Target Shooting- Decision

220-500-140 Firearms and target practicing.

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Summary Sheet

Meeting dates: October 23-24, 2020

Agenda item: Target Shooting – Decision

Presenter(s): Joel Sisolak, Lands Planning, Recreation and Outreach Section

Manager - Wildlife Program

Background summary:

Staff briefed the Commission on proposed amendments to WAC 220-500-140 Firearms and target practicing.

Highlights of the proposed target shooting amendments:

- Definition of recreational target shooting.
- Description of when and where shooting is allowed or prohibited on WDFW-managed lands.
- Description of prohibited ammunition.
- Description of allowable and prohibited targets.
- Definition of required backstop.
- Definition of littering.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) wishes to continue welcoming recreational target shooters to WDFW-managed lands while also protecting public safety and private property and minimizing damage to habitat. The proposed update to WAC 220-500-140 clarifies the WDFW definition of recreational target shooting; distinguishes between department designated target shooting areas and dispersed target shooting; distinguishes between shooting single projectiles (i.e. rifle bullets and shotgun slugs) and shooting shot (i.e. bird shot); describes when a backstop is required when discharging specific types of firearms/implements; lists specific locations where recreational target shooting would be prohibited (e.g. from or across roads, designated trails, water body, etc. or w/in 500' of buildings, campgrounds, etc.); restricts allowable targets to those commercially or privately manufactured specifically for target shooting; restricts recreational target shooting to 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset; and requires recreational target shooters to remove shell casings, shotgun hulls, ammunition packaging, targets, and target debris.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

No fiscal impacts beyond the status quo.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

In 2017, WDFW formed a citizen advisory committee to address issues with recreational target shooting on the Wenas Wildlife Area. The Wenas Wildlife Area Target Shooting Advisory Committee (WTSAC) was comprised of state and national interests (The Hunter's Heritage Council, National Rifle Association), as well as neighbors and affected landowners, local law enforcement (Kittitas County Sheriff), and a broad array of recreational interests (hunters, target shooters, horseback riders, mountain bike riders, hikers, wildlife watchers, bird dog trainers, motorized users). Some local elected officials also served as ex officio members. The advisory committee produced a December 2017 report with recommendations for addressing recreational target shooting on the Wenas Wildlife Area. These include a strong recommendation to align WDFW target shooting rules with DNR rules and to develop a rule for uniform application on all WDFW-managed lands in the state.

WDFW personnel expanded upon the Wenas effort to address target shooting on WDFW-managed lands statewide by drafting a proposed update to WAC 220-500-140. The draft update has been reviewed by the State Attorney General's office, the WTSAC, the Game Management Advisory Committee, and Wildlife Area Advisory Committees across the State.

Public comment was solicited electronically via the agency website between 5/6/20 and 6/10/20. More than 1,300 comments were submitted electronically. Online surveys, direct interviews, emails and two public hearings have determined a mix of support and opposition to the rule update.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Adopt WAC 220-500-140 as presented

Draft motion language:

I move to adopt WAC 220-500-140 as presented.

Post decision communications plan:

