU 681 & GMU 684 boundaries. My proposal would be to include everything west of US Hwy 101 from Greenhead Slough south to alternate US101. In all reality I believe all of GMU 684 should fall under the firearm restricted area. My goal isn't to prevent hunting, far from it, but to use wisdom in planning for a safe hunting environment. With the spotlight on those of us who own guns and hunt, along with today's technology, modern rifles are capable of shooting 500, 600...1,000 yards and I believe this range is too great for such a small geographic area.</p>	<p>We appreciate your comment. Changes to firearm restriction areas typically come from Regional Enforcement staff and Regional Wildlife staff working together to come up with new or different boundaries to address any safety concerns. We will work with Region 6 staff to see if any changes need to be considered.</p>

<p>I just spoke with Nancy Holman of FWS today and she informed me that all lands except a small area around the office complex for the Willapa refuge will be open for big game hunting. The proposed changes that I received by email say everything is closed except Long Island and is in error!</p>	<p>Thank you for that correction. We have addressed this in the Big Game Closures section of 232-28-248. In the Big Game Pamphlet, we will direct hunters to seek specific details of closed and open areas from the USFWS wildlife refuge.</p>
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WAC 232-28-334 Game management units (GMUs) boundary descriptions--Region four.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

This proposal changes the management area designation of the Puget Sound Islands from Deer Areas to Game Management Units (GMUs). The proposed amendments will allow the Department to better track harvest removals specific to the islands.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

WAC 232-28-336 Game management units (GMUs) boundary descriptions--Region six.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of the amendment is to designate Anderson Island as a Game Management Unit rather than a Deer Area. The proposed language will allow the Department to better track harvest removals specific to the island, rather than having those removals lumped with a mainland GMU.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

WAC 232-28-337 Elk area descriptions.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of the amendment is to separate Elk Area descriptions from Deer Area descriptions. The proposal also removes one Elk Area that is no longer needed and adjusts the boundary of two other Elk Areas to make them more effective in dealing with wildlife conflict. Some of the language modifications in this proposed amendment are part of the effort to streamline, reorganize, and update rules in the WAC Overhaul Project currently underway.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- Elk Area 3068 Klickitat Meadows was eliminated because ownership of the property has changed. The new owners will not be allowing access for this hunt.
- Modify boundary language for Elk Area 6069 Hanaford as proposed. The old boundary included an active logging operation road that some hunters were traveling on which had become unsafe. This new boundary should reduce that potential conflict.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None.

WAC 232-28-624 Deer area descriptions.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of the amendment is to separate Deer Area descriptions from Elk Area descriptions to improve the clarity of these rules. The proposal also removes the Puget Sound Islands that were previously described as Deer Areas. The Department is proposing that those islands be described as Game Management Units (GMUs) in the future. Some of the language modifications in this proposed amendment are part of the effort to streamline, reorganize, and update rules in the WAC Overhaul Project currently underway.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None.

WAC 232-28-357 2012-2014 Deer general seasons and definitions

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of this amendment is to retain general-season deer hunting opportunity, providing recreational deer hunting opportunities, and protecting deer from overharvest. The purpose is also to balance the hunting opportunity between user groups; increase opportunity when deer populations allow; and reduce opportunity when declining deer numbers warrant a change.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- Under the modern firearm general season, for western Washington black-tail, any deer, GMUs 411-417, 419-422, and 655 were added and Deer Areas 4013, 4926, and 6014 were removed. These proposed changes convert some of the island Deer Areas to GMUs. The listed GMUs used to be Deer Areas or they were Deer Areas that lived within a GMU and are now proposed to be stand-alone GMUs. This conversion will help with harvest data specificity.
- Under the modern firearm late general season, for western Washington black-tail, any deer, GMUs 411-417 and 419-422 were added and Deer Areas 4013, 4926, and 6014 were removed. These proposed changes convert some of the island Deer Areas to GMUs. The listed GMUs used to be Deer Areas or they were Deer Areas that lived within a GMU and are now proposed to be stand-alone GMUs. This conversion will help with harvest data specificity.
- Under Western Washington Black-tailed Deer, Late Modern Firearm, move GMU 655 from the any buck category to the Any Deer category for dates Nov. 14-17 for 2013 and Nov. 13-16 for 2014. This change corrects an error in the original filing of the WAC.
- Under the early archery general season, for Western Washington black-tail, any deer, GMU 655 was added. This change is the result of a Deer Area that lived within a GMU being converted into a stand-alone GMU.
- Under the early archery general season, for eastern Washington white-tail, 3pt. minimum, GMUs 169, 172, and 175, the dates for 2013 should be Sept. 1-27 and for 2014 should be Sept. 1-26. This change corrects an error in the original filing of the WAC.
- Under the late archery general season, for western Washington black-tail, any buck, GMU 655 was added. This change is the result of a Deer Area that lived within a GMU being converted into a stand-alone GMU.
- Under the late archery general season, for western Washington black-tail, any deer, GMUs 411-417 and 419-422 were added. The listed GMUs used to be Deer Areas or they were Deer Areas that lived within a GMU and are now proposed to be stand-alone GMUs.
- Under the early muzzleloader general season, for western Washington black-tail, any deer, GMUs 411-417 and 419-422 were added and Deer Area 4926 was removed. These proposed changes convert some of the island Deer Areas to GMUs. The listed GMUs used to be Deer Areas or they were Deer Areas that lived within a GMU and are now proposed to be stand-alone GMUs. This conversion will help with harvest data specificity.
- Under Western Washington Black-tailed Deer, Early Muzzleloader, GMU 655 should be added to the Any Deer category for dates Sept. 28-Oct. 6 for 2013 and Sept. 27-Oct. 5 for 2014. This change corrects an error in the original filing of the WAC.

- Under the late muzzleloader general season, for western Washington black-tail, any deer, GMUs 411-417 and 419-422 were added and Deer Area 4926 was removed. These proposed changes convert some of the island Deer Areas to GMUs. The listed GMUs used to be Deer Areas or they were Deer Areas that lived within a GMU and are now proposed to be stand-alone GMUs. This conversion will help with harvest data specificity.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Comment	
<p>I am sending this comment in, because I have a bit of a concern about the proposed season dates for the 2013 & 2014 LATE ARCHERY GENERAL DEER SEASONS. In particular, I am referring to the hunting season dates for the late white-tailed deer hunting season in GMU's 204, 209, 215, 233, 243, 272, 278, and 373. My concern is as follows: in 2012, archery deer hunters were provided the opportunity to hunt white-tailed deer from November 21-December 15, which made a lot of sense, as hunters who were pursuing mule-deer in GMU's 209, 215, 233, and 243 were also allowed to pursue white-tailed deer at the same time, which helped to reduce the amount of hunting pressure that rutting mule-deer bucks faced within those open units, as some archery hunters chose to pursue white-tailed deer in other GMU's such as 204. Under the 2013 & 2014 proposed seasons, the mule-deer season will start on the same dates as what it did in 2012 (Nov. 21-Nov. 30), but, the white-tailed deer season will not open until Nov. 27-Dec. 15 (in 2013) & Nov. 26-Dec. 15 (in 2014), which is about a week later than when it started in 2012.</p> <p>In my opinion, the WDFW should leave the opening date for the late white-tailed deer season in GMU's: 204, 209, 215, 233, 243, 272, 278, and 373 the same as what it was in 2012 (Nov. 21-Dec. 15, which coincides with the opening date of the late mule-deer season). By having the white-tailed deer and mule-deer seasons start on the same dates, it will help to reduce the concentration of hunters within the mule-deer hunting GMU's and reduce the amount of hunting pressure on rutting mule-deer bucks, as some hunters will choose to pursue white-tailed deer instead of mule-deer. This will also help to create some consistency for late archery hunters who are accustomed to having the late white-tail and mule-deer seasons opening on the same date, which should help to reduce the instances of hunters inadvertently taking white-tailed deer out of season (because many just skim through the regulations looking for any major changes).</p>	<p>The season structures for mule deer and white-tailed deer have historically been triggered differently. The mule deer season is a 10-day season, always starting on Nov. 21 and ending on the 30th. The white-tailed deer season has been starting the day before Thanksgiving and running until Dec. 15. It was a coincidence that both opened on Nov. 21 in 2012. The white-tailed deer season shifts with the calendar because Thanksgiving shifts. Most archers that we have heard from like this system and plan their hunting activities accordingly. If hunters are interested in changing this approach it can be a topic of discussion in the next 3-year package which will be 2015-2017.</p>

