

14. 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 SMALL GAME SEASONS – RULE ACTION

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“GREEN SHEET”

Meeting: April 13-14, 2012

Agenda Item 14: 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 Small Game Seasons – **Rule Action**

Prepared By: Don Kraege and Dave Ware

Presented By: Don Kraege, Waterfowl Section Manager, Wildlife Program
Dave Ware, Game Division Manager, Wildlife Program

Background:

Department staff will brief the Commission on proposed amendments to WAC 232-28-342 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 Small game seasons. The revised WAC describes season timing, hunting requirements, applicable permit levels, and bag limits for the following species: bobcat, raccoon, fox, coyote, forest grouse, pheasant, chukar, gray partridge, mountain quail, California quail, bobwhite quail, wild turkey, Canada goose, band-tailed pigeon, mourning dove, cottontail rabbits, snowshoe hare, and crow. The revised WAC also describes falconry and dog training seasons. For the most part, proposed hunting season timing does not change from recent years, though seasons for wild turkey have been expanded in several areas of eastern Washington. In addition, a proposed senior pheasant season would be expanded from western Washington to statewide.

The eastside September Canada goose season was initiated in several counties in 1996 and expanded to all of eastern Washington in 1997. When the season was first established, its continuation was based on maintaining a three-year average survey index of 2,000 nests. This criterion was included in the Pacific Flyway Council's Pacific Population of Western Canada Goose Management Plan (2001 revision), and also in the WDFW Game Management Plans for 2003-09 and 2009-15. Because the nest index was below 2,000 during 2009-11, the September season in eastern Washington was closed during the past three years. The three-year average nest index increased to 2,044 in 2011, so we are proposing reinstatement of the two-day September season in eastern Washington.

Policy Issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

- Reinstatement of a two-day September Canada goose season in eastern Washington.
 - Expansion of wild turkey seasons in eastern Washington.
 - Create a senior pheasant season in eastern Washington.
-

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

The Department conducted an extensive public involvement process to develop the 2012-2014 hunting season recommendations. In early August, an email was sent to over 50,000 hunters announcing that the Department was beginning the development of the 2012-2014 hunting season package. The email also informed them of the opportunity to provide their comments via an online issue scoping survey and invited them to attend one of the public meetings being held statewide. Six public meetings were held with approximately 150 people in attendance and nearly 4,000 responses were received on the scoping survey. In February, a postcard was mailed to approximately 600 organizations and individuals informing them of the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed regulations. These organizations and individuals were also informed of the opportunity to provide public testimony at the March Commission Meeting in Moses Lake.

Action requested (identify the specific Commission decisions you are seeking):

Amend WAC 232-28-342 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 Small game seasons, as presented.

Draft motion language:

I move to amend WAC 232-28-342 as proposed.

Justification for Commission action:

These changes meet the approved criteria established by OFM as a result of the Governor's Executive Order 11-03 Extending Executive Order 10-06 Suspending Non-critical Rule Development and Adoption by satisfying the following conditions:

- Necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare or necessary to avoid an immediate threat to the state's natural resources.
- Beneficial to or requested or supported by the regulated entities, local governments, or small businesses that it affects.

Communications plan:

WDFW Website
News Releases
Hunting Pamphlet

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 10-94, filed 4/30/10, effective 5/31/10)

WAC 232-28-342 ((~~2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12~~)) 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 Small game and other wildlife seasons and regulations. It is unlawful to fail to comply with bag, possession, and season limits except as described below. Violations of this section are punishable under RCW 77.15.245, 77.15.400, and 77.15.430, depending on the species hunted and the violation.

STATEWIDE SEASONS:

FOREST GROUSE (BLUE, RUFFED, AND SPRUCE)

Bag and Possession Limits: Four (4) grouse per day, straight or mixed bag, with a total of twelve (12) grouse in possession at any time.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Dec. 31, ((~~2009, 2010, 2011~~)) 2012, 2013, 2014.

BOBCAT

Bag and Possession Limits: No limit.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Mar. 15, ((~~2009, 2010, 2011~~)) 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015.

RESTRICTION: Bobcat may not be hunted with dogs.

RACCOON

Bag and Possession Limits: No limit.

OPEN AREA: Statewide, EXCEPT closed on Long Island within Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Mar. 15, (~~(2009, 2010, 2011,)~~) 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015.

FOX

Bag and Possession Limits: No limit.

OPEN AREA: Statewide EXCEPT closed within the exterior boundaries of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan, Wenatchee, and Gifford Pinchot National Forests and GMUs 407 and 410.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Mar. 15, (~~(2009, 2010, 2011,)~~) 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015.

COYOTE

Bag and Possession Limits: No limit.

OPEN AREA : Statewide.

SEASON DATES: Year round.

RESTRICTION: Coyote may not be hunted with dogs.

COTTONTAIL RABBIT AND SNOWSHOE HARE (OR WASHINGTON HARE)

Bag and Possession Limits: Five (5) cottontails or snowshoe hares per day, with a total of fifteen (15) in possession at any time, straight or mixed bag.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 1, (~~(2009)~~) 2012 - Mar. 15, (~~(2010)~~) 2013; Sept. 1, (~~(2010)~~) 2013 - Mar. 15, (~~(2011)~~) 2014; Sept. 1, (~~(2011)~~) 2014 - Mar. 15, (~~(2012)~~) 2015.

CROWS

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Bag and Possession Limits: No limit.

SEASON DATES: (~~Oct. 1, 2009 – Jan. 31, 2010; Oct. 1, 2010 – Jan. 31, 2011; Oct. 1, 2011 – Jan. 31, 2012~~) Sept. 1, 2012 – Dec. 31, 2013; Sept. 1, 2013 – Dec. 31, 2014; Sept. 1, 2014 – Dec. 31, 2015.

JACKRABBIT

Season closed statewide.

PTARMIGAN, SAGE, AND SHARP-TAILED GROUSE

Season closed statewide.

WILD TURKEY:

YOUTH SEASON

LEGAL BIRD: Male turkeys and turkeys with visible beards only.

SEASON DATES: April 7-8, 2012; April (~~(3-4, 2010)~~) 7-8-7, 2013; April (~~(2-3, 2011)~~) 6-7-6, 2014; April (~~(7-8, 2012)~~) 4-5, 2015.

SPRING SEASON

LEGAL BIRD: Male turkeys and turkeys with visible beards only.