WDFW Website News Release

Form revised 2-15-18

- WAC 220-500-140 Firearms and target practicing. (($\frac{(1)}{(a)}$ It is unlawful to discharge tracer or incendiary ammunition on department lands.
- (b) It is unlawful to discharge firearms in those portions of department lands where or when such discharge is prohibited by department posted notice or from or within five hundred feet of a department designated campground. Violating this subsection is a gross misdemeanor if the violation creates a substantial risk of death or serious physical injury to another person, pursuant to RCW 9A.36.050.
- (c) It is unlawful to fail to remove expended shell casings, ammunition packaging, or other related target debris, excluding clay pigeons, when target practicing on department lands at the conclusion of the target practice session and prior to departure from the area. Failure to remove debris constitutes littering.
- (d) The use of glass, signs, appliances, mattresses, TVs, furniture, and exploding items as targets in target practicing is prohibited.
- (2) The department may designate locations and times for target practicing consistent with resource management or public safety concerns.)) (1) The department may designate or restrict locations, times, and manner for recreational target shooting upon department land, consistent with resource management concerns, management agreements or requirements, recreational use compatibility, or public safety concerns.
- (2) Persons must not recreationally target shoot on department land except as provided by this section.
- (3) Department land is open to recreational target shooting under the conditions set forth in this section, unless closed or otherwise restricted by this section or by any department-posted signage or notice.
- (a) Notwithstanding the allowances by this section, recreational target shooting is only permitted where a reasonable person, in consideration of all attendant circumstances, would believe the area between the person and the target, and the area beyond the target, is free of risk to person, animals, or property.
- (b) Unless otherwise posted, recreational target shooting is only allowed one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.
 - (c) Recreational target shooting using:
- Firearms firing single projectile ammunition of .17 caliber or greater or shot equal to or greater than BB; or
- Compressed gas or air guns capable of shooting any projectile at over eight hundred feet per second, is permitted only:
- (i) On department-designated recreational target shooting areas and in compliance with posted regulations; or
- (ii) In other areas containing an earthen backstop, as defined (reference to definitions), which must be utilized while target shooting. A backstop is not required while using shotguns discharging shot smaller than size BB. Targets must be placed in front of and within eight feet of the backstop, and the person must be shooting at the lower half of the backstop.
 - (d) Recreational target shooting using:
 - Archery equipment, crossbows, air bows; or
 - Shotguns discharging shot smaller than size BB, is permitted:

[1] OTS-2067.2

- (i) On department-designated recreational target shooting areas and in compliance with posted regulations; or
 - (ii) In other areas consistent with (a) of this subsection.
 - (e) Recreational target shooting is specifically prohibited:
 - (i) On, from, at, along, across, or down:
- (A) Any department-designated or department-developed water access site or boat launch, and associated parking area;
 - (B) Any road as defined in WAC 220-500-020;
 - (C) Any utility line, utility poles, or light posts;
 - (D) Any department-designated trail;
 - (E) Any water body or stream.
- (ii) Within five hundred feet of the following (when not utilizing a department-designated recreational target shooting area):
- (A) Residences, businesses, and/or other buildings or structures, including port-a-potties, etc.;
- (B) Power stations, cell phone towers, utility poles, light posts, wind turbines, or other public utility structures;
 - (C) Campgrounds;
 - (D) Viewing platforms or structures;
- (iii) In other areas posted by the department as restricted from shooting.
- (4) Authorized targets for use on department lands are restricted to items, other than exploding targets, that are commercially manufactured for the specific purpose of target shooting, or similar targets privately manufactured that are consistent with this section, and as further restricted below.
- (a) Steel targets that are manufactured for the specific purpose of target shooting are allowed subject to the following restrictions:
- (i) When used on a department-designated recreational target shooting area, steel targets that are manufactured for the specific purpose of target shooting are allowed year round.
- (ii) When used outside a department-designated recreational target shooting area, steel targets that are manufactured for the specific purpose of target shooting are allowed from October 1 to May 31, unless otherwise posted.
- (b) Clay targets, when used, must be biodegradable clay targets.
 (c) Items prohibited to be used as targets or to hold or post targets include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) Buildings;
- (ii) Power stations, cell phone towers, utility poles, light posts, wind turbines, or other public utility structures;
 - (iii) Gates, fence posts or rails;
 - (iv) Vehicles, or parts thereof;
 - (v) Machinery, or parts thereof;
 - (vi) Signs, kiosks, or informational panels of any kind;
 - (vii) Appliances or electronics;
 - (viii) Furniture;
 - (ix) Pallets;
 - (x) Glass;
- (xi) Explosive and incendiary items, including binary exploding targets (i.e., Tannerite);
- (xii) Containers of liquids, chemicals, paints, or compressed qas;
 - (xiii) Standing or moving water;
 - (xiv) Live or dead trees or other vegetation;
 - (xv) Animals or animal carcasses.

