



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA

April 28, 2020

Dear Spring Bear Permit holder:

The governor has relaxed his stay at home order, which allows us to open the spring bear permit season. The spring bear season will open on May 5 and will be extended until June 30. As we open hunting in Washington during the Covid-19 crisis, we need your help in complying with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) social distancing guidelines and the Governor's Executive Order.

If you decide to participate in the spring bear hunt, we urge you to consider some of the suggestions below that will help with reducing the virus transmission risk. If you chose not to participate see the section below regarding refunds and point restoration.

Before you go

- It is your responsibility to confirm that private land access for your hunt is still available, including for the additional days provided by the season extension. Many of these hunts occur on private timber company land and they may still have closures in place. If access to your hunt area is not available, you will be eligible for a refund and/or point restoration. See the section below for more information on these options.

Hunt local

- Please consider taking day trips only and limit travel, overnight stays and camping. Camping may be prohibited in some locations.
- Please purchase all your necessary supplies and fuel from your local community so that you can help to keep communities safe by not having to stop for items during your hunt.
- Please hunt with household members only. If you choose to hunt with people outside of your household, please maintain social distancing guidelines.

You may recall the Commission passed a new spring bear hunting regulation regarding inspection which required all successful bear hunters, after validating (notching) their bear tag, to notify the department within 72 hours of kill (excluding legal state holidays) by calling their local WDFW office and scheduling their carcass inspection. The raw pelt, with evidence of sex, and first premolar tooth, with root intact, must be presented to an authorized department employee for inspection within 5 days of notification of kill pursuant to RCW 77.15.280.

Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, **WDFW is waiving the agency physical inspection requirement. However, the agency is still requiring 2 things on your part:**

1. You are required to report your bear hunting activity even if you do not harvest a bear. Hunter reports are due by January 31, 2021. You may report your hunting activity by calling toll free 1-877-945-3492 or online at <http://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov>.
2. Complete the self-addressed and prepaid postage yellow mortality envelope (shown) in its entirety and place the required premolar tooth inside – then mail it to WDFW

If you choose not to hunt this spring or if access to your hunt area is unavailable:

- You have until 4:45 p.m. June 30 to seek a refund and/or point restoration, **only if you have not hunted.**
- You can get a refund (cost of bear license, bear tag) and will get your spring bear points restored. In this case you would have no tag for fall bear unless you purchased one at a later date and you will not receive a point for this year's permit since you will not have purchased one.
- Alternatively, you can choose to get just your points restored (keeping your bear license and tag for fall bear hunting). In this case, all previous points, plus the one you received this year, would be restored.
- For help with any of these point restoration or refund options please contact customer service at 360-902-2515 or by email at wildthing@dfw.wa.gov.

For the latest information around our response to impacts from the spread of COVID-19, please continue to visit <https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/covid-19-updates>.

If you have any questions not related to point restoration or refunds, please contact the Wildlife Program customer service desk at 360-902-2515 or by email at wildthing@dfw.wa.gov. Good luck during your spring black bear special permit season.

Sincerely,

Anis Aoude
Game Division Manager