Written Public Comment

<p>Why is muzzleloading season so short and more restricted than both rifle and archery in area 101 and 105? Why are does not allowed, but are with rifle for youth and seniors? I hunted archery for years until I separated my shoulder. Now I muzzleload to avoid the mobs of hunters. Two years ago I tried modern again and it was a zoo. We found 3 dead deer that people just shoot first and then go see if its legal. It turns my stomach. At least with primitive weapons we have to get close and actually use some common sense, so why is this season the most shorted?</p>	<p>Muzzleloader season used to be a 7-day season that only included one weekend. In 2009, the season was extended to 9 days and now includes two weekends. Any additional expansion would have to be part of future 3-year package discussions and would rely on comments from all user groups about expanding opportunity.</p>
<p>The proposed regulations list the following GMUSs as being open for the Late General Season deer hunt: Nov. 15-18 Nov. 14-17 Nov. 13-16 410, 564, Deer Areas 4013, 4926, 6014, 6020 Any deer. Because GMU 410 is being broken into separate GMUs for each island, this wording excludes the other islands from being open for the late hunt. For example, Blakely Island will be GMU 415, but GMU 415 is not listed as an open area for the late hunt. I encourage you to correct this oversight by amending the open areas to include all of the newly formed GMUs. Thank you.</p>	<p>You are correct. Thank you for pointing it out. We have made those corrections.</p>
<p>I would like to see the same number of hunting days for muzzleloaders as there is for the archery and modern firearm folks. Open up more areas to hunt and give more cow permits out also. The late deer season for muzzleloaders is way too limited with little or no opportunities to hunt because of all the private land that is tied up. We've also got to put up gates in the winter areas and close them down so our animals have a chance to make it through winter...there is way too much hunting going on unchecked and the trophy game animals are being slaughtered and the genetics are going away. Start either a late or early season choice and make a draw for the other one to limit the amount of hunters in the field. We've got to get our herds back up to a point that they will survive the up and coming wolf predation and also the non-licensed hunters that come in late and take whatever they want. Our dollars - our wildlife, so let's start protecting what is left out there and give them a chance to become trophy animals. Limit the amount of master hunters. Also, in wintering areas, make it a draw to hunt those areas and limit the landowner's tags too. Close the season at the end of December for everyone.</p>	<p>The Commission expanded the opportunity greatly for muzzleloaders in 2009. Any additional expansion would have to first be part of future 3-year package discussions.</p> <p>The Department tries to limit winter range access to lands we manage when appropriate. If you see illegal out-of-season harvest taking place be sure and call 1-877-WDFW-TIP to report the crime.</p> <p>Master hunters and landowner damage prevention permits are typically used when chronic agricultural damage is already taking place.</p>
<p>Stop the late buck season, and during the regular season go back to the 1950 seasons: forked-horn black-tail only.</p> <p>We need to build back up the black-tail population. As you are aware, we lost a big portion of the deer with the hair-loss and the spraying of broad leaf plants, by the state and private large landowners like Weyco.</p>	<p>Deer populations are still doing well or have rebounded in some locations. Going back to the 1950s is not an option. The amount of deer habitat available and the amount of timber harvest taking place in the 1950s was substantially different than today.</p>

Written Public Comment	
Archery deer needs to open does again.	Unsure of the meaning of the first comment or the location.
I am curious if GMU 4013 Vashon-Maury is open for hunting bucks during the archery season. I see that you can get a second deer tag for that area, but I don't see where the dates are listed for that area during regular buck. Thanks for the information.	The new GMU designation for Vashon-Maury is GMU 422, and yes, it will be open for early and late archery. Thank you for providing that correction.

WAC 232- WAC 232-28-359 2013 Deer special permits.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of this amendment is to retain special-permit deer hunting opportunity. The purpose is also to balance the hunting opportunity between user groups; increase opportunity when deer populations allow; and reduce opportunity when declining deer numbers warrant a change.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Chewuch hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 15 to 20 due to slightly higher deer numbers in post-hunt survey counts allowing for additional opportunity.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Pearygin hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 15 to 20 due to slightly higher deer numbers in post-hunt survey counts allowing for additional opportunity.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Gardner hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 10 to 15 due to slightly higher deer numbers in post-hunt survey counts allowing for additional opportunity.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Pogue hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 20 to 15 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Alta hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 10 to 15 due to slightly higher deer numbers in post-hunt survey counts allowing for additional opportunity.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Chiwawa hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 28 to 27 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Slide Ridge hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 11 to 10 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Ritzville hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 12 to 10 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Desert hunt, from Oct. 26 to Nov. 3, was changed from 17 to 18 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Naneum hunt, from Nov. 12-20, was changed from 14 to 15 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Modern, the number of permits for the Teanaway hunt, from Nov. 12-20, was changed from 14 to 17 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Modern, the season dates for the Wind River hunt were changed to Nov. 14-21. This change corrects a date error that would have caused an overlap between user groups.
- Under Quality, Modern, the season dates for the West Klickitat hunt were changed to Nov. 14-21. This change corrects a date error that would have caused an overlap between user groups.

- Under Quality, Archery, the number of permits for the Chiwawa hunt, from Dec. 1-8, was changed from 13 to 12 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Archery, the number of permits for the Desert hunt, from Nov. 25-Dec. 8, was changed from 29 to 32 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Archery, the number of permits for the Naneum hunt, from Nov. 21-Dec. 8, was changed from 6 to 7 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Archery, the number of permits for the Teanaway hunt, from Nov. 21-Dec. 8, was changed from 9 to 11 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Archery, the season dates for the West Klickitat hunt were changed to Nov. 22-30 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Archery, the season dates for the Kitsap hunt were changed to Nov. 1-13. This change avoids an overlap with the modern firearm late buck general season.
- Under Quality, Archery, the season dates for the Skokomish hunt were changed to Nov. 1-13. This change avoids an overlap with the modern firearm late buck general season.
- Under Quality, Muzzleloader, the number of permits for the Naneum hunt, from Nov. 4-11, was changed from 2 to 1 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Muzzleloader, the number of permits for the Quilomene hunt, from Sept. 28-Oct. 6, was changed from 6 to 4 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Muzzleloader, the number of permits for the West Klickitat hunt, from Dec. 1-8, was changed from 100 to 75. The reduction is intended to help meet post-hunt management objectives while still providing quality opportunity.
- Under Quality, Muzzleloader, the season dates for the Olympic hunt were changed to Nov. 1-13. This change avoids an overlap with the modern forearm late buck general season.
- Under Bucks, Modern, the number of permits for the Pogue hunt, from Nov. 1-20, was changed from 20 to 15 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Bucks, Modern, the number of permits for the Ritzville hunt, from Dec. 1-8, was changed from 4 to 7 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bucks, Muzzleloader, the number of permits for the Alkali hunt, from Sept. 22-Oct. 11, was changed from 1 to 2 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Second Deer, Any tag, the number of permits for the North Okanogan hunt, from Sept. 8-Oct. 9, was changed from 40 to 30 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Second Deer, Any tag, the number of permits for the Central Okanogan hunt, from Sept. 8-Oct. 9, was changed from 50 to 30 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Second Deer, Muzzleloader, the West Klickitat hunt, from Sept. 28-Oct.6, was eliminated due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Youth, Modern, the number of permits for the Sinlahekin hunt, from Oct. 12-20, was changed from 20 to 10 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Youth, Modern, the number of permits for the Chewuch hunt, from Oct. 12-20, was changed from 25 to 20 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Youth, Modern, the number of permits for the Pearrygin hunt, from Oct. 12-20, was changed from 25 to 20 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.

- Under Youth, Modern, the number of permits for the Chiliwist hunt, from Oct. 12-20, was changed from 15 to 10 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Youth, Modern, the number of permits for the Alta hunt, from Oct. 12-20, was changed from 15 to 10 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals.
- Under Senior 65+, Modern, the number of permits for the Chewuch hunt, from Oct. 12-20, was changed from 10 to 5 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals
- Under Senior 65+, Modern, the number of permits for the Pearrygin hunt, from Oct. 12-20, was changed from 10 to 5 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals
- Under Senior 65+, Modern, the number of permits for the Chiliwist hunt, from Oct. 12-20, was changed from 10 to 5 due to lower deer numbers in the post-hunt survey requiring reduced opportunity to maintain population management goals
- Under Master Hunter, Any 2nd deer tag, the number of permits for the Region 1 North, from Aug. 1, 2013-March 31, 2014, was changed from 10 to 150 to assist with white-tailed deer research that is being conducted as well as address agricultural damage issues. Heart and kidney fat from harvested deer will be used to assess body condition of deer

