

Hunting Contests

Background

- Currently, Washington law ([RCW 77.32.525](#)) establishes that the Director shall administer rules adopted by the commission which govern the time, place, and manner of holding hunting and fishing contests.
- The Washington Administrative Code pertaining to hunting contests are found in [WAC 220-412-110](#).
- The law and rules above do not limit the species that can be included in a hunting contest.
- WDFW issues only a few permits each year.

WDFW Process

A hunt contest permit is required if an organized competition is held in which participants are given an allotted amount of time to harvest a specific wildlife species.

Groups interested in hosting a hunting contest must comply with the following provisions:

- Only organizations filed as a nonprofit corporation with the state of Washington may apply
- Hunting contest permit applications shall be submitted to the department 30 days prior to the proposed contest date.
- Application fee of \$70.00 and a \$24.00 permit fee. The permit fee will be returned if the permit is denied.
- Contests are restricted to the species approved on the permit.
- Total value of prizes per contest shall not exceed \$2,000.
- Entry fees or requests for donations are prohibited.
- It is unlawful to fail to comply with the conditions of a hunting contest permit.
- Hunting contests which may adversely affect wildlife resources will be denied.
- All applicable hunting regulations must be followed during the contest (e.g., hunting at night, weapon restrictions, and area restrictions).
- Number of coyotes taken during the contest must be reported to the department within 30 days of the end of the contest.
- A wolf / coyote identification flyer will be distributed to all participants.

Statistics

- Contests could be statewide, but typically encompass 1-12 counties.
- Contests could target any game species that can legally be hunted in Washington.
- We typically issue 1-6 permits annually
- Those contests that include coyotes have harvested 535, 111, and 149 coyotes during the 2014, 2015, and 2016 seasons respectively.

Summary

In 2013, the Department added coyotes to the small game survey in an effort to obtain a better idea of harvest levels. Research indicates harvest rates would need to equal or exceed a removal rate of 50% of the estimated population. We do not believe that the number of coyotes taken each year begins to approach a level that would have any significant reduction on the population. Coyotes are very common in Washington and we do not anticipate the current harvest rates, including those taken during the limited coyote hunting contests, will have a negative impact on the coyote population statewide