SEASON DATES: April 15 – May 31, (~~(2009, 2010, 2011, 2012)~~) 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015.

BAG LIMIT: The combined spring/youth season limit is three (3) birds. Only two (2) turkeys may be killed in Eastern Washington, except only one (1) may be killed in Chelan, Kittitas, or Yakima counties. One (1) turkey may be killed per year in Western Washington outside of Klickitat County. Two (2) turkeys may be killed in Klickitat County.

FALL NORTHEAST BEARDLESS TURKEY SEASON

LEGAL BIRD: Beardless only.

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LEGAL HUNTER: Open to all hunters with a valid turkey tag.

OPEN AREA: GMUs (~~(105-124)~~) 105-142.

SEASON DATES: (~~(Sept. 26 - Oct. 9, 2009; Sept. 25 - Oct. 8, 2010; Sept. 24 - Oct. 7, 2011)~~) Sept. 22 - Oct. 12, 2012; Sept. 21 - Oct. 11, 2013; Sept. 20 - Oct. 10, 2014.

BAG LIMIT: Two (2) beardless turkeys (in addition to other fall turkey harvest).

EARLY FALL GENERAL SEASON

LEGAL BIRD: Either sex.

LEGAL HUNTER: Open to all hunters with a valid turkey tag.

OPEN AREA: GMUs 101, (~~(127-133)~~) 124-142, 145-154, and 162-186.

SEASON DATES: (~~(Sept. 26 - Oct. 9, 2009; Sept. 25 - Oct. 8, 2010; Sept. 24 - Oct. 7, 2011)~~) Sept. 22 - Oct. 12, 2012; Sept. 21 - Oct. 11, 2013; Sept. 20 - Oct. 10, 2014.

BAG LIMIT: One (1) turkey (~~(during the early fall general and permit hunting seasons combined)~~) either sex (in addition to other fall turkey harvest).

FALL PERMIT SEASONS

LEGAL BIRD: Either sex.

LEGAL HUNTER: All hunters who are selected in the fall turkey special permit drawing and who possess a valid turkey tag.

Hunt Name	Permit Season Dates	Special Restrictions	Boundary Description	Permits	Bag Limit*
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Klickitat	Sept. (26 - Oct. 9, 2009, Sept. 25 - Oct. 8, 2010, Sept. 24 - Oct. 7, 2011) <u>22 - Oct. 12, 2012, Sept. 21 - Oct. 11, 2013, Sept. 20 - Oct. 10, 2014</u>	Either sex	GMUs 382, 388, 568-578	150	1
Methow	Nov. 15 - Dec. 15, (2009, 2010, 2011) <u>2012, 2013, 2014</u>	Either sex	GMUs 218-231 and 242	50	1
<u>Teanaway</u>	<u>Nov. 15 - Dec. 15, 2012, 2013, 2014</u>	<u>Either sex</u>	<u>GMU 335</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>1</u>

*BAG LIMIT: During the early fall general and permit hunting seasons combined.

LATE FALL SEASON

LEGAL BIRD: Either sex.

LEGAL HUNTER: Open to all hunters with a valid turkey tag.

OPEN AREA: GMUs (~~105-124~~) 105-142, 149-154, 162-186.

SEASON DATES: Nov. 20 - Dec. 15, (~~2009, 2010, 2011~~) 2012, 2013, 2014.

BAG LIMIT: One (1) turkey.

HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR INCENTIVE PERMITS

LEGAL BIRD: Male turkeys and turkeys with visible beards only.

LEGAL HUNTER: Qualified hunter education instructors who are selected through a random drawing. Qualifying hunter education instructors must be certified and have been in active status for a minimum of three consecutive years, inclusive of the year prior to the permit drawing. Instructors who are drawn, accept a permit, and are able to participate in the hunt, will not be eligible for these incentive

permits for a period of ten years thereafter.

OPEN AREA: Statewide.

SEASON DATES: April 1 - May 31, (~~(2009, 2010, 2011, 2012)~~) 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015.

PERMITS: 2.

OFFICIAL HUNTING HOURS FOR WILD TURKEY:

HUNTING HOURS: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset during spring and fall seasons.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR WILD TURKEY:

1. Turkey season is open for shotgun shooting #4 shot or smaller, archery, and muzzleloader shotgun shooting #4 shot or smaller.
2. A turkey tag is required for hunting turkey.
3. It is unlawful to use dogs to hunt turkeys.
4. It is unlawful to bait game birds.

EASTERN WASHINGTON SEASONS:

RING-NECKED PHEASANT

Bag and Possession Limits: Three (3) cock pheasants per day, with a total of fifteen (15) cock pheasants in possession at any time.

YOUTH SEASON DATES: (~~(Sept. 26 and 27, 2009; Sept. 25 and 26, 2010; Sept. 24 and 25, 2011)~~) Sept. 22 and 23, 2012; Sept. 21 and 22, 2013; Sept. 20 and 21, 2014. Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old.

HUNTERS SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER SEASON DATES: Sept. 24-28, 2012; Sept. 23-27, 2013; Sept. 22-26, 2014.

REGULAR SEASON DATES: (~~Oct. 24, 2009 - Jan. 18, 2010; Oct. 23, 2010 - Jan. 17, 2011; Oct. 22, 2011 - Jan. 16, 2012~~) Oct. 20, 2012 - Jan. 1413, 2013; Oct. 19, 2013 - Jan. 1312, 2014; Oct. 18, 2014 - Jan. 1211, 2015.

~~The director is authorized to close the pheasant season on an emergency basis as conditions warrant, consistent with RCW 34.05.350 and 77.12.150.~~

CHUKAR

Bag and Possession Limits: Six (6) chukar per day, with a total of eighteen (18) chukar in possession at any time.

YOUTH SEASON DATES: (~~Sept. 26 and 27, 2009; Sept. 25 and 26, 2010; Sept. 24 and 25, 2011~~) Sept. 22 and 23, 2012; Sept. 21 and 22, 2013; Sept. 20 and 21, 2014. Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old.

REGULAR SEASON DATES: (~~Oct. 3, 2009 - Jan. 18, 2010; Oct. 2, 2010 - Jan. 17, 2011; Oct. 1, 2011 - Jan. 16, 2012~~) Oct. 6, 2012 - Jan. 21, 2013; Oct. 5, 2013 - Jan. 20, 2014; Oct. 4, 2014 - Jan. 19, 2015.

GRAY (HUNGARIAN) PARTRIDGE

Bag and Possession Limits: Six (6) gray partridges per day, with a total of eighteen (18) gray partridges in possession at any time.