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I reviewed the hunting season proposals and had a few comments I wanted to make.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are permits issued for GMU 418 for a Quality Buck late season hunt, but only 5 days are given to hunters to fill their tag. 418 is a huge unit and the amount of time needed to properly hunt is far more than 5 days. I would love to see a longer season for the Quality Buck hunt or give 25-50 tags to archery hunters to hunt from November 1 - 20 in the unit so that more time can be provided for hunters. That hunt could be great, but the 5 day season is just too short. 2. In regards to the GMU 418 Quality Buck hunt - it may be worth considering splitting that unit up into a north and south unit for this hunt. The south side of the unit is all lower elevation (800-2500 feet elevation with tons of clear-cuts and logging roads being hunted.) The north side of the unit is a mountain hunt with much more alpine hunting taking place. The 5 day season may make sense for the clear-cut hunt, but for a high mountain alpine hunt, a longer season would be very beneficial. 	<p>The current quality special permit season seems to be more than adequate at this time. Of the 25 hunters that drew that special permit opportunity, only 11 reported hunting that opportunity. Of those 11 hunters, 6 were successful (>50% success rate). Part of the criteria for quality permits to have low numbers of hunters in that unit during the time frame.</p> <p>We have no plans to recommend splitting GMU 418.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>In WAC 323-28-359, 2013 Deer Special Permits, Quality, you propose to take away 25 of the 100 permits for Archery in West Klickitat GMU 578. There is no good reason and it is unfair to take away these permits from the archers. This is a great time to mentor new archers especially kids into the sport besides the success rate according to your own stats says that the archers harvest less deer on that 100 tags than the muzzleloaders with the same 100 tags right after our tag season. Also, do not take the 2 days away from the archers during that season.</p>	<p>The reduction from 100 down to 75 permits in both archery and muzzleloader Quality special permits is an attempt to maintain the sustainable aspect of these hunts. Department staff members are trying to maintain appropriate levels of post-bunt buck ratios while providing a quality opportunity. Quality in this example equates to low densities of hunters and a prime time of the year to pursue deer. Harvest reports indicate that archers killed 8 deer in this hunt and muzzleloaders killed 9.</p> <p>The season dates have been corrected. Because of the calendar date adjustments, archers will lose 1 day to avoid overlaps with other weapon groups.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>For the past 47 years I have archery-hunted what was once designated the GMU 588 Unit. These past few years have brought considerable changes, which have split Unit 588 into Units 388 and 578. Since the division of Unit 588, archery opportunities have been greatly reduced. Changes include the harvest of three-point or better (excluding antlerless) and minimizing opportunities through special draw in Unit 578. A review of proposed changes in the regulations reveals yet another modification to this unit. It is important to note that it does not go unnoticed that the job of balancing conservation and fairness to all hunters is no easy task. I don't pretend to understand all the details that go into the decision-making process required to come to a final conclusion, but I would respectfully request that the board reconsider their decision to modify the Special-Permit season as it pertains to archery.</p> <p>Please consider the following: Muzzleloader: November 1-8 (no change) Rifle: November 14 -20 (a change adding 6 days) Archery: November 21-29 from 22-30 (2 days less and a reduction of 25 permits from 100) Upon reviewing the changes and the distribution of seasons for the entire hunting community, I believe that a good-faith effort has been made by the Department to be fair to all parties concerned. However, with each change over the years, the archery seasons have been drastically reduced to current restrictions. Strictly speaking, however, from a conservation standpoint, the reduction of 25 permits and 2 days in a 3 point or better archery season would add very little to the deer harvest in this unit. I have no argument with the 6 additional days proposed for rifle hunters, they should have the opportunity like everyone else. This I feel is only reasonable, as it should be. Retaining the 2012 muzzleloader and archery permit regulation status and the added 2013 proposal for rifle would be a reasonable compromise and accommodate all parties involved. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.</p>	<p>You are correct, there were some errors in the deer special permit dates. Thank you for bringing this to our attention.</p>

Written Public Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I think you really need to take a look in the mirror and think about whether you are really doing - what is right for the future of the game animals in the state. Honestly, I don't believe what you are doing is right for promoting a healthy game population.</p> <p>Take, for example, the Alta area. During the past 8 + years the population has gone down significantly. Yet, you continue to have the rifle, archery, and muzzleloader permits at an all-time high. I have hunted, hiked, and taken pictures in this area since I was a kid. It has gone from being able to go out in an evening and seeing 30 + deer in the 80's to where you might only see 2 or 3 deer in 4 days. I had the special permit in 1999 and was able to see several decent bucks, although not a lot of deer. Now when I go over to photograph the deer, it is astounding to see the decline in the deer population that has occurred. The Alta herd was once a well-documented, thriving, and much talked-about herd. Then, for the biologist to tell that it still is, is a stretch of the truth and he/she should be held accountable. The Entiat population is headed in the same direction. So, you really need to ask yourself, is it truly worth it to sacrifice the future deer population for a perceived increase in fund generation? I think you will find out that if you decrease the number of permits you will still sell the same number of licenses, and permit applications. This is a critical time for the deer population, so let's at least try to restore some of it for the future.</p> <p>I know this will probably fall on deaf ears once again, but I had to make my feelings known. Thanks for your time.</p>	<p>The post-hunt deer surveys conducted by the District Biologists are not consistent with your observations. The recommendations made by the Department's field staff are not calling for any major reductions in these units.</p>

WAC 232-28-358 2012-2014 Elk general seasons and definitions.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of this amendment is to retain general-season elk hunting opportunity. The purpose is also to balance the hunting opportunity between user groups; increase opportunity when elk populations allow; and reduce opportunity when declining elk numbers warrant a change.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- Under True Spike Bull Antler Restrictions, the wrong GMUs are listed that have the True Spike Restriction. GMUs 145-154, 162-186, 249, and 336-368 should be deleted from the True Spike section and replaced with 251 and 328-335. This change corrects an error that was created by the WAC overhaul process.
- To address increasing damage problems, under Early Archery, Western Washington, remove GMU 407 from the "3 pt. min. or antlerless" section; and create a new hunt as follows:

Western Washington	WA	407	N/A	Sept. 3-27	Sept. 2-26	Any elk
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- Under Late Archery, Western Washington, delete GMU 407 from the “3 pt. min or antlerless” section; and add to the “Any elk” line. This change is intended to address increasing damage problems.
- Under Early Muzzleloaders, Western Washington, create a new hunt to address increasing damage problems as follows:

Western Washington	WM	407	N/A	Sept. 28- Oct. 11	Sept. 27- Oct. 10	3 pt. min. or antlerless
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- Under Late Muzzleloader, Western Washington, create a new hunt to address increasing damage problems as follows:

Western Washington	WM	407	N/A	Nov. 27- Dec. 15	Nov. 26- Dec. 15	3 pt. min. or antlerless
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C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Restoring antlerless elk opportunities for archery hunters in Yakima County, specifically in GMU's 352 (Nile) and 356 (Bumping). Adoption of this proposal will further reduce already dismal harvest success rates for muzzle loader hunters in these GMU's. It is obviously an attempt to pacify the archery hunters, who began a concerted lobbying campaign 2 years ago, after their antlerless elk opportunities were rescinded by WDFW. The Commission must leave the rule as it is today. The muzzle loaders are not allowed to harvest antlerless elk in any Yakima County GMU's without having successfully drawn a special permit. There are only 20 such permits awarded for GMU 352 (Nile) and 30 for GMU 356 (Bumping) to muzzleloaders. These numbers are extremely low, and have been for many years, due to low elk numbers in these units. To re-open antlerless elk harvesting to archery hunters during the general season will further decimate elk numbers in the units.</p> <p>The muzzle loader elk season follows the archery elk season, so muzzle loaders are stuck with "what's left" after archery season anyway. This proposal, if adopted, will further decrease the muzzle loader's opportunity to harvest antlerless elk, even WITH a special permit. In all fairness, the muzzle loaders deserve at least a slim chance of success in these units. There is no logical reason that the archery hunters should have any advantage over the muzzle loaders. We're all equal contributors when it comes to license and tag fees and should enjoy equal opportunity. I ask the commission to disregard the archery hunter's extensive lobbying efforts (they significantly outnumber the muzzle loaders) and make a responsible decision that helps preserve elk populations and provides equal hunting opportunity to both groups.</p>	<p>The opportunities recommended by the Regional biologists are based on the annual aerial surveys conducted, as well as past patterns of harvest and success rates for all user groups. In 2010, Region 3 recommended the antlerless part of the early, archery opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 be put on temporary hold as a result of lower than desired numbers of elk counted in the aerial surveys. This was always seen as a temporary measure until the elk numbers in those GMUs responded appropriately. At that same time, to offset the loss of early season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346. As an aside, late season antlerless opportunity for archery has always been offered in GMU 346 for this entire time period (2000-2012) and there is no recommendation to change that opportunity.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Yes to antlerless elk for archery in GMU 352 & 356. Change archery elk dates to 8-21 the dates WDFW have chosen dates that are not in the rut and meat loss to heat.</p>	<p>The majority of people that have commented are in favor of restoring the pre-2010 antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356. The Department has no plans to recommend a change the early archery structure adopted at the beginning of the current 3-year package which starts the Tuesday after Labor Day and runs for 13 days including two weekends.</p>
<p>I am writing to express my support for the change to the archery elk season in Goose Prairie (Bumping and Nile units). I appreciate the change that re-establishes this area to the season that had been in place until it was abruptly, and without much warning, changed 3 years ago. I do however wish the DFW biologist would have seen the benefit of keeping the Little Naches open as well. It would have helped to spread out the archery pressure and harvest over a larger range, thus minimizing impact on all of the areas. However if forced to choose between the two, I definitely think that this change benefits the most people.</p>	<p>The majority of people that have commented are in favor of restoring the pre-2010 antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346. As an aside, late season antlerless opportunity for archery has always been offered in GMU 346 for this entire time period (2000-2012) and there is no recommendation to change that opportunity.</p>
<p>Here is my proposal for big game rig consideration. Disallow hunting for Deer/elk with large trophy's, to a certain degree. IE a max point restriction or authorize additional Doe tags. This would be temporary in order to allow trophy animals to breed and circulate their genes to yield quality animals in the years to come.</p>	<p>This would be an unnecessary restriction. The Department has implemented similar minimum restrictions for deer and elk in a number of locations. However, implementing a maximum antler restriction and maintaining a general season would likely prevent enough younger age class animals to recruit into the older age class that you are interested in fostering.</p>
<p>Change GMU area 352 to antlerless or 3 point minimum in early or late archery season.</p>	<p>The recommendation for the season structure in 352 is to restore the spike bull and antlerless opportunity in the early season. We are not recommending a change to the late season.</p>
<p>I agree and support modifying the regulations to allow antlerless elk hunt in GMU 352 (Nile) and Bumping Lake GMU. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I do not agree with letting archery hunters hunt Nile and Bumping areas during a late season without giving muzzleloaders more hunts. Archery hunters already have ample time to hunt, many more days than muzzleloaders. Muzzleloaders used to have a couple of late 3 day seasons in the Ahtanum, Cowoche and Bald Mt. areas but have lost those seasons while archery hunters still have late hunting areas. If new later seasons are implemented all weapons should be given a chance not just archery hunters. We can't just keep feeling sorry for the archery hunters because of lower success rates, that is their choice to hunt with archery equipment. Have some late quality bull tags for people with more than 7 pts or something like that rather than the archery hunters have more time, they have enough time, early and late seasons.</p>	<p>There aren't any changes to late archery opportunities being recommended for those units.</p> <p>Late archery opportunity in Nile (GMU 352) is already in place and there is no recommendation to change that.</p> <p>In 2010, the Commission removed early season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356 in response to lower than desired number in those units. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>
<p>The proposed rules take away significant opportunity for the Eastern Washington Elk hunters. The permits in 352-356 were the same as the previous harvest so there is no gain or loss of harvest in that regard. Adding the general antlerless is great. Removing GMU 346 will prevent older and disabled hunters from having much needed access to territory with easy access, The little Naches hunting area is covered with roads that can get hunters in and out easily when they have limited mobility. Why are you shortening Late Season Archery by one week in 2014? This will reduce harvest opportunity and an increase in hunters because of the shortened hunting season will have many negative impacts on the animals and the territory.</p>	<p>In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346. As an aside, late season antlerless opportunity for archery has always been offered in GMU 346 for this entire time period (2000-2012) and there is no recommendation to change that opportunity.</p>
<p>Late season EA elk dates in 14 and 15 are shortened by a week, again, taking away opportunity for no visible reason</p>	<p>Unsure what your comments are referencing. There is no Elk Area 14 or 15. There are no recommendations to shorten season lengths. Any season length changes are a result of calendar date adjustments.</p>
<p>I have hunted in the Nile GMU (352) every year since 1992. This year while hunting the Spike-Only season, I experienced seeing many more cows and calves than I have seen for the last 5 years. The Spike-Only rule appears to have worked and now I believe the population is back to normal. I would strongly support a return to the either-sex season.</p>	<p>That is the recommendation. Thank you for your support.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I have just seen the proposal to add cow tags in game management units 352 and 356. Does anyone get out of the office and see what is happening in those areas??? You have been facing a declining population for several years and they are still declining! On top of that you now have an aging population! We will soon lose those herds if something is not done. And now you propose killing off more cows when you need to be increasing the numbers!!</p> <p>Or do you want to kill off more elk since you severely overgrazed the area with sheep this past year??? The forest service acknowledged overgrazing in early August but in October the sheep were still in the area!!!!</p> <p>With depressed herds, and an aging herd in 352 and 356, the last thing we need to do is add seasons or permits! Please wake up the biologist and tell him to go out and see what is happening!!!</p>	<p>In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346.</p>
<p>Restoring antlerless elk opportunities for archery hunters in Yakima County, specifically in Game Management Units 352 (Nile) and 356 (Bumping). The public notice says nothing about closing Unit 346; and essentially returning to the old hunting rules. At a minimum change 346 to spike only. Opening the 346 unit was welcomed by my family since we have hunted all units in that area and like the opportunity to move to different units. The three areas open at the same time allows some privacy from other hunters. After all, archery is a primitive weapon and too many hunters in a small area defeats the point. High hunter density is a problem for archery hunters</p>	<p>In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346. As an aside, late season antlerless opportunity for archery has always been offered in GMU 346 for this entire time period (2000-2012) and there is no recommendation to change that opportunity.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>To whom it may concern, Specifically in reference to the proposed change for Archery Elk opportunities in the Bumping and Nile GMUs. I oppose the change to the Archery Elk rules going "Spike or antlerless" from the current "Spike and antlerless draw" based on the following: This will increase the antlerless harvest for archers tremendously in both Units thus decreasing opportunities for the other two hunting disciplines who are lucky enough to be drawn for an antlerless tag. If the Game biologist feel there are too many cows in these 2 units and want to reduce numbers, it would be fair to all hunting disciplines to increase tags for everyone instead of allowing the Archers an unfair advantage. According to the WDFW Game Harvest Report for 2011 (2012 hasn't been released yet) : Archers in the Nile had an 8.8% success rate compared to Muzzleloaders 0.0% and Modern's 2.7% Archers in the Bumping had a 0.8% success rate compared to Muzzleloaders 2.0% and Modern's 1.5%. In order to "even the playing field" and based on the Stats above, I feel that the antlerless issue should be resolved by proportionately increasing tags in each group. Not giving all the advantage to just one discipline.</p>	<p>In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346.</p> <p>The recommendation for antlerless special permits in these two GMUs for modern firearm and muzzleloader is status quo.</p>
<p>Why can't any of us disabled hunters, hunt antlers?</p>	<p>Hunters with disabilities can take advantage of the same general seasons and apply for the same special permit hunts as other hunters.</p>
<p>Going through fire arm safety with my son they stated that elk herds were at their highest in years, and looking at wild life reports there is a high calf count in the pass years. This new permit thing seems to be a way to make money not regulate herds. Looking at reports of cows taken by archery in 356 in past years to me looked very low. In closing my family went for rifle this year for the first time in 16 years and out of 5 people we got 2 spike bulls and were happy but all would rather get one cow out of five and not have to worry about all the high amounts of rifle hunters in the woods. I would like to see the Antlerless back without permit. Thank you for your time.</p>	<p>The change that you are requesting is in the recommendations. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Dear Sirs, Regarding archery and elk season in area 356, Bumping Lake, I am writing to express my support in returning the cow tags, to accompany the spike tags, to the area. This is preferable the current status of spike only tags. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>The change that you are requesting is in the recommendations. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>
<p>Entirely closing GMU 346 Little Naches will eliminate the majority of that area's access to hunt Elk. GMU 356 Bumping doesn't provide adequate road access. Leaving only the Nile unit to realistically hunt for all that traditionally hunted the 3 GMU's. Closing GMU 346 Naches will consolidate the hunters in that region, which is not desirable.</p>	<p>In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346. As an aside, late season antlerless opportunity for archery has always been offered in GMU 346 for this entire time period (2000-2012) and there is no recommendation to change that opportunity.</p>
<p>To whom it may concern: i would love to see this hunt come back to the bumping unit. I say yes to antlerless and spikes in unit 356 bumping. Thank you for letting me express my sentiments!</p>	<p>The change that you are requesting is in the recommendations. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I noticed GMU 346- Little Naches is being proposed for closure for general early season archery. I would like to voice my opposition to this measure. Are the elk numbers really that bad such that there will no cow harvest? I do not even see that there is a special permit for antlerless.</p>	<p>In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346. As an aside, late season antlerless opportunity for archery has always been offered in GMU 346 for this entire time period (2000-2012) and there is no recommendation to change that opportunity.</p>
<p>To whom it may concern: I am writing in support of restoring antlerless elk to the general archery tag in GMU's 352 & 356. If numbers are or have been a concern, archery hunters have traditionally had very little impact on populations of antlerless elk. The restriction in the mentioned units over the last few years to spike only on the general archery tag has kept me from hunting elk in Washington. I spent several seasons packing into the Bumping Unit and loved the area and the hunt. However, with the restriction, I haven't hunted there since 2009. Yes, I've continued to buy my WA tags in hopes of drawing a quality elk tag, but having not drawn, I've instead spent my hunting time and hunting money for the local economies in Idaho where there was greater opportunity for success. If the antlerless option is restored I will once again spend my September archery hunt in WA.</p>	<p>The change that you are requesting is in the recommendations. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Dear WDFW. I would like to voice my approval for restoring antlerless elk opportunities in the Yakima County. I have hunted Elk for over 30 years and have only harvested one Bull Elk on a special Muzzle loader permit. I have been hunting with a bow for 4 years. Due to the closure of the unit for Antlerless Elk opportunity I have decided not to pursue hunting elk for the 2013/2014 season. This would change, should you decide to offer antlerless opportunity for the area. Hunting only a spike bull in the area is along the same lines as winning the lottery. Success rates for archery are extremely low for elk and offering an antlerless opportunity would encourage me to buy a 2013 elk tag. As the success rate extremely low for bow hunters this decision should minimally affect the harvest numbers in the area. I would encourage you to consider restoring the antlerless elk opportunities in the area. Otherwise I will be sitting out next season.</p>	<p>If the change that you are referring to is in GMUs 352 and 356, that is in the recommendations. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>
<p>I have hunted either muzzleloader or modern firearm elk seasons in the Bumping Unit 5 of the last 8 years. Since antlerless harvests were curtailed for Archery hunters in 2010, the quality of hunting has improved vastly in this unit in terms of the numbers of cows and bulls present. Anecdotally, previous seasons with archery antlerless harvests reduced the numbers present on opening days of firearm seasons by about two-thirds compared to the last 3 years. To resume that apparent level of hunting disturbance seems wrong and probably contributes to the unseemly "Elk Fence slaughters", which periodically occur for firearm seasons within the Cowiche and Wenas units. Hunting pressure has been better allocated under current regs. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>The majority of people that have commented are in favor of restoring the pre-2010 antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>
<p>I would like to see some balance in user groups in both deer and elk hunting. Every user group should have the same amount of days to be allowed to hunt. In the case of archers if there are early and late seasons such as deer and elk they need to choose either early or late (they can't hunt both) that would have an impact on the amount of hunters in their areas. On public land hunter densities are too high. Re-instate early and late seasons for muzzleloaders and make them opt out in which they would prefer. Once again hunter densities are way too high. If user groups would like to hunt both early and late they need to be drawn for a new multi-season permit which would enable them to hunt both. There is currently a multi season permit which the holder can hunt all weapons. That permit can continue as is.</p>	<p>Limiting user groups to either an early season or a late season would require extensive discussions as part of a 3-year package process. You can submit your suggestions during that scoping process. The next 3-year package will be 2015-2017. The Department is not recommending any changes along these lines.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Currently, WDFW issues 54 tags for quality buck hunts out of the Desert Unit (GMU 290). Additionally, an auction tag, 3 deer raffle tag, north-central raffle tag, mule deer tag, 5 incentive tags and a hunter ed instructor tag is also given to hunt the unit. That is a combination of 64 bucks coming out of one unit that is fairly small in size when you remove the water and private agriculture fields. I feel this hard to justify as a "quality" hunt. Overharvest of mature big bucks is occurring in this unit from WDFW regulations and is a huge concern; this is not including the poaching issue that occurs in this unit year-round. Please reduce the number of quality tags and seasons out there. If you cannot reduce it, please look into it. You would be amazed by their annual count of mature mule deer bucks.</p>	<p>A fair number of tags are offered for this unit but for the last 10 years the average harvest has been 20 bucks (range 16-32), primarily because archers have low success rates. Regional staff considers a reduction in buck harvest to be unwarranted. Currently, the B:D ratio reflects a conservative harvest per the Game Management Plan. If survey and harvest metrics suggest a problem Regional staff will certainly be recommending a change.</p>
<p>I have never understood why Archers and Muzzleloaders get pigeonholed in some units and never get to hunt all of the state like rifle hunters. We all pay the same fees so why does one group get everything and the others get basically scraps? If you are worried about harvest reduce the number of days for the hunt, but let's treat everyone the same.</p>	<p>Aside from possibly 3 or 4 units archers can all the same units that modern firearm hunters can. Depending on the species, muzzleloaders can hunt about 80% to 90% of the units that modern firearm can. If you have a specific unit in mind, please contact the appropriate Regional Wildlife Program Manager and that decision can be part of the next 3-year hunting season process.</p>
<p>Gentlemen, I can't believe you want to give archery hunters more antlerless opportunities in Units 352 Nile and 356 Bumping. You already gave archery hunters Unit 346 Little Naches during the rut which is the premier unit in the Yakima area. You have taken the late Unit 346 Little Naches from the muzzleloaders and have drastically reduced the number of muzzleloading antlerless permits in Nile, Bumping, and Bethel. Muzzleloading hunters are the only user group that doesn't have antlerless deer permits for over 65 hunters. I guess muzzleloaders don't have the enough political clout to deserve equal opportunity.</p>	<p>The majority of people that have commented are in favor of restoring the pre-2010 antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356. We can explore additional senior, antlerless deer opportunities as part of the next 3-year package process.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I would love to see GMU’s 352 (Nile) and 356 (Bumping) go back to antlerless elk ONLY if GMU 346 (Little Naches or Peaches Ridge) goes back to quality branched bull. Peaches Ridge used to be a great hunt until it was opened to general archery elk hunters now it’s a mad house! We need more areas to have quality hunts with less hunting pressure. I finally drew Peaches quality bull tag the first year it was open to the general and it was a horrible hunt with people everywhere and this was way in the back country, could not imagine what it was like around the roads.</p>	<p>The majority of people that have commented are in favor of restoring the pre-2010 antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn’t been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn’t been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>
<p>I have a disability and hunt in the Nile and Bumping with modern firearm. Why aren’t you giving modern firearm the same opportunities as the bow hunters?</p>	<p>In general archery hunters tend to have lower success rates and therefore typically get more days to hunt.</p>
<p>what do you think about an antlerless archery hunt in the mashel unit for elk you guys did it one year then switched to muzzleloader maybe you could go half and half on the tags or one year archery then one year muzzleloader just an idea thanks</p>	<p>We think that is a good idea. In fact, there already is an antlerless archery elk hunt in the Mashel unit (GMU 654) and we are not recommending changing that at this time. You’re welcome.</p>
<p>After reviewing the proposal to allow archery cow elk to be harvested I believe it should be allowed for the whole month of September state wide. Thanks</p>	<p>A relatively high number of GMUs are currently open for antlerless archery opportunity. We try to maximize opportunity whenever possible, while still meeting our post-hunt management objectives. A broad, sweeping change of statewide antlerless opportunity for the entire month of September would likely not be something that we would entertain as a management strategy that would allow us to meet management objectives in all locations.</p>
<p>I would just like to give my opinion on making the bumping and Nile antlerless. We hunted the bumping last year for archery and we were into elk every day. We saw a lot of sign and animals; we covered a lot of ground. My opinion is that there are enough elk to support changing to antlerless.</p>	<p>The change that you are requesting is in the recommendations. In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn’t been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn’t been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356.</p>

