2022 Spring Black Bear Special Permits Decision

Stephanie Simek, Ph.D.
Carnivore, Furbearer, Small Game Section Manager, Wildlife Program
Introduction

• Brief background
• Proposed rule changes
• Public comment
• Recommendation
Background
Background

- Mandate (RCW 77.04.012)
- Game Management Plan (2015-2021)
Background

Intent: Provide limited recreational opportunity while addressing local bear management issues
Proposed Rule Changes
WAC 220-415-080
Spring black bear Special Permits
Spring black bear special permits

If the motion is to adopt:

• **Changes:** Adjust the season dates to reflect the 2022 season

• **Changes:** Reduce the permit numbers in Hunt Unit 684 (Long Beach) from 10 to 6 permits

• **Changes:** Modify language associated with the harvest inspection
Public Comment
Public Comment

Over 5,000 comments received

– Online survey
– Letters (electronic)
– Email
– Voice message
– FWC briefing
Public Comment

Common Themes

– Oppose bear hunting or spring bear hunting
– Oppose hunting in general
– Possible cub orphaning and mortality
– No evidence the hunts have desired effects
– Bear hunting seasons too long
– Lack of or misleading information
Public Comment

Common Themes

– Would like to have a general spring bear season
– Support recreational hunt for mitigating impacts
– Hunting is wildlife conservation and part of the model
– Would like more opportunities (permits)
– Would like more hunt areas
– Provides economic revenue to local communities
Public Comment

- We received letters electronically from individuals, organizations, or groups of individuals.

- Comments were similar in content to the previously mentioned comments.
Public Comment

- Intent of RCW 77.04.012
- Bears are property of all residents
- Low reproductive cycle of bears
- Ability to identify male vs female or cubs
- Environmental condition impacts
- Lack of hunter compliance with reporting
- Misuse of the Game Management Plan
Recommendation
Recommendation: WAC 220-415-080 2022 Spring black bear special permits

— Request a Motion:
• To move to adopt the recommended rule changes as presented.