YOUTH SEASON DATES: (~~Sept. 26 and 27, 2009; Sept. 25 and 26, 2010; Sept. 24 and 25, 2011~~) Sept. 22 and 23, 2012; Sept. 21 and 22, 2013; Sept. 20 and 21, 2014. Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old.

REGULAR SEASON DATES: (~~Oct. 3, 2009 - Jan. 18, 2010; Oct. 2, 2010 - Jan. 17, 2011; Oct. 2, 2011 - Jan. 16, 2012~~) Oct. 6, 2012 - Jan. 21, 2013; Oct. 5, 2013 - Jan. 20, 2014; Oct. 4, 2014 - Jan. 19, 2015.

MOUNTAIN QUAIL

Season closed throughout Eastern Washington.

CALIFORNIA (VALLEY) QUAIL AND NORTHERN BOBWHITE

Bag and Possession Limits: Ten (10) quail per day, with a total of thirty (30) quail in possession at any time, straight or mixed bag.

YOUTH SEASON DATES: (~~Sept. 26 and 27, 2009; Sept. 25 and 26, 2010; Sept. 24 and 25, 2011~~) Sept. 22 and 23, 2012; Sept. 21 and 22, 2013; Sept. 20 and 21, 2014. Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old.

REGULAR SEASON DATES: (~~Oct. 3, 2009 - Jan. 18, 2010; Oct. 2, 2010 - Jan. 17, 2011; Oct. 2, 2011 - Jan. 16, 2012~~) Oct. 6, 2012 - Jan. 21, 2013; Oct. 5, 2013 - Jan. 20, 2014; Oct. 4, 2014 - Jan. 19, 2015.

WESTERN WASHINGTON SEASONS:

RING-NECKED PHEASANT

Bag and Possession Limits: Two (2) pheasants of either sex per day, with a total of fifteen (15) pheasants in possession at any time.

YOUTH SEASON DATES: (~~Sept. 26 and 27, 2009; Sept. 25 and 26, 2010; Sept. 24 and 25, 2011~~) Sept. 22 and 23, 2012; Sept. 21 and 22, 2013; Sept. 20 and 21, 2014. Open only to youth hunters accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old.

HUNTERS SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER SEASON DATES: (~~Sept. 28 - Oct. 2, 2009; Sept. 27 - Oct. 1, 2010; Sept. 26-30, 2011~~) Sept. 24-28, 2012;
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Sept. 23-27, 2013; Sept. 22-26, 2014.

REGULAR SEASON DATES: (~~Oct. 3 - Nov. 30, 2009; Oct. 2 - Nov. 30, 2010; Oct. 1 - Nov. 30, 2011~~) Sept. 29 - Nov. 30, 2012; Sept. 28 - Nov. 30, 2013; Sept. 27 - Nov. 30, 2014. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; EXCEPT Dungeness Recreation Area Site (Clallam County) starting (~~Oct. 3, 2009; Oct. 2, 2010; Oct. 1, 2011~~) Oct. 6, 2012; Oct. 5, 2013; Oct. 4, 2014.

EXTENDED SEASON DATES: Dec. 1-15, (~~2009, 2010, 2011~~) 2012, 2013, 2014.
8 a.m. to 4 p.m. only on the following release sites: Belfair, Fort Lewis, Kosmos, Lincoln Creek, Scatter Creek, Skookumchuck, and all Whidbey Island release sites EXCEPT Bayview. Pheasants will not be released during the extended season.

SPECIAL RESTRICTION: Western Washington pheasant hunters must choose to hunt on either odd-numbered or even-numbered weekend days from 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. at all units of Lake Terrell, Tennant Lake, Snoqualmie, Skagit, Skookumchuck, and Scatter Creek Wildlife Areas, all hunting sites on Whidbey Island, and at the Dungeness Recreation Area, and must indicate their choice on the Western Washington Pheasant Permit by choosing "odd" or "even." Hunters who select the three day option, hunters 65 years of age or older, and youth hunters may hunt during either weekend day morning. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old who must have an appropriately marked pheasant permit if hunting.

MOUNTAIN QUAIL

Bag and Possession Limits: Two (2) mountain quail per day, with a total of four (4) mountain quail in possession at any time.

SEASON DATES: (~~Oct. 3 - Nov. 30, 2009; Oct. 2 - Nov. 30, 2010; Oct.~~

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~~1 - Nov. 30, 2011~~) Sept. 29 - Nov. 30, 2012; Sept. 28 - Nov. 30, 2013; Sept. 27 - Nov. 30, 2014.

CALIFORNIA (VALLEY) QUAIL AND NORTHERN BOBWHITE

Bag and Possession Limits: Ten (10) California (valley) quail or northern bobwhite per day, with a total of thirty (30) California (valley) quail or northern bobwhite in possession at any time, straight or mixed bag.

SEASON DATES: (~~Oct. 3 - Nov. 30, 2009; Oct. 2 - Nov. 30, 2010; Oct. 1 - Nov. 30, 2011~~) Sept. 29 - Nov. 30, 2012; Sept. 28 - Nov. 30, 2013; Sept. 27 - Nov. 30, 2014.

FALCONRY SEASONS:

UPLAND GAME BIRD AND FOREST GROUSE - FALCONRY

Bag and Possession Limits: Two (2) pheasants (either sex), six (6) partridge, five (5) California (valley) quail or northern bobwhite, two (2) mountain quail (in Western Washington only), and three (3) forest grouse (blue, ruffed, spruce) per day. Possession limit is twice the daily bag limit.

OPEN AREA: Statewide.

SEASON DATES: Aug. 1, (~~2009~~) 2012 - Mar. 15, (~~2010~~) 2013; Aug. 1, (~~2010~~) 2013 - Mar. 15, (~~2011~~) 2014; Aug. 1, (~~2011~~) 2014 - Mar. 15, (~~2012~~) 2015.

TURKEY - FALCONRY

A turkey tag is required to hunt turkey during the turkey falconry season.

Bag and Possession Limits: One (1) turkey (either sex) per turkey

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tag with a maximum of two (2) turkeys. Possession limit: Two (2).

OPEN AREA: Eastern Washington.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 1, (~~(2009)~~) 2012 - Feb. 15, (~~(2010)~~) 2013; Sept. 1, (~~(2010)~~) 2013 - Feb. 15, (~~(2011)~~) 2014; Sept. 1, (~~(2011)~~) 2014 - Feb. 15, (~~(2012)~~) 2015.