- (5) The discharge of tracer bullets or shells or incendiary ammunition is specifically prohibited on all department lands.
- (6) At all times, it is unlawful for a person to discharge a firearm, crossbow, bow, or any other projectile shooting implement on department lands in a reckless or negligent manner. A violation of this subsection may be punishable under RCW 77.15.230, 77.15.460, 9A.36.050, 9A.36.031, 9A.36.021, 9A.32.070, 9A.32.060, or other relevant statute depending on the circumstances of the violation.
- (7) It is unlawful for persons recreationally target shooting to fail to remove and transport from department lands for proper disposal all shell casings, shotgun hulls, ammunition packaging, and targets or target debris. Failure to remove any such item is prohibited and constitutes littering.
- (8) Persons who recreationally target shoot are responsible for knowing other state, local, or federal laws that may govern their shooting activity, and compliance with this rule does not guarantee compliance with other applicable laws.

(9) **Definitions**.

- (a) "Backstop" means an unobstructed earthen mound or bank at least eight feet in height which must stop the progress of and contain all projectiles, fragments, and ricochets in a safe manner.
- (b) "Biodegradable clay target" means any clay target labeled by the manufacturer as biodegradable.
- (c) "Clay targets," for purposes of this chapter, refers to those targets that are commonly referred to as clay pigeons and often saucer-shaped, which are:
- (i) Designed to be thrown by hand or machine, such as in skeet or trap shooting, but may also be used as stationary targets; and
 - (ii) Designed to be easily and permanently broken by projectiles.
- (d) "Department-designated recreational target shooting area" means an area designated and posted by the department for the purpose of recreational target shooting.
- (e) "Department-designated trail" means any trail designated and posted by the department.
- (f) "Recreational target shooting" is defined for purposes of this chapter as the act of shooting projectiles for practice, sighting in, or other reasons, and involves the discharging of firearms, compressed gas or air guns, air bows, crossbows, or archery equipment. Recreational target shooting does not include the activity of lawful hunting or hunting dog training.

Summary of Public Comments Received During the Official Comment Period and WDFW Response:

WAC 220-500-1400 Firearms and target practicing.

Survey Response:

WDFW received 1243 responses to a public survey during the official comment period.

Survey Question	Yes	No	Unsure
Have you ever participated in target shooting on WDFW-	66%	19%	15%
managed lands?			
Does the proposed rule update meet the goal of continuing to	38%	36%	26%
provide shooting opportunities on WDFW-managed lands?			
Does the proposed rule update meet the goal of protecting	48%	30%	22%
public safety?			
Does the proposed rule update meet the goal of reducing risk	40%	35%	25%
of wildfire?			
Does the proposed rule update meet the goal of reducing	45%	34%	21%
litter and damage to habitat?			
Is the language of the proposed rule update clear and easy	50%	33%	17%
to understand?			
Do you support adoption of the proposed rule update?	31%	51%	17%

Written Supporting Comments:

Supporting comments expressed appreciation for increased restrictions on recreational target shooting. Proponents of the rule's adoption expressed concerns about safety, conflicts between target shooting and other recreation uses, wildfire risk, littering, and other habitat impacts associated with target shooting. Supporting comments also offered recommendations, including additional restrictions, such as confining target shooting to designated ranges, shortening seasons when shooting is allowed, and imposing stricter penalties. Other recommendations included clarifying language regarding elements of the proposed rule (e.g. backstops), creating more designated places to shoot, increasing enforcement, and making the rule LESS restrictive, particularly in the types of targets and ammunition allowed under the proposed update.