Written Public Comment	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I suggest you move elk season to the first week end of Nov. to give us modern fire hunters a break between muzzle loaders, bow hunters, and modern fire arm deer hunters.	At this time the calendar is full with no room to shift user groups as you've described. In addition history has shown that the increased vulnerability of eastern Washington elk moving in response to snow events will result in a higher harvest than can be sustained over the long-term.
It is a shame that the WDFW has chosen to include the local area in the general elk season with the taking of 'any elk' allowed (GMU 124). How is it that we can ever hope to see an increase in the herd size if this is the policy of the WDFW?	GMU 124 is not a unit where we are managing for high numbers of elk. Hence the any elk season structure.
And 460 elk herd is very large need to have a late hunt.	The suggestion for a late hunt for elk in GMU 460 can be submitted as part of the scoping process in the next 3-year package, 2015-2017.
Please consider global climate change and adjust 2013-2014 deer and elk hunting season to start later in the year. Mid-October is like mid-Sept. recently, with warm and dry conditions. Please set deer and elk seasons to open at least one week later than in past years. Hunting success for 2011 in the Pearrygin Unit was 11.15% for modern firearm and 2.6 % for elk in the Umtanum unit. In 2010 hunter success was 10.6% for deer and 2% for elk in these units. These results makes a hunter wonder why he/she is buying a license and tags. The last decade has been the warmest in history. This trend is not likely to reverse any time soon so we can expect, short sleeve weather and fire restrictions on every opening day of deer hunting season from here on out unless we change the season openers to a later date. Please seriously consider this suggestion.	The suggestion for later seasons in response to climate change can be submitted as part of the scoping process in the next 3-year package, 2015-2017.
Dear Commissions, Thank you for allowing me to comment on the proposals. I would like to ask you to reconsider your proposal on the late muzzleloader season of areas 568,574 and 578. The proposal is recommending a four (4) day late season hunt, 27 th -30 th . Normally the season opens a day before Thanksgiving and closes the last day of November. Since Thanksgiving is on the 28 th this year and late next year, I ask the commission to consider opening season on Wednesday the 20 th a week before Thanksgiving. This has been done in the past and worked well for all muzzleloaders in the area.	This season structure is designed to shift with the calendar adjustments and the start is the day before Thanksgiving and end on a set date. Last year Thanksgiving was a week earlier. Over time the season will lengthen each year and then ultimately it resets back to 4 days.

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I am writing to ask that you take a look at the late muzzleloader season that is proposed for GMU 568,574, and 578 in 2013. In the proposed regulations it is listed as a 4 day season. In the past, this has been a 10 day late season hunt. I have only hunted with muzzleloader the last couple of years and have found it to be enjoyable. Prior to that I hunted with modern firearm.</p> <p>There were many reasons to switch weapons, one of them being that the seasons were comparable in length to modern firearm season and there were fewer people hunting with muzzleloader. I feel that if you shorten the season to 4 days, you will have more people going to modern firearm (which I will do reluctantly) and away from muzzleloader, which in my opinion creates a worse situation for the modern firearm hunters. To me, it makes sense to spread the hunters out equally if possible and shortening seasons will not accomplish that.</p>	<p>This season structure is designed to shift with the calendar adjustments and the start is the day before Thanksgiving and end on a set date. Last year Thanksgiving was a week earlier. Over time the season will lengthen each year and then ultimately it resets back to 4 days.</p>
<p>WAC 232-28-358 2012-2014 Elk general seasons and definitions. Archery General Elk Seasons. Eastern Washington Why delete the opportunity of archery hunting spike bull or antlerless in GMU 346?</p> <p>Strongly support the Legal Elk in GMU 352 and 356 as Spike Bull or Antlerless. But recommend GMU 346 not be deleted. The archery hunting pressure will be limited in GMU 346 because the archery hunters will now be able to hunt in GMU 353 and 356.</p> <p>Last year the pressure was tremendous because of the closure of 353, 356, road closures due to the road wash-outs. The hunting opportunity could be spread across 3 GMUs. Please keep all 3 GMUs open to spike bull and antlerless.</p>	<p>Your comment probably pertains to GMU 352, there is no GMU 353.</p> <p>In 2010, to offset the loss of early archery season antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352, 356, Region 3 recommended opening an early antlerless opportunity in GMU 346. Records show that opportunity hadn't been offered in the previous ten years (2000-2009) and probably hadn't been offered much longer than that if ever. Now that the elk numbers in GMUs 352 and 356 have responded, the Department is recommending returning to the pre-2010 structure for the early archery season that allowed antlerless opportunity in GMUs 352 and 356 but not in GMU 346. As an aside, late season antlerless opportunity for archery has always been offered in GMU 346 for this entire time period (2000-2012) and there is no recommendation to change that opportunity.</p>