MOURNING DOVE - FALCONRY

Bag and Possession Limits: Three (3) mourning doves per day straight bag or mixed bag with snipe, coots, ducks, and geese during established seasons. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.

OPEN AREA: Statewide.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 1 - Dec. 16, (~~(2009, 2010, 2011)~~) 2012, 2013, 2014.

COTTONTAIL RABBIT AND SNOWSHOE HARE - FALCONRY

Bag and Possession Limits: Five (5) cottontails or snowshoe hares per day, straight or mixed bag. Possession limit: Fifteen (15).

OPEN AREA: Statewide.

SEASON DATES: Aug. 1, (~~(2009)~~) 2012 - Mar. 15, (~~(2010)~~) 2013; Aug. 1, (~~(2010)~~) 2013 - Mar. 15, (~~(2011)~~) 2014; Aug. 1, (~~(2011)~~) 2014 - Mar. 15, (~~(2012)~~) 2015.

OTHER SEASONS:

CANADA GOOSE SEPTEMBER SEASON

Bag and Possession Limits: Western Washington, except Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties and that part of Clark County north of the Washougal River: Five (5) Canada geese per day with a total of ten (10) in possession at any time.

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Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties and that part of Clark County north of the Washougal River: Three (3) Canada geese per day with a total of six (6) in possession at any time.

EASTERN WASHINGTON: Three (3) Canada geese per day with a total of six (6) in possession at any time.

EASTERN WASHINGTON SEASON DATES: Sept. 14-15, 2012, 2013, 2014.

WESTERN WASHINGTON SEASON DATES: Sept. 10-15, (~~(2009, 2010, 2011)~~) 2012, 2013, and 2014. EXCEPT Pacific County: Sept. 1-15, (~~(2009, 2010, and 2011)~~) 2012, 2013, 2014.

MOURNING DOVE

Bag and Possession Limits: Ten (10) mourning doves per day with a total of twenty (20) mourning doves in possession at any time.

OPEN AREA: Statewide.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 1-30, (~~(2009, 2010, 2011)~~) 2012, 2013, 2014.

HIP REQUIREMENTS:

All hunters age 16 and over of migratory game birds (duck, goose, coot, snipe, mourning dove, and band-tailed pigeon) are required to complete a Harvest Information Program (HIP) survey at a license dealer, and possess a Washington Migratory Bird (~~(validation)~~) permit as evidence of compliance with this requirement when hunting migratory game birds. Youth hunters are required to complete a HIP survey, and possess a free Washington Youth Migratory Bird (~~(validation)~~) permit as evidence of compliance with this requirement when hunting migratory game birds.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON

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Bag and Possession Limits: Two (2) band-tailed pigeons per day with a total of four (4) band-tailed pigeons in possession at one time.

OPEN AREA: Statewide.

SEASON DATES: Sept. 15-23, (~~(2009, 2010, 2011)~~) 2012, 2013, 2014.

WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED TO HUNT BAND-TAILED PIGEONS.

~~((All persons hunting band-tailed pigeons in this season are required to obtain a written authorization and harvest report from the Washington department of fish and wildlife. Application forms must be delivered to a department of fish and wildlife office no later than August 25 or postmarked on or before August 25 in order for applicants to be mailed an authorization before the season starts. Immediately after taking a band-tailed pigeon into possession, hunters must record in ink the information required on the harvest report. By October 15, hunters must return the harvest report to a department of fish and wildlife office, or report harvest information on the department's internet reporting system. Hunters failing to comply with reporting requirements will be ineligible to participate in the following band-tailed pigeon season.))~~ Hunters must possess a special migratory bird hunting authorization and harvest record card for band-tailed pigeons when hunting band-tailed pigeons. Immediately after taking a band-tailed pigeon into possession, hunters must record in ink the information required on the harvest record card. Hunters must report harvest information from band-tailed pigeon harvest record cards to WDFW for receipt by September 30 following the current season. Every person issued a migratory bird hunting authorization and harvest record card must

return the entire card to the Washington department of fish and wildlife or report the card information at the designated internet site listed on the harvest record card. Any hunter failing to report by the deadline will be in noncompliance of reporting requirements. Beginning with the 2013 license year, hunters who have not reported hunting activity by the reporting deadline for any harvest record card will be required to pay a ten dollar administrative fee before any new migratory bird authorization and harvest record card will be issued. A hunter may only be penalized a maximum of ten dollars during a license year.

BIRD DOG TRAINING SEASON

Wild upland game birds may be pursued during the dog-training season, but may not be killed except during established hunting seasons. A small game license is required to train dogs on wild game birds. A Western Washington Pheasant Permit is required to train dogs on pheasants in Western Washington. Captive raised game birds may be released and killed during dog training if proof of lawful acquisition (invoices) are in possession and the birds are appropriately marked (WAC 232-12-271 and 232-12-044).

OPEN AREA: Statewide.

SEASON DATES: Aug. 1, (~~(2009)~~) 2012 - Mar. 31, (~~(2010)~~) 2013; Aug. 1, (~~(2010)~~) 2013 - Mar. 31, (~~(2011)~~) 2014; Aug. 1, (~~(2011)~~) 2014 - Mar. 31, (~~(2012)~~) 2015.

Only youth and seniors may train dogs during their respective seasons on designated Western Washington pheasant release sites.

Bird dog training may be conducted year round on areas posted for

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bird dog training on portions of: Region One - Espanola (T24N, R40E, E 1/2 of section 16); Region Three - South L. T. Murray Wildlife Area; Region Four - Skagit Wildlife Area, Lake Terrell Wildlife Area, and Snoqualmie Wildlife Area; Region Five - Shillapoo/Vancouver Lake Wildlife Area; Region Six - Scatter Creek Wildlife Area, Fort Lewis Military Base.

HOUND HUNTING DURING DEER AND ELK HUNTING SEASONS

It is unlawful to hunt any wildlife at night or wild animals with dogs (hounds) during the months of September, October, or November in any area open to a modern firearm deer or elk season. The use of hounds to hunt black bear, cougar (EXCEPT by public safety cougar removal permit (WAC 232-12-243) or a commission authorized hound permit (WAC 232-28-285)), coyote, and bobcat is prohibited year round.

YAKAMA INDIAN RESERVATION:

The ((~~2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12~~)) 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 upland bird seasons within the Yakama Indian Reservation shall be the same as the season established by the Yakama Indian Nation.