Written Opposing, Neutral, and Other Comments:

Some opponents of the rule expressed that target shooting should be banned entirely from WDFW-managed lands and the rule is not restrictive enough. The majority of opposing comments called the proposed rule too restrictive and/or said that the existing rule is adequate and/or that target shooting should not be regulated on state lands. Many opponents questioned the enforceability of the proposed rule, suggest that the rule contains mostly common sense and is therefore unneeded, and WDFW should focus on enforcing existing rules, especially related to littering. Opponents said that the bad behavior of "a few bad apples" does not justify a rule that will impact all target shooters and limit access to shooting opportunities. As mitigation for the loss of opportunities, some recommended creating more opportunities by designating sites and

better communicating their location and availability. Others protested the proposed rule's treatment of specific types of ammunition, targets, and shooting sites.

Some commenters responded "unsure" when asked if they support or do not support the proposed rule update. Some of their comments requested clarification one specific elements of the proposed rule update or clearer language overall. Many said the proposed rule is too restrictive in specific parts, including allowable targets and when shooting is allowed.

Nearly all comments – supporting, opposing, and unsure – expressed a desire for more designated shooting areas and better communication from WDFW on when and where it is okay to practice target shooting. There was also strong agreement that littering is a problem associated with recreational target shooting on WDFW-managed lands.

Rationale-Agency Action Regarding Comments:

[RCW 34.05.325 (6)(iii) Summarizing all comments received regarding the proposed rule, and responding to the comments by category or subject matter, indicating how the final rule reflects agency consideration of the comments, or why it fails to do so.]

Rule Section	Comments Summary	WDFW Response	Recommended Adjustment
General Restrictions	 Rule is too restrictive Adopt DNR rule instead Do education (not regulation) 	 Proposed update is based on DNR rule and supplements it. Education important, but regulation also needed. 	na
Where shooting allowed	 Language restricting shooting by roads is vague Allow unrestricted shooting Allow shooting over/near dry water bodies Allow summer shooting west of Cascades or where minimal vegetation Ban dispersed shooting Require backstop for all shooting with any implement 	 Clarify road language Recurrent safety and habitat concerns indicate need for regulation Shooting over seasonal water bodies increases habitat risks Wildfire danger in summer Statewide Restricting shooting to ranges will not meet user needs at this time 	"(e) Recreational target shooting is specifically prohibited:(i) On, from, at, along, across, or down: (B) Any road as defined in WAC 220.500.020."
Prohibited Ammunition	 Allow steel core ammo Ban lead ammo Do not restrict archery or air guns 	 Allow steel core outside fire restrictions Lead being addressed outside this rule process Rule has minimal restriction on archery/air guns 	"(5) The discharge of tracer bullets or shells, or incendiary ammunition, or steel core bullets, is specifically

Allowable Targets	Allow steel targets year- round	Fire and ricochet risk remain concern during dry season	prohibited on all department lands." na
Prohibited Targets	 Allow binary explosive targets Allow alternative targets (e.g. stumps, cans, pumpkins) 	 Exploding targets create high a risk of wildfire Alternative targets contribute to litter problem. 	na
When shooting allowed	Restrict shooting to daylight hours	Half-hour before sunrise and half-hour after sunset consistent with hunting best practices and regs	na
Litter	 WDFW should provide receptacles Increase penalties and enforcement Organize volunteers to clean up 	Public recommendations outside scope of rulemaking	na

PROPOSED RULE MAKING



CR-102 (December 2017) (Implements RCW 34.05.320)

Do NOT use for expedited rule making

CODE REVISER USE ONLY

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER STATE OF WASHINGTON FILED