Written Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>3 plus years ago WDFW eliminated the late bull only archery season in GMU 506. I commented on this proposed change and your justification was due to the high bull harvest in this unit. I do not believe you had any harvest data that showed that the late archery bull only elk season had any significant impact on the archery bull harvest success. I live in this unit (Salmon Creek) and hunted it exclusively, it was not an either sex unit and there was little to no hunting pressure. I am not aware of any late archery bull harvest on the west side of GMU 506 in the last five (5) years that it was open to bull harvest. This hunt provided a quality opportunity for those that chose to hunt it. Subsequently, the early Elk archery season has been reduced by a day incrementally over the last two years for the same reason. I now suspect that the elimination of the bull only hunting opportunity was your attempt to reduce bull harvest without reducing hunting days, but reductions were required in following years to achieve the balance you were seeking and required to provide. I and several others with like hunting interest would like to see this season reimplemented even if it would be for say a seven day period sometime in early mid-December as it would not have any major impact on late bull harvest. Perhaps a split of 506 would help you achieve this. Say west side with a bull only season and the east side without. The mainline at the top of KM on SR 4 could provide a good boundary for this split. I understand why you eliminated the bull only season in 506, and later reduced the early archery seasons. If the reduction in days has provided the balance for bull harvest with the other user groups we would like to see the bull only season in 506 restored. Any efforts on your part to restore a short late archery bull only season on the west side of 506 would be greatly appreciated.</p>	<p>The suggestion for late archery bull season in GMU 506 can be submitted as part of the scoping process in the next 3-year package, 2015-2017.</p>

Oral Public Comment

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Several citizens provided testimony regarding hoof disease in elk in southwest Washington.</p>	<p>Reports of lameness and deformed hooves in free-ranging Roosevelt elk have been observed in southwest Washington since the mid 1990's. This problem appears to be concentrated in the lowlands in the lower Cowlitz River Valley, but reports have been increasing in number and geographic scope, and hunters are regularly seeing and sometimes harvesting elk with this condition.</p> <p>One of the challenges in understanding hoof disease in animal populations is that there are over 40 types of hoof diseases of domestic livestock that are known. The type observed in southwest Washington elk does not appear to match with any known hoof diseases in domestic or wild animals and does not seem to be affecting domestic livestock in the area.</p> <p>Because of the complexity of this situation, additional investigation is needed to help us better understand and manage this problem. WDFW biological and veterinary staff have been working with veterinary experts throughout the country, and abroad, to develop sampling and testing plans for identifying the cause of hoof disease in southwest Washington elk.</p> <p>Regarding the public's concerns about the safety of meat from elk with hoof disease, as with all wild animals, WDFW cannot guarantee the safety of game meat. As a general guideline, if the animal appeared and behaved normally before it was shot; the meat appears and smells normal; good hygiene and common sense practices were used during butchering, storage, and preparation; and the meat is thoroughly cooked before consuming it; then most likely the meat is safe to eat. WDFW advises against harvesting any animal that appears sick. And while no specific investigation regarding meat from elk with hoof disease in southwest Washington has occurred, we have not had any reports of the public becoming ill from eating the meat of elk in southwest Washington. WDFW will keep hunters informed as more information is obtained. Check the Elk Hoof Disease section of the Wildlife Health page at http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/.</p>

WAC 232-28-360 2013 Elk special permits.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of this amendment is to retain special-permit elk hunting opportunity. The purpose is also to balance the hunting opportunity between user groups; increase opportunity when elk populations allow; and reduce opportunity when declining elk numbers warrant a change.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Blue Creek hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 5 to 4 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, the Watershed hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, antlerless elk were removed as a legal animal; now the legal animal is a 3 pt. minimum bull. The majority of hunters that participate in this hunt harvest bulls. To remain consistent with the Quality concept and to reduce some complications with harvest data reporting the proposal is to shift the legal animal to 3 pt. minimum bulls.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Dayton hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 26 to 12 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Ten Ten hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 12 to 5 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Tucannon hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 14 to 12 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Wenaha West hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 15 to 9 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Wenaha East hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 21 to 12 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Mountain View hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 20 to 15 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Lick Creek hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 10 to 6 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Colockum hunt, from Oct. 21 to Nov. 3, was changed from 7 to 1 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Western Modern Firearm, the date for the Green River hunt was changed to Nov. 9-15. These dates are negotiated with the watershed and land managers controlling access and therefore, hunt dates need to be adjusted.
- Under Quality, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the date for the Toutle hunt, Sept. 24-28 should be changed to Sept. 23- 27. This change corrects a typographical error.
- Under Quality, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the date for the Quinault hunt was changed to Sept. 23-27. This change avoids an overlap between modern firearm and archery deer.
- Under Quality, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the number of permits for the Toutle hunt, from Nov. 2-13, was changed from 100 to 99 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.

- Under Quality, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the Dungeness hunt, Oct. 7-11, was eliminated due to the hunt not being an effective method of achieving the reductions that are needed.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Dayton hunt, from Sept. 1-19, was changed from 14 to 7 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Ten Ten hunt, from Sept. 1-19, was changed from 8 to 3 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Wenaha West hunt, from Sept. 1-19, was changed from 5 to 3 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Wenaha East hunt, from Sept. 1-19, was changed from 11 to 5 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Lick Creek hunt, from Sept. 1-19, was changed from 11 to 16 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Clockum hunt, Sept. 3-15, was changed from 6 to 2 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Peaches Ridge hunt, from Sept. 3-15, was changed from 101 to 106 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Observatory hunt, from Sept. 3-15, was changed from 130 to 110 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Goose Prairie hunt, from Sept. 3-15, was changed from 65 to 62 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Bethel hunt, from Sept. 3-15, was changed from 29 to 35 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Rimrock hunt, from Sept. 3-15, was changed from 97 to 94 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the number of permits for the Cowiche hunt, from Sept. 3-15, was changed from 19 to 24 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Archery (EA), the Klickitat Meadows hunt, Oct. 12-20, was eliminated due to land ownership changing. New landowners will not be allowing access. The hunts and the elk area are proposed to be eliminated.
- Under Quality, Western Archery (WA), the number of permits for the Toutle hunt, from Sept. 7-22 and Dec. 1-15, was changed from 50 to 65 due to... the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Western Archery (WA), the number of permits for the White River hunt, from Sept. 4-16, was changed from 13 to 14 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Dayton hunt, from Oct. 1-11, was changed from 5 to 3 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Ten Ten hunt, from Oct. 1-11, was changed from 6 to 2 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.

- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Tucannon hunt, from Oct. 1-11, was changed from 3 to 2 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Wenaha West hunt, from Oct. 1-11, was changed from 3 to 2 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Wenaha East hunt, from Oct. 1-11, was changed from 3 to 2 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Mountain View hunt, from Oct. 1-11, was changed from 8 to 6 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Lick Creek hunt, from Oct. 1-11, was changed from 2 to 1 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Peaches Ridge hunt, from Oct. 1-10, was changed from 26 to 25 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Observatory hunt, from Oct. 1-10, was changed from 21 to 19 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Goose Prairie hunt, from Oct. 1-10, was changed from 15 to 13 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Bethel hunt, from Oct. 1-10, was changed from 14 to 11 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Rimrock hunt, from Oct. 1-10, was changed from 13 to 14 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Cowiche hunt, from Oct. 1-10, was changed from 10 to 6 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Quality, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the Klickitat Meadows hunt, Oct. 1-10, was eliminated due to land ownership changing. New landowners will not be allowing access. The hunts and the elk area are proposed to be eliminated.
- Under Quality, Western Muzzleloader (WM), the number of permits for the Toutle hunt, from Oct. 5-11, was changed from 20 to 21 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Peaches Ridge hunt, from Oct. 21-Nov. 3, was changed from 120 to 115 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Observatory hunt, from Oct. 21-Nov. 3, was changed from 64 to 66 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Goose Prairie hunt, from Oct. 21-Nov. 3, was changed from 74 to 68 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Bethel hunt, from Oct. 21-Nov. 3, was changed from 63 to 51 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.