COLVILLE INDIAN RESERVATION:

The ((~~2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12~~)) 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 upland bird seasons within the Colville Indian Reservation shall be the same as the season established by the Colville Indian Tribe.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.020, 77.12.570, 77.12.210, 77.12.150, 77.12.240, 77.32.070, 77.32.530. 10-10-061 (Order 10-94), § 232-28-342, filed 4/30/10, effective 5/31/10. 3/30/12 3:14 PM[15] OTS-4575.1

Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.020, 77.12.570,
77.12.210, 77.12.150, 77.12.240. 09-09-083 (Order 09-53), §
232-28-342, filed 4/15/09, effective 5/16/09. Statutory Authority:
RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.020, 77.12.570, 77.12.210. 08-09-090 (Order
08-78), § 232-28-342, filed 4/18/08, effective 5/19/08. Statutory
Authority: RCW 77.12.047. 06-11-031 (Order 06-91), § 232-28-342,
filed 5/8/06, effective 6/8/06.]

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

RECOMMENDED ADJUSTMENTS

The following adjustments are proposed since the Code Reviser (CR 102) filing and are already included in your notebook.

Page 1

- Change the WAC title to read: “Small game and other wildlife seasons and regulations.” Rather than create a separate rule for unclassified wildlife regulations, the title was changed to allow the Department to retain the rules for coyotes and other unclassified or predatory wildlife.

Page 2

- Reinstate the language referencing the coyote hunting regulations. This eliminates a previous recommended adjustment.

Page 3

- Proposed crow season dates have been changed from Sept. 1, 2012 - Dec. 31, 2013; Sept. 1, 2013 - Dec. 31, 2014; and Sept. 1, 2014 - Dec. 31, 2015 to Sept. 1, 2012 - Dec. 31, 2012; Sept. 1, 2013 - Dec. 31, 2013; and Sept. 1, 2014 - Dec. 31, 2014 to accurately reflect calendar date adjustments.
- Proposed turkey youth season dates have been changed from April 7-8, 2013 and April 6-7, 2014 to April 6-7, 2013 and April 5-6, 2014 to accurately reflect calendar date adjustments.
- Spring 2012 turkey season dates (April 7-8, 2012 and April 15-May 31, 2012) were inadvertently deleted from the CR102 and were added back into the draft rule.

Page 5

- A new fall permit season has been added for GMU 335 (Teaway) during Nov. 15 - Dec. 15 in 2012, 2013, and 2014, with 50 permits and a bag limit of 1 turkey (either sex), because of increased turkey numbers in this area.

Page 6

- Spring 2012 turkey season dates for hunter education instructor incentive permits (April 15 - May 31, 2012) were inadvertently deleted from the CR102 and were added back into the draft rule.

Pages 6 & 7

- A senior hunt for pheasants in eastern Washington was added and runs concurrent with the western Washington season. This proposal was inadvertently left out of the initial proposal.
- Proposed eastern Washington pheasant season closing dates have been changed from Jan. 14, 2013, Jan. 13, 2014, and Jan. 12, 2015 to Jan. 13, 2013, Jan. 12, 2014, and Jan. 11, 2015 to end the seasons on Sundays.

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- The emergency authority of the director is provided in statute and does not need to be repeated in WAC. Therefore, we are deleting this language from the WAC, but will include it in the pamphlet.

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN PUBLIC INPUT

WAC 232-12-342 “Small game seasons.”

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>What is happening with the crow hunting season? Are we exchanging a month at the end for a month at the beginning, or is the season year around?</p>	<p>The hunting season is shifting one month earlier at the recommendation of the Waterfowl Advisory Group. The issue is trying to time the fall migration of crows with the hunting season, so they advised us to start the season earlier. Then we must cut off a month at the end to comply with the Federal framework for total number of days available for migratory bird (crow) seasons. However, crows may be killed at any time if they are depredated crows.</p>
<p>I would like the crow season to extend into February rather than make it earlier in September. The crows that cause problems are more likely in February when food is limited. February is also a better time because there is less to hunt or fish at that time.</p>	<p>See the response listed above.</p>
<p>Why is there no squirrel hunting season in Washington? Certainly there are squirrel populations capable of supporting a season, e.g., eastern gray squirrels. Why don't we have a managed season?</p>	<p>Most of the introduced squirrels, e.g., eastern grays and fox squirrels are unclassified, and therefore, may be killed at any time. They tend to occur around human habitat in Washington, so there really isn't much interest in managing them as a game species.</p>
<p>I would like to see the pheasant hunt in the Sequim area continued past the 2012 season. Why is it scheduled to end next year?</p>	<p>The Department has worked very hard along with local pheasant hunters to keep our lease with the county to hunt pheasants on their property. We have also chased down every other site that we might be able to use for pheasant releases and hunting. We have come to the end of several extensions with the County and they do not want any more extensions. At the same time, no one has come up with an alternative site. We would greatly appreciate it if you would be willing share any information you have as to an alternative.</p>
<p>I would like the pheasant hunting season to extend a couple of weeks past the last release (end of November) on the Intalco and BP units of the Lake Terrell wildlife area. There seems to be very little problem with the waterfowl hunting there.</p>	<p>We have pursued this possibility, but the waterfowl hunter might disagree that there is not a conflict. Other units of the wildlife area do provide extended opportunity, and we encourage you to take advantage of those areas.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>I would like to see the pheasant season returned to the first weekend in October. By the time we get out to hunt, the deer hunters have already stirred up the birds so badly you can't find them.</p>	<p>The opening day of pheasant season is constantly debated. No date works perfectly. When we open the pheasant season before the deer season, hunters and landowners complain that the deer were stirred up. Because this isn't a conservation issue or a major strategy for game management, we are not proposing any changes.</p>
<p>Why is there a \$13 fee for hunting snow geese? What are the results of the harvest report? What are the costs of management? Do waterfowl stamp fees cover the management costs? WDFW does a poor job of informing the public about why fees are necessary. My point is that snow geese should be taken off the harvest card program or provide an explanation of where the money is going.</p>	<p>The fee for migratory bird authorizations is to help cover the cost of managing those species and associated hunting. The harvest results are published each year as part of the Department's Game Status and Trend report (available on our website). A rough estimate of the revenue would include about 5,000 hunters who will purchase an authorization, so roughly \$65,000 in revenue. The authorizations cover band-tailed pigeon, Dusky geese, snow geese, and brant. We must conduct surveys for all of these species, monitor harvest, conduct field checks, and enforce the regulations. Without a detailed estimate, I think you can see that the cost of managing these species is well in excess of the revenues. Specifically for snow geese, we provide funding to support work on the wintering grounds in Russia even sending biologists over to assist with research projects every few years; we conduct special aerial surveys; we support hunter access programs and assist landowners with planting winter cover; and we heavily patrol and monitor the harvest seasons. Waterfowl stamp (permit) fees are designed to provide funding for habitat enhancement and protection, and yes, we have used some of these funds to encourage farmers to plant cover crops for snow geese.</p>
<p>Are crossbows legal for hunting turkeys? What are the firearm restricted areas for turkeys? Why not allow turkey hunting with crossbows statewide?</p>	<p>Crossbows are only lawful for use in firearm restricted areas. These areas are listed in the big game pamphlet. The use of crossbows for hunting has not been widely accepted by hunters at this point, but could be expanded in the future.</p>
<p>Can we change the chukar and hun season to run from November through February? This would extend the season for upland bird hunting; target mature, dispersed birds rather than young of the year; it would avoid issues such as snake bites and overheated dogs; and should not affect overall chukar harvest.</p>	<p>Upland bird hunters have many options with our current season structure. It is doubtful that delaying the start date would change participation. The concept for early season dates is that the peak of the upland bird population is in summer. Every month after hatching the population declines, so early seasons take advantage of maximum population levels.</p>