DATE: August 18, 2020

TIME: 2:55 PM

WSR 20-17-132

Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)			
☐ Original Notice			
☑ Supplemental Notice to WSR 20-10-116 and WSR 20-15-068			
☐ Continuance of W	SR		
□ Preproposal State	ment of Inqu	uiry was filed as WSR 20-07-046	; or
☐ Expedited Rule Ma	kingPropo	osed notice was filed as WSR _	; or
□ Proposal is exemp	t under RC	W 34.05.310(4) or 34.05.330(1); c	pr
□ Proposal is exemp			
Title of rule and other identifying information: (describe subject) Target Practice on WDFW-Managed Lands – The department has added subsection (9) to include "definitions" to its proposed amendments to WAC 220-500-140 Firearms and target practicing.			
Hearing location(s):			
Date:	Time:	Location: (be specific)	Comment:
October 23-24, 2020	8:00 a.m.	Webinar and/or conference call.	This meeting will take place by webinar and/or conference call. The public may participate in the meeting. Visit our website at: https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/commission/meetings or contact the Commission office at (360) 902-2267 or commission@dfw.wa.gov for instructions.
Date of intended ado	ption: Octok	per 23-24, 2020 (Note: This is NO	
Submit written comm	ents to:		
Name: Wildlife Program	m		
Address: PO Box 432	00, Olympia,	, WA 98504-3200	
Email: wildthing@dfw.v	wa.gov		
Fax:			
	-	vdfw-lands/public-conduct#firearms	<u>§</u>
By (date) September 23, 2020			
Assistance for persons with disabilities:			
Contact Dolores Noyes			
Phone: (360) 902-2349 Fax:			
TTY: (360) 902-2207			
Email: dolores.noyes@dfw.wa.gov			
Other:			
By (date) September 23, 2020			
Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The purpose of this			
supplemental notice is to clarify how the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) intends to define specific			

terms related to target practice regulations on WDFW-owned or managed lands. Specifically, the proposed revisions define the following terms: backstop, biodegradable clay target, clay targets, Department-designated recreational target shooting

area, Department-designated trail, and recreational target shooting.

Reasons supporting proposal: WDFW owns or manages about one million acres statewide, with 33 wildlife areas and nearly 500 water access areas around the state. These public lands help sustain wildlife habitat and public recreation opportunities, which may include target practice, when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and in a manner that addresses public safety concerns. An increase in target shooting on WDFW-managed lands as well as an increase in visitors generally has created several challenges, including wildfires, concerns over public safety and user conflicts, impacts to private property, littering, and damage to wildlife habitat, and differences in rules for state-managed lands has also led to confusion among target shooters about the rules applicable to specific sites. These proposed amendments help address these challenges. Statutory authority for adoption: RCWs 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.210, and 77.12.240 Statute being implemented: RCWs 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.210, and 77.12.240 Is rule necessary because of a: Federal Law? ☐ Yes ⊠ No Federal Court Decision? □ Yes ⊠ No State Court Decision? ☐ Yes No If ves. CITATION: Agency comments or recommendations, if any, as to statutory language, implementation, enforcement, and fiscal matters: None. Name of proponent: (person or organization) Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife ☐ Private ☐ Public Name of agency personnel responsible for: Office Location Name Phone 1111 Washington St. SE Drafting: Eric Gardner (360) 902-2515 Olympia, WA. 98501 1111 Washington St. SE Implementation: Eric Gardner (360) 902-2515 Olympia, WA. 98501 1111 Washington St. SE Enforcement: Steve Bear (360) 902-2373 Olympia, WA. 98501 Is a school district fiscal impact statement required under RCW 28A.305.135? ☐ Yes ⊠ No If yes, insert statement here: The public may obtain a copy of the school district fiscal impact statement by contacting: Name: Address: Phone: Fax: TTY: Email: Other: Is a cost-benefit analysis required under RCW 34.05.328? ☐ Yes: A preliminary cost-benefit analysis may be obtained by contacting: Name: Address: Phone: Fax: TTY: Email: Other:

	uired for this rulemaking under RCW 34.05.328.		
Regulatory Fairness Act Cost Considerations for a Small Business Economic Impact Statement:			
This rule proposal, or portions of the proposal, may be exempt from requirements of the Regulatory Fairness Act (see chapter 19.85 RCW). Please check the box for any applicable exemption(s):			
☐ This rule proposal, or portions of the proposal, is exempt under RCW 19.85.061 because this rule making is being adopted solely to conform and/or comply with federal statute or regulations. Please cite the specific federal statute or regulation this rule is being adopted to conform or comply with, and describe the consequences to the state if the rule is not adopted.			
Citation and description: ☐ This rule proposal, or portions of the proposal, is exempt be a second or continuous continuous.			
defined by RCW 34.05.313 before filing the notice of this proposed rule. ☐ This rule proposal, or portions of the proposal, is exempt under the provisions of RCW 15.65.570(2) because it was			
adopted by a referendum.			
This rule proposal, or portions of the proposal, is exempt u	under RCW 19.85.025(3). Check all that apply:		
□ RCW 34.05.310 (4)(b)	□ RCW 34.05.310 (4)(e)		
(Internal government operations)	(Dictated by statute)		
□ RCW 34.05.310 (4)(c)	□ RCW 34.05.310 (4)(f)		
(Incorporation by reference)	(Set or adjust fees)		
□ RCW 34.05.310 (4)(d)	□ RCW 34.05.310 (4)(g)		
(Correct or clarify language)	((i) Relating to agency hearings; or (ii) process requirements for applying to an agency for a license or permit)		
Explanation of exemptions, if necessary: The department is exempt from the requirements of RCW Chapter 19.85 because the proposed target practice rules do not regulate small businesses; rather, the proposed rules regulate individual persons who undertake recreational use of department-managed lands. The proposed statewide target practice rules simply govern the time, place and manner for individual persons engaging in target practice activities on WDFW-managed lands.			
COMPLETE THIS SECTION O	NLY IF NO EXEMPTION APPLIES		
If the proposed rule is not exempt , does it impose more-than	-minor costs (as defined by RCW 19.85.020(2)) on businesses?		
☐ No Briefly summarize the agency's analysis showing how costs were calculated			
☐ Yes Calculations show the rule proposal likely imposes more-than-minor cost to businesses, and a small business economic impact statement is required. Insert statement here:			
The public may obtain a copy of the small business economic impact statement or the detailed cost calculations by contacting:			
Name: Address:			
Phone:			
Fax:			
TTY:			
Email:			
Other:	0		
Date: August 18, 2020	Signature:		
Name: Michele K Culver	Mihile K. Culur		
Title: Agency Rules Coordinator			

- WAC 220-500-140 Firearms and target practicing. (($\frac{(1)}{(a)}$ It is unlawful to discharge tracer or incendiary ammunition on department lands.
- (b) It is unlawful to discharge firearms in those portions of department lands where or when such discharge is prohibited by department posted notice or from or within five hundred feet of a department designated campground. Violating this subsection is a gross misdemeanor if the violation creates a substantial risk of death or serious physical injury to another person, pursuant to RCW 9A.36.050.
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 - (B) Any road as defined in WAC 220-500-020;
 - (C) Any utility line, utility poles, or light posts;
 - (D) Any department-designated trail;
 - (E) Any water body or stream.
- (ii) Within five hundred feet of the following (when not utilizing a department-designated recreational target shooting area):
- (A) Residences, businesses, and/or other buildings or structures, including port-a-potties, etc.;
- (B) Power stations, cell phone towers, utility poles, light posts, wind turbines, or other public utility structures;
 - (C) Campgrounds;
 - (D) Viewing platforms or structures;
- (iii) In other areas posted by the department as restricted from shooting.
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 - (ix) Pallets;
 - (x) Glass;
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- (8) Persons who recreationally target shoot are responsible for knowing other state, local, or federal laws that may govern their shooting activity, and compliance with this rule does not guarantee compliance with other applicable laws.

(9) **Definitions**.

- (a) "Backstop" means an unobstructed earthen mound or bank at least eight feet in height which must stop the progress of and contain all projectiles, fragments, and ricochets in a safe manner.
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