- Under Bulls, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Rimrock hunt, from Oct. 21-Nov. 3, was changed from 120 to 124 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Cowiche hunt, from Oct. 21-Nov. 3, was changed from 22 to 20 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the Klickitat Meadows hunt, Oct. 21-Nov. 3, was eliminated due to land ownership changing. New landowners will not be allowing access. The hunts and the elk area are proposed to be eliminated.
- Under Bulls, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the number of permits for the Margaret hunt, from Nov. 2-14, was changed from 75 to 73 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the number of permits for the Olympic hunt, from Nov. 3-14, was changed from 20 to 16 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the number of permits for the White River hunt, from Nov. 3-14, was changed from 24 to 21 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Western Archery (WA), the number of permits for the Olympic hunt, from Sept. 4-16, was changed from 5 to 6 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Teanaway hunt, from Dec. 9-16, was changed from 16 to 7 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Western Muzzleloader (WM), the season dates for the Margaret hunt were changed to Oct. 5-12 and the number of permits was changed from 25 to 21 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Western Muzzleloader (WM), the season dates for the Mount Whittier hunt were changed to Oct. 5-11 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Western Muzzleloader (WM), the number of permits for the Olympic hunt, from Oct. 6-12 were changed from 5 to 4 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Western Muzzleloader (WM), the number of permits for the Skokomish hunt, from Oct. 6-12 was changed from 1 to 3 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under Bulls, Western Muzzleloader (WM), the number of permits for the White River hunt, from Oct. 6-12 was changed from 3 to 4 due to the special permit allocation formula calculated different special permit numbers from the previous year.
- Under the Antlerless Elk, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the number of permits for the Blue Creek hunt, from Oct. 26-Nov. 3, was changed from 20 to 10. This change corrects an error in the original filing.
- Under the Antlerless Elk, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the Colockum hunt, Oct. 30-Nov. 3, the number of permits was changed from 40 to 190 due to March aerial surveys indicating the total population was well above objective.
- Under Antlerless Elk, Eastern Modern Firearm (EF), the Klickitat Meadows hunt, Oct. 30-Nov. 3, was eliminated due to land ownership changing. New landowners will not be allowing access. The hunts and the elk area are proposed to be eliminated.
- Under Antlerless Elk, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the number of permits for the Wildwood hunt, from Jan. 16-30, was changed from 50 to 25 due to reduced damage complaints.
- Under Antlerless Elk, Western Modern Firearm (WF), the number of permits for the Puyallup hunt, from Jan. 1-20, was changed from 5 to 10 due to increasing damage concerns in this area. Also, in the weapon/tag column, WA and WM were added to allow archery and muzzleloader hunters to apply for this hunt in addition to the modern firearm hunters. This approach in this location best meets the needs of landowners and better addresses damage issues.

- Under the Antlerless Elk, Eastern Archery (EA), for the Colockum hunt, Sept. 3-15, the number of permits was changed from 50 to 140 due to March aerial surveys indicating the total population was well above objective.
- Under Antlerless Elk, Eastern Archery (EA), the Klickitat Meadows hunt, Oct. 12-21, was eliminated due to land ownership changing. New landowners will not be allowing access. The hunts and the elk area are proposed to be eliminated.
- Under Antlerless Elk, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the number of permits for the Colockum hunt, from Oct. 5-11, was changed from 30 to 40 due to March aerial surveys indicating total population was well above objective.
- Under Antlerless Elk, Eastern Muzzleloader (EM), the Klickitat Meadows hunt, Oct. 1-11, was eliminated due to land ownership has changed. New landowners will not be allowing access. The hunts and the elk area are proposed to be eliminated.
- Under Antlerless Elk, Western Muzzleloader (WM), the number of permits for the Wildwood, from Jan. 1-15, was changed from 50 to 25 due to reduced damage complaints.
- Under Master Hunter, Any tag, the number of permits for the Region 4 North hunt, from Aug. 1, 2013- Mar. 31, 2014, was changed from 20 to 30 to increase pressure on elk damaging agricultural crops, especially in the Skagit River Valley.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Input	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Open the Quinault valley for draw tags for cow elk –make the Quinault valley open for trophy bull hunts ONLY. The bulls maybe make it to a rag horn 3 point and nothing more. Or even just close the valley down to hunting all together for a couple years except damage hunts.	We can provide your concerns to the Region 6 staff but at this time, the need for such a change is not being entertained and would likely be a big enough change that it would require waiting for the 2015-2017 3-year package discussion.
I wish we could go back to the way it was before. I will be 58 years old the year and have been trying to draw a branched antler permit for observatory A for 12 years now. It would be nice to draw while I still have my health...Thanks.	We wish we could go back to the way it was before, too. Unfortunately with loss of habitat and increasing pressures on elk numbers we can't. Special permits are a random draw despite the number of points you have. Hopefully you will be successful this year. Good luck.
To whom it may concern, would like to see a change in the special hunt drawings. I do not want to commit to modern fire arm in an area. If I do not draw that tag maybe I would like to hunt archery in a different area.	<p>This has been suggested before and discussed in the previous 3-year package process. The current system reduces crowding by not allowing what you have described on the general broad scale.</p> <p>More than half of the hunting constituency that we have received comment from in past 3-year packages also voice concerns about crowding especially when it comes to selecting areas and weapon types for elk hunting.</p> <p>To currently accomplish your idea you should take advantage of the multi-season permit draw that the Department conducts. A multi-season permit would allow you to accomplish everything you've described here. Applications are on sale now. See page 80 of the 2012 Big Game Pamphlet for more details. The application deadline is March 31, 2013.</p>
It would be nice to see the cow elk season expanded. Meaning that it would start on Monday of the general season than on Wednesday.	You didn't specify which GMU but we can take comment on such a proposal during the next 3-year package process, 2015-2017.

WAC 232-12-021 Importation and retention of dead nonresident wildlife.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The amendment reduces the risk of CWD being imported into Washington State via carcasses of animals harvested in other states. Reducing disease risk helps in sustaining deer, elk, and moose hunting opportunities in Washington.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- In the first sentence of subsection 2, the term “mountain sheep” was changed to “bighorn sheep” to clarify the intended species, *Ovis canadensis*, commonly known as bighorn sheep.
- Due to detection of CWD in 3 deer from two counties, Pennsylvania was added to the list of states with importation restrictions for harvested deer, moose, elk or parts thereof.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

None.

WAC 232- WAC 232-28-296 Landowner Hunting Permits.

A. Agency reason for adoption:

The purpose of this amendment is to expand the number of special hunting opportunities available on private lands for hunters and to maintain the number of cooperating landowners. This program encourages landowners to provide opportunity to the general hunter in exchange for customized hunting seasons and the ability to generate funding to offset the cost of providing public access.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.
- The legal animal designation under the Buckrun Special Hunt Permits category was changed to “antlerless”-only, as per the department’s negotiated agreement with the landowner.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

Written Public Input	
COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Too often I hear of these permits being given to friends and family members then to the “general hunter.” I am worried this is only going to increase that from happening. “Ability to generate funding to offset the cost” what happened to allowing someone to hunt on your land after they ask. Are we going to turn into a state full of leased only land. I just recently saw at the sportsmen show Rayonier timber selling leases to hunting land. Some of these areas went for upwards of \$5,000. Is that the general hunter who can afford that? I am in support of timber companies giving access to only a certain number and having names and possibly deposits or smaller fees for a key to access for the year. I think I am getting away from the true meaning of this amendment being smaller ranchers and farmers. This takes away opportunity for a hunter to go talk to a landowner to gain access for hunting when that landowner knows they can get money for the access. What is to stop people from buying land just to sell landowner tags? I am not for this idea unless it can be regulated so the general hunter actually has an opportunity to draw one of these permits.	The idea behind this program is that the permits are shared between the landowner and the hunter. Half of the antlerless permits and twenty-five percent of the antlered deer or elk permits are drawn by WDFW and do not require an access fee.

Written Public Input

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I cannot in support the continual increase of private land hunts. This is getting out of control for the little access we gain. Also, legal boundary descriptions for these areas need to be published in the hunting pamphlet to avoid the rampant abuse.	We are not recommending any increases in LHP cooperators for 2013. In order to qualify, landowners must post their boundaries.
I do not feel that customized hunting season on specific private lands is the best opportunity for the general public. I have not personally experienced one of these opportunities, so my understanding may not be complete, but can see how a great concept (more land for public access) can become corrupt by individual landowners who use this system improperly. I know of several families who regulate usage of their land through personal guiding opportunities and don't see how this proposed amendment will better increase the public's access to hunting properties.	Surveys conducted by participating landowners of hunters who drew permits have been overwhelming supportive and appreciative of their hunts.

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

A. Agency reason for adoption:

This amendment is intended to further the discussion on allowing illuminated nocks for archery equipment, including discussion of new technologies and consideration of acceptable fair chase and ethical standards for hunting.

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

- Several technical amendments were made throughout this section to improve the clarity and accuracy of the rule.