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Hunting turkeys in the fall with dogs is well accepted in the eastern part of the country (19 states) and in four states in the spring. It would help with recovery of birds; the enjoyment of hunting with dogs; could increase funding if a fall turkey tag was implemented; and provide a good overlap with fall forest grouse hunting. Can we allow it in Washington?	When we have brought up this issue in the past, most of the comments from turkey hunters have not been very supportive. It seems western hunters view turkey hunting a little differently than the eastern states.
What happens to the 2012 season for turkeys if the season is scratched in the WAC?	Good catch, we have corrected that error.
Rather than increase fall turkey hunting opportunities, you should increase spring harvest opportunities. That is when hunters are out and hunting turkeys. Also, you should go back to allowing a free turkey tag with the small game license.	Harvesting hens in the spring is not popular with turkey hunters. In the fall you are close to the highest population levels for game birds, so you can provide some either sex harvest. You are harvesting a lot of young birds that may not make it through the winter anyway. Providing a free turkey tag would result in a significant loss of revenue and a loss of turkey enhancement projects since one third of the revenue from the sale of turkey tags is dedicated to turkey management.
I would like to see the waterfowl season shifted 10 days later this year. It seems like the migration is later in recent years.	Waterfowl seasons are set in August, but we will keep your proposal in mind.
I would like to propose a pursuit season for raccoons from March 16 to August 30 th to keep our dogs in shape. You could require a field trial permit and bring in some revenue.	This is a poor time of year to have dogs chasing wildlife. It is when young of the year for most species of wildlife are born and vulnerable.
I think the early goose season should be brought back. There seem to be plenty of resident geese.	A September season is part of our proposal for 2012-14. We have exceeded our thresholds, and therefore, are recommending reinstating this hunt.
Let Master Hunters harvest turkeys when they cause damage.	We may be looking at this for the future.
The fall turkey seasons are too aggressive on public lands. They should be focused on private lands where problems occur. You should sign up landowners who have problems with turkeys and let hunters check online listings of these landowners.	While this isn't a hunting regulation, we like your idea and will look into this kind of a matching process.
Overlap the fall turkey season with the all of the fall deer and elk seasons to increase the harvest. Farmers need turkeys killed and harassed in November.	The concern is that overlap with modern firearm seasons would result in excessive harvest of hens and drive the population lower than necessary to reduce complaints.

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
<p>Allow the use of rifles and handguns to kill turkeys in the fall.</p>	<p>Again, this would result in excess harvest and encourage shooting turkeys on the roost which many consider unethical. We appreciate your ideas and will keep working to address the complaints and problems from landowners.</p>
<p>There are plenty of turkeys in the area of south east Washington. Why don't we set a season that runs from Spring through Fall?</p>	<p>There are a couple of main reasons, one is that we might kill too many birds and the other is that this is the time when most wildlife have their young. They would be very vulnerable at this time of year. We are recommending an increase in the fall season for the Blue Mountains.</p>
<p>The NRA requests a repeal of the lead ammunition ban for upland game hunting on pheasant release sites.</p>	<p>The department received many emails and letters as a result of NRA's "Alert" regarding the restrictions on the use of lead shot. Early in the scoping process for the 2012-14 seasons, we decided not to consider additional proposals for non-toxic shot. We also are not considering repeal of the decision made by the Commission in 2009 that went into effect last year. We would like to work with NRA to better understand their views on this issue and others associated with hunting and how we might better coordinate rule making efforts in the future.</p>

SUMMARY OF ORAL PUBLIC INPUT
 Taken at the Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
 March 9, 2012

WAC 232-12-342 Small game seasons.

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Support for starting the crow season on September 1 rather than October 1.	Thank you for your comment and support for the proposal.
Shift the youth waterfowl season into February.	Youth waterfowl seasons are set in August, and we will keep your suggestion in mind as regulation proposals are developed this year.
Allow falconers to use processed small game meat for feeding raptors without it being counted against possession limits.	Possession limit rules for falconry seasons related to small game are the same as for other methods of take. Processed meat is not normally considered part of field possession limits.
We support the senior pheasant hunting opportunity in eastern Washington.	Thank you for your support.
We would like to see the use of dogs for hunting turkeys in the fall similar to other small game such as grouse.	This issue has not been very significant to hunters at this point. With the Governor's suspension on unnecessary rules, this one just didn't move forward. However, it can be considered in future discussions.
We should expand the youth pheasant hunting season even longer than the current one.	Again, this issue did not come up during the public process, but could be considered in future hunting season discussions.



PROPOSED RULE MAKING

CR-102 (June 2004)

(Implements RCW 34.05.320)
Do NOT use for expedited rule making

Agency: Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Preproposal Statement of Inquiry was filed as WSR 11-24-102 on 12-07-11 ; or
- Expedited Rule Making--Proposed notice was filed as WSR _____; or
- Proposal is exempt under RCW 34.05.310(4).

- Original Notice
- Supplemental Notice to WSR _____
- Continuance of WSR _____

Title of rule and other identifying information: (Describe Subject)
Hunting Seasons and Regulations – See Attachment A

Hearing location(s):
Moses Lake City Hall
321 S. Balsam
Moses Lake, WA 98837
(509) 764-3701

Date: March 9-10, 2012 Time: 8:30 a.m.

Date of intended adoption: April 13-14, 2012
(Note: This is NOT the effective date)

Submit written comments to:

Name: Wildlife Program Commission Meeting Public Comments
Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia WA 98501-1091
e-mail Wildthing@dfw.wa.gov
fax (360) 902-2162

By: Tuesday, February 21, 2012

Assistance for persons with disabilities:

Contact: Tami Lininger by March 5, 2012

TTY (800) 833-6388 or (360) 902-2267

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules:

See Attachment A

Reasons supporting proposal:

See Attachment A

Statutory authority for adoption: 77.12.047

Statute being implemented: 77.12.047

Is rule necessary because of a:

- Federal Law? Yes No
- Federal Court Decision? Yes No
- State Court Decision? Yes No

If yes, CITATION:
CFR Part 20.21

DATE
February 1, 2012

NAME
Lori Preuss

SIGNATURE
Lori Preuss

TITLE
Rules Coordinator

CODE REVISER USE ONLY

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

DATE: February 01, 2012
TIME: 11:43 AM

WSR 12-04-098

Agency comments or recommendations, if any, as to statutory language, implementation, enforcement, and fiscal matters:

None

Name of proponent: (person or organization)

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission

- Private
- Public
- Governmental

Name of agency personnel responsible for:

Name	Office Location	Phone
Drafting..... Nate Pamplin	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(306) 902-2693
Implementation....Nate Pamplin	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(360) 902-2693
Enforcement.....Bruce Bjork	Natural Resources Building, Olympia	(360) 902-2373

Has a small business economic impact statement been prepared under chapter 19.85 RCW?

Yes. Attach copy of small business economic impact statement.

A copy of the statement may be obtained by contacting:

Name:

Address:

phone () _____

fax () _____

e-mail _____

No. Explain why no statement was prepared.
These rules do not directly regulate small business.

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 () _____

e-mail _____

No: Please explain: Not hydraulics rules.

ATTACHMENT A

WAC 232-12-047 Unlawful methods for hunting.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: This proposed amendment is intended to further the discussion on what should be allowed for crossbow use during modern firearm seasons.

Reasons supporting proposal: This proposal facilitates public discussion of new technologies and consideration of acceptable fair chase and ethical standards for hunting.

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

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: This proposed amendment is intended to further the discussion on allowing illuminated nocks for archery equipment.

Reasons supporting proposal: This proposal facilitates public discussion of new technologies and consideration of acceptable fair chase and ethical standards for hunting.

WAC 232-12-063 Hunting at night – regulations – penalties.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: This proposal would clarify how a hunter can hunt small game and unclassified wildlife at night and would complement existing night hunting rules.

Reasons supporting proposal: The proposal would provide greater certainty for officers in determining whether a hunter is lawfully hunting at night.

WAC 232-12-243 Public safety cougar removals.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The purpose of the proposed WAC amendment is to identify when public safety cougar removals are warranted for the protection of public safety and private property. The proposed WAC changes remove the use of “cougar sighting events” or “nuisance behavior” to trigger a public safety cougar removal. The proposed WAC also renames the program from “cougar management removal” to “public safety cougar removal.”

Reasons supporting proposal: This proposal better aligns the WAC language and actions with the terms used in the RCW authority.

WAC 232-12-257 Use of decoys and calls.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: This proposed amendment is intended to further the discussion on the use of electronic technology for waterfowl hunting.

Reasons supporting proposal: This proposal facilitates public discussion of new technologies and consideration of acceptable fair chase and ethical standards for hunting.

WAC 232-12-264 Baiting of game birds – Unlawful.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: This proposed amendment is intended to clarify the existing rule on baiting of game birds, and align the rule with current federal regulations on baiting of migratory game birds.

Reasons supporting proposal: This amendment was requested by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission, subsequent to a Commission presentation in September 2009, to facilitate consistent enforcement of state and federal baiting rules by the Department and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

WAC 232-28-273 2012-2014 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The proposed WAC changes amend seasons for moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat. Winter surveys indicate moose populations are stable. The Department recommends minor permit level adjustments based on recent survey results. The Department also recommends redefining Mt. Spokane moose hunts in GMU 124 into two moose areas, Mt. Spokane North and Mt. Spokane South, and increasing permit levels slightly in those areas to control population levels. Based on the recommendation, statewide permit levels would change from 140 to 152. The anticipated effect is stable moose populations in core areas with more control on moose population growth in areas surrounding Spokane. Hunter opportunity will increase slightly.

All bighorn sheep populations that we are currently hunting either meet or exceed total population objectives. However the number of adult rams fluctuates and we are recommending reductions in ram harvest for several units consistent with the population thresholds in the Game Management Plan (2008). Based on the recommendation, statewide permit levels would change from 41 to 31. The anticipated effect is stable bighorn sheep populations in all hunted areas. Hunter opportunity will decrease slightly.

Mountain goat populations are managed for stable-to-increasing populations in all hunted areas. Changes in permit levels are based on annual survey counts and tend to be conservative, given the sensitivity of goats to overharvesting. The Department recommends status quo delegated authority for existing hunt area permit levels, plus the addition of two hunt areas each with 1 permit. Under that authority the Department will be rotating and reducing hunting pressure in the goat units surrounding Mt. Baker, based on recent survey results. With the delegated authority, statewide permit levels would change from 15 to 17. The anticipated effect is stable mountain goat populations in all hunted areas. Hunter opportunity will increase slightly.

Reasons supporting proposal: This proposal incorporates permit level changes based on the population thresholds and criteria in the Game Management Plan (2008).

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

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The proposed rule amendments establish the 2013, 2014, and 2015 spring black bear seasons. The purpose is to: 1) reduce tree damage by bears in western Washington; 2) disperse harvest geographically and reduce female harvest in southeastern Washington; and 3) reduce nuisance and damage activity in northeastern Washington, while maintaining long-term sustainable populations in each Black Bear Management Unit (BBMU) --except Puget Sound and Columbia Basin BBMUs. The anticipated effects of the rule are continued recreational harvest opportunities similar to 2009-2011 levels and long-term sustainable bear populations.