C. Agency responses to written and oral comments:

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
I would like to voice my support in favor of allowing illuminated nocks for archery in the coming hunting seasons. I see this as a tool to aid in the recovery of game animals; I do not believe illuminated nocks would increase the instance of illegal hunting after dark. I believe there are too many other obstacles with archery to allow for using a bow in the dark (seeing through sights, peep sight, etc). Further, an illuminated nock only aids in seeing the arrow's trajectory and where the arrow came to rest. Since both of these benefits (seeing the trajectory and arrow location) happen after the shot, they would not logically be an instigating factor for a poacher to decide to take the shot in the first place.	Thank you for your support for allowing illuminated nocks. The majority of comments received and surveys conducted of archers in 2011, supported allowing illuminated nocks.
I am opposed to the approval of lighted nocks. The temptation to extend one's hunting day is strong, but even a lighted nock can be obscured by passing into or through the animals' body. Tracers are not allowed for a variety of reasons, checking your trajectory with lighted nocks is similar to a couple of them. Furthermore, adding electronics to "primitive" methods is a "slippery slope" which undermines the rationale behind these less lethal hunting methods.	These concerns are some of the main reasons that archery organizations have not supported the use of any electronics in the past. However, the majority of archers surveyed by the Department in 2011 were in support of this exception.
The Commission vote in 2012 was close, 4-3 in favor of, illuminated nocks. I urge you to approve illuminated nocks or hold the vote until all Commissioners are present.	With a nine member Commission, it takes five votes to approve a change to regulations. As you described, in 2012 the vote by the Commission was split four in favor and three opposed. The

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	<p>Commission asked the Department to bring this proposal forward again in 2013 for further consideration.</p>
<p>The Washington State Archery Association represents approximately 2500 archers in this state.</p> <p>We find ourselves once again opposed to an attempt by the DFW to increase technology in archery hunting. The WSAA opposes the use of any electronic devices or gadgets attached to a bow for archery hunting.</p> <p>DFW Quote! “This proposed amendment is intended to further the discussion on allowing illuminated nocks for archery equipment.” This issue has been discussed and rejected during the three Continued...</p> <p>year season process! Is there new evidence that showing sound reasons to make a special exception to the existing rules?</p> <p>DFW Reasons supporting proposal: “This proposal facilitates public discussion of new technologies and consideration of acceptable fair chase and ethical standards for hunting”. Once again there are no studies showing that any good reasons to cross the “no electronic” threshold.</p> <p>The WSAA is disappointed that the DFW continues to bring this up after it was rejected last year. There are no studies that show this will help with anything! The fact is that the Pope & Young Club and Professional Bowhunters have both rejected the use of electronic devices attached to a bow for archery hunting. The WSAA urges the DFW and Commission to reject the use of lighted nocks and stop trying to add electronic devices and gadgets to archery hunting in this state. No electronic devices attached to a bow for archery hunting is where the line should be drawn! It is simple, easy to enforce and east to understand.</p>	<p>The request to consider allowing illuminated nocks again, in 2013, came from the Commission and is in response to the high support of archery hunters for the change and the presence of only seven of nine Commissioners at the 2012 meeting.</p>
<p>An electronicnock is not necessary to bow-hunting, nor have they proved to be helpful in the retrieval of lost game. It will encourage risky, and at worst illegal, shots. Bow-hunting is a close-range sport, and from up close with adequate light, the things that are legal now to enhance arrow visibility work just fine.</p> <p>All that an electricnock will do, besides looking cool on video, is allow those who take long shots to find their arrow. If a person isn't willing to lose an occasional arrow then they aren't cut out to be a bow-hunter. Locating downed game is one of the most important things we as conscientious individuals can do while in the field bow-hunting. But arguably equal in importance is taking reasonable shots, those in good light and from short distances. I believe, although we will never know, that any device which may encourage some individuals to change their intelligent self-imposed shot limitations will lead to bad hits that wouldn't have occurred had there been no electricnock on their arrow. It only stands to reason</p>	<p>We understand the concern and recognize that the issue has been debated within the archery community. Facilitating this discussion on whether to allow illuminated nocks is largely driven by the number of archery hunters who support them.</p>

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<p>that this will happen. And so there will be, if I am correct about human nature, more poorly hit and lost animals because the technology will give some people a false sense of security.</p>	
<p>Will the state have more options hunting with a crossbow? Not just in firearm restriction areas.....Thank you</p>	<p>We are not proposing any expansion with these 2013 hunting season recommendations.</p>
<p>I feel that mechanical broad heads should be allowed. The reason I have heard for non-use is the reliability factor. I would agree except the styles today are sold as reliable openers since the majority do not use the rubber band to hold blades in place. We have grown into the equipment we use today and really why not mechanical?</p>	<p>Overall, the archery community still does not feel that mechanical broad heads function reliably enough to recommend their use. Even if they are 95% reliable, that would mean that 5% might inflict a less than lethal arrow into an animal.</p>
<p>A bow-hunting study was conducted at Camp Ripley, Minnesota, in the early 1990s. This was an investigation regarding bow-hunting and wounding loss. This scientific study has provided the public with very clear evidence that the bow and arrow is an efficient and effective means of game management. Effectiveness was measured without the aid of electronic devices on the bow and arrow.</p> <p>The idea behind the proposal for electronic nocks is that the bow-hunter can retrieve their game when darkness falls because a light on the nock will be a beacon to the game. Additionally, it is strongly suggested that bow hunters are wounding a disproportionate amount of game and need a change in regulations to address this as a conservation matter. The problems with these ideas are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quite often the nock does not stay on the arrow after the arrow hits a target. The nock is lying on the ground in this scenario. 2. The arrow usually passes through a target such as a deer or elk. The nock is now on the ground behind the animal in this scenario. 3. Sometimes the arrow breaks and the nock end will be on the ground while the remainder of the arrow is in the animal. The electronic nock is useless in this scenario. 4. The idea that this proposal is a conservation issue is false. There is no evidence to support more game is retrievable due to electronic nocks. The proposal, therefore, does not lend any credibility in favor of a conservation issue. One of the key requirements for regulation changes this year is for the matter to be one of conservation. 5. There are already non-electronic nocks available on the market which illuminate. The requirements for this regulation change are clearly questionable based upon this fact. 6. Electronics being on the bow and arrow is a perfect place to draw a line in the sand with regards to regulations being easier to understand and enforce. 7. Bowhunters prefer more time in the field or more opportunity than they do electronic gadgets. <p>For over 40 years bowhunters have successfully harvested game without lighted nocks or other electronics on the bow or arrow. That fact alone is enough to discredit any need or support for</p>	<p>We understand the concern and recognize that the issue has been debated within the archery community. Facilitating this discussion on whether to allow illuminated nocks is largely driven by the number of archery hunters who support them.</p>

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COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>the lighted nock.</p> <p>Experienced bowhunters understand the effectiveness of archery equipment and how much of an element the person using the (continued..)</p> <p>equipment contributes towards achieving success in the field. Previous testimony in support for the electronic nock is riddled with unproven and anecdotal claims of excessive wounding by bowhunters.</p> <p>The elements of success while hunting with the bow are very similar to what they are for rifle hunters. The individual hunter is the cornerstone to success. A successful hunter will often have experience, exercise patience, make good decisions and perhaps even have a sprinkle of luck which will contribute to their outcome. Is the idea of the electronic nock going to promote people to take shots when it is darker than they would previously? The answer is, yes. Consider the idea that perhaps it is too dark to begin with if someone requires an electric nock to hunt. Ask yourself - How did bowhunters harvest game all these years without the electronic nock?</p> <p>Companies are constantly attempting to invent a new gizmo in order to fix hunting or improve someone's field prowess. I would like to remind you that game in the field are not getting more advanced technology in order to avoid hunters. Companies which invent and mass market the gadgets to improve hunting have a vested interest (monetarily speaking) to chip away at regulations until all hunters can legally utilize their company's trinket in the field. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and considering this matter further.</p>	
<p>I would like to address a couple of concerns that were stated by the Commission at last year's rule adoption meeting regarding WAC 232-12-054 1. b.</p> <p>It troubles me to hear the Commission use the term <i>slippery slope</i>. The use of electronics on archery equipment is not a <i>slippery slope</i> unless you allow it. Each item should be looked at on its own merit. Continued...</p> <p>The use of an illuminated nock has less impact on your <i>hunting or sportsman skills</i> than a range finder, which is allowed. The range finder tells you the exact distance to an animal +/- 1yd and newer ones calculate actual distance from tree stands by using ARC, all before the shot. They are not primitive nor do they encourage us to use better skills as an outdoorsman. Should you ban them as well?</p> <p><i>Shooting later and taking unwise shots.</i> You need to see the animal before you can shoot it. Shooting after legal light and sometimes before is not acceptable, nor ethical.</p> <p>Ethical considerations are important and strongly encouraged by</p>	<p>The Commission did not initiate the use of the term slippery slope; it was the public that expressed those terms in describing their concerns for allowing electronics attached to bows or arrows.</p> <p>Decisions by the Commission on \</p> <p>Continued...</p> <p>allowing the use of advancing technology are not simple; regardless of the device, there are some important policy calls that guide these decisions. The policy of maintaining separate archery and muzzleloader hunting opportunities, the timing of those seasons, and the length of those seasons, hinges on keeping the weapons primitive. At this point the use of range finders or any other technological tools currently allowed, but may be subject to future consideration.</p> <p>We all expect hunters to be ethical in their choices of when to attempt a shot; we expect them to be</p>

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hunting and archery organizations and the use of illuminated nocks does not impact those considerations.	diligent in following up on retrieval of game and not to attempt shots when retrieval might be compromised. How those decisions by hunters are influenced by regulations are the crux of the Commission's considerations of technology restrictions, and will be important in the decision this year on whether to allow illuminated nocks.

Oral Public Input

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