Reasons supporting proposal: Spring bear opportunity is provided to address management needs rather than solely for the purpose of providing recreational opportunity. This is due to the public's sensitivity to hunting bears while adult females are accompanied by the young of the year. The Department did not receive any requests for additional spring bear harvest to address the management needs listed above, except for additional bear harvest in northeastern Washington to address nuisance bear issues. Based on the population thresholds outlined in the Game Management Plan, hunting may be impacting the bear population in northeastern Washington; that is, the "median age of harvested females" indicator suggests bear harvest may be impacting the regional bear population. As such, any additional spring bear harvest in the area would require equivalent reductions to fall bear harvest to offset any additional population impacts. During the scoping phase of this WAC, survey data indicated

respondents preferred status quo spring seasons rather than adding harvest opportunity in the spring coupled with reductions in the fall season.

WAC 232-28-288 2012-2014 Fall black bear hunting seasons and regulations.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The proposed rule establishes the 2012, 2013, and 2014 fall black bear seasons. The purpose is to provide recreational harvest opportunities for black bear, while maintaining long-term sustainable populations in each BBMU --except Puget Sound and Columbia Basin BBMUs. The anticipated effects of the rule are to maintain recreational harvest trends similar to 2009-2011 levels. The anticipated effect to the bear population is a long-term sustainable bear populations statewide.

Reasons supporting proposal: The parameters used as population indicators by the Department to evaluate the impacts of hunting on the bear populations are either stable or trending in the right direction. Therefore, no significant changes are recommended at this time.

WAC 232-28-296 Landowner hunting permits.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The purpose of this proposal is to expand the number of special hunting opportunities available on private lands for hunters. The recommended changes would add two additional cooperators in eastern Washington.

Reasons supporting proposal: The Fish and Wildlife Commission developed a policy to expand the private lands available for hunting to the general public several years ago. One of the programs that was authorized under their authority is the Landowner Hunting Permit program. 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.

WAC 232-28-297 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 Cougar hunting seasons and regulations.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The purpose of the proposal is to establish the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 cougar hunting seasons. The proposal establishes hunt areas and associated harvest guidelines for the entire state (except Columbia Basin and Puget Sound Cougar Management Units). The harvest guideline represents a sustainable 12-16 percent harvest rate for each hunt area. The anticipated effects to the cougar population are to maintain a stable population and to maintain an adequate age structure for cougar populations equally distributed across the state.

Reasons supporting proposal: Recently published studies suggest that a 12-16 percent harvest rate of a local cougar population is the maximum harvest rate that still has a high probability for maintaining a stable cougar population along with stable adult male territorial behavior. Harvest rates in excess of 16 percent can result in declines in core populations of breeding females, and excessive male harvest rates result in the loss of adult male territorial behavioral, which acts as a regulatory mechanism for local male cougar numbers.

WAC 232-28-337 Deer and elk area descriptions.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The proposed language eliminates one elk area and creates three new deer areas. Deer and elk areas help direct hunters when a scale smaller than the Game Management Unit (GMU) is needed. Deer and elk areas help staff deal with wildlife damage problems.

Reasons supporting proposal: The proposed language allows the Commission to distribute hunters more favorably during quality hunts. Proposed language also helps delineate when state authorized deer

hunting is and is not allowed at a smaller scale within the GMU. Proposed language eliminates an elk area that is associated with a special permit elk hunt that is no longer being conducted.

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

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: This amendment proposes calendar date adjustments to most small game seasons, expands the wild turkey season in eastern Washington, reinstates the September Canada goose season in eastern Washington, and shifts the crow season one month earlier.

Reasons supporting proposal: This proposal provides for the continuation of hunting seasons on small game species to provide recreational opportunity and depredation control.

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

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The purpose of this proposal is to retain general season deer hunting opportunity, balance the hunting opportunity between user groups, increase opportunity when deer populations allow, and reduce opportunity when declining deer numbers warrant a change. The proposal would repeal the old deer general seasons for 2009-2011 and adopt the new deer seasons for 2012-2014.

Reasons supporting proposal: This proposal provides recreational deer hunting opportunity and protects deer from overharvest. The proposal would maintain sustainable general deer hunting season opportunities for 2012 through 2014. The proposal helps address deer damage problems and provides for deer population control when needed.

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

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The purpose of this proposal is to retain general season elk hunting opportunity, balance the hunting opportunity between user groups, increase opportunity when elk populations allow, and reduce opportunity when declining elk numbers warrant a change. The proposal would repeal the old elk general seasons for 2009-2011 and adopt the new elk seasons for 2012-2014.

Reasons supporting proposal: This proposal provides recreational elk hunting opportunity and protects elk from overharvest. The proposal would maintain sustainable general elk hunting season opportunities for 2012 through 2014. The proposal helps address elk damage problems and provides for elk population control when needed.

WAC 232-28-359 2012 Deer special permits.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The purpose of this proposal is to retain special permit deer hunting opportunity that is above and beyond what is offered for general seasons. The proposal would repeal the old deer special permit seasons for 2011 and adopt the new deer special permit seasons for 2012. The proposal adjusts special permits for deer for 2012 in response to deer population changes and damage complaints. The proposal would help reduce or minimize agricultural damage and provides for population control of deer where needed.

Reasons supporting proposal: The proposal continues to provide recreational deer hunting opportunity while protecting deer from overharvest and helps minimize deer agricultural damage.

WAC 232-28-360 2012 Elk special permits.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The purpose of this proposal is to retain special permit elk hunting opportunity that is above and beyond what is offered for general seasons. The proposal would repeal the old elk special permit seasons for 2011

and adopt the new elk special permit seasons for 2012. The proposal adjusts special permits for elk for 2012 in response to elk population changes and damage complaints. The proposal would help reduce or minimize agricultural damage and provides for population control of elk where needed.

Reasons supporting proposal: The proposal continues to provide recreational elk hunting opportunity while protecting elk from overharvest and helps minimize elk agricultural damage.

WAC Sections Proposed for Repeal:

WAC 232-28-272	2009 Black bear and 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 Cougar hunting seasons and regulations.
WAC 232-28-287	2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 Cougar permit seasons and regulations.
WAC 232-28-295	Landowner hunting permits.
WAC 232-28-351	2009-2011 Deer general seasons and definitions.
WAC 232-28-352	2009-2011 Elk general seasons and definitions.
WAC 232-28-355	2011 Deer special permits.
WAC 232-28-356	2011 Elk special permits.