



PROPOSED RULE MAKING

CR-102 (June 2012)

(Implements RCW 34.05.320)

Do NOT use for expedited rule making

Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Preproposal Statement of Inquiry was filed as WSR 14-24-118 filed 12/3/14; or
- Expedited Rule Making--Proposed notice was filed as WSR _____; or
- Proposal is exempt under RCW 34.05.310(4) or 34.05.330(1).

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

Title of rule and other identifying information:

232-28-288 2015-2017 Fall black bear hunting seasons and regulations
 232-28-286 2016, 2017, and 2018 Spring black bear seasons and regulations
 232-12-297 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 Cougar hunting seasons and regulations

Hearing location(s):

Civic Center
 411 South Balsam Street
 Moses Lake, WA 98837

Date: March 20-21, 2015 Time: 8:00 AM

Submit written comments to:

Name: Wildlife Program Commission Meeting Public Comments
 Address: 600 Capitol Way North,
 Olympia, WA 98501
 e-mail wildthing@dfw.wa.gov
 fax (360) 902-2162 by (date) 2/24/15

Assistance for persons with disabilities: Contact

Tami Lininger by March 1, 2015

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

Date of intended adoption: On or after April 9, 2015

(Note: This is NOT the effective date)

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: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.150 and 77.12.240.

Statute being implemented: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.150 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 yes, CITATION:

CODE REVISER USE ONLY

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
 STATE OF WASHINGTON
 FILED

DATE: February 02, 2015

TIME: 1:40 PM

WSR 15-04-085

DATE

February 2, 2015

NAME (type or print)

Joanna Eide

SIGNATURE

TITLE

Rules Coordinator

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

When filing the permanent rule-making order (CR-103P), the WAC sections containing rule amendments will be consolidated into two or three Order Typing Service (OTS) documents.

Name of proponent: (person or organization) Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Private
- Public
- Governmental

Name of agency personnel responsible for:

Name	Office Location	Phone
Drafting..... Nate Pamplin	Natural Resource Building	(360) 902-2515
Implementation....Nate Pamplin	Natural Resource Building	(360) 902-2515
Enforcement..... Steven Crown	Natural Resource Building	(360) 902-2373

Has a small business economic impact statement been prepared under chapter 19.85 RCW or has a school district fiscal impact statement been prepared under section 1, chapter 210, Laws of 2012?

Yes. Attach copy of small business economic impact statement or school district fiscal 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 apply to recreational hunting and do not affect 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: This proposal does not involve hydraulics.

Attachment A

WAC 232-28-286 2016, 2017, and 2018 Spring black bear seasons and regulations

WAC 232-28-288 2015-2017 Fall black bear hunting seasons and regulations

WAC 232-28-297 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 Cougar hunting seasons and regulations

232-28-286 2016, 2017, and 2018 Spring black bear seasons and regulations.

Purpose of the proposal and its anticipated effects, including any changes in existing rules: The proposed rule establishes the 2016, 2017, and 2018 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 and southwestern 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 2013-2015 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 and southwestern Washington to address local bear issues.

232-28-288 2015-2017 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 2015, 2016, and 2017 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 2012-2014 levels. The anticipated effect to the bear population is a long-term sustainable bear population statewide.

Reasons supporting proposal: The parameters used as population indicators by the Department to evaluate the impacts of hunting on the bear populations are with the acceptable range outlines in the Game Management Plan. Therefore, no significant changes are recommended at this time.

232-12-297 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 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 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 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.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 13-11-078, filed 5/16/13, effective 6/16/13)

WAC 232-28-286 ((2013, 2014, and 2015)) 2016, 2017, and 2018 Spring black bear seasons and regulations. It is unlawful to fail to comply with the provisions of this section. A violation of this section is punishable under RCW 77.15.410, 77.15.245, ((and)) or 77.15.280, depending on the circumstances of the violation.

Who May Apply: Anyone with a valid Washington big game license, which includes black bear as a species option.

Hunt Areas, Permit Levels, and Season Dates for Each License Year:

Hunt Name	Hunt Area	Permits ^a	Season Dates ^b
Sherman	GMU 101	((25)) <u>50</u>	April 1 - June 15
Kelly Hill	GMU 105	((25)) <u>50</u>	April 1 - June 15
Douglas	GMU 108	((20)) <u>40</u>	April 1 - June 15
Aladdin	GMU 111	((25)) <u>50</u>	April 1 - June 15
49 Degrees North	GMU 117	((50)) <u>100</u>	April 1 - June 15
Huckleberry	GMU 121	((50)) <u>100</u>	April 1 - June 15
Blue Creek	GMU 154	15	April 15 - May 31
Dayton	GMU 162	15	April 15 - May 31
Tucannon	GMU 166	5	April 15 - May 31
Wenaha	GMU 169	45	April 15 - June 15
Mt. View	GMU 172	15	April 15 - May 31
Lick Creek	GMU 175	15	April 15 - May 31
Couse	GMU 181	4	April 15 - May 31
Grande Ronde	GMU 186	5	April 15 - May 31
<u>Bear River^b</u>	<u>GMU 681</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>April 15 - May 31</u>
<u>Long Beach^b</u>	<u>GMU 684</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>April 15 - May 31</u>
North Skagit ^c	That portion of GMU 418 that is designated as the hunt area by DNR, Sierra Pacific, Longview Timber Lands, and Grandy Lake Timber company.	30	April 15 - June 15
Monroe ^c	That portion of GMU 448 that is designated as the hunt area by DNR, Campbell Group, and Longview Timber Lands.	25	April 15 - June 15
Copalis ^{(a)c}	That portion of GMU 642 that is designated as the hunt area by Rayonier Timber Company.	100	April 15 - June 15
Kapowsin ^{(a)c}	That portion of GMUs 653 and/or 654 that is designated as the hunt area by Hancock Forest Management and International Forestry.	150	April 15 - June 15
((Lincoln^a	That portion of GMU 501 that is designated as the hunt area by participating commercial timber landowners.	75	April 15 - June 15))

^a((Spring black bear hunting seasons under this area constitute a pilot program to reduce black bear damage to trees.))
Permits are valid for the license year they are issued.

Hunt Name	Hunt Area	Permits ^a	Season Dates ^b
^b ((Permits are valid for the license year they are issued.)) Private lands; access is extremely limited; firearm restriction area. If you cannot secure access to private lands, do not apply for these hunts.			
^c Spring black bear hunting seasons to reduce black bear damage to trees.			

Bag Limit: One black bear per black bear special permit season.

License Required: A valid big game hunting license, which includes black bear as a species option, is required to hunt black bear. One black bear transport tag is included with a big game hunting license that has black bear as a species option.

Hunting Method: Hunters may use any lawful big game modern firearm, archery, or muzzleloader equipment for hunting black bear. The use of dogs or bait to hunt black bear is prohibited statewide.

Submitting Bear Teeth: Successful bear hunters must submit the black bear premolar located behind the canine tooth of the upper jaw.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 12-12-006, filed 5/23/12, effective 6/23/12)

WAC 232-28-288 ((2012-2014)) 2015-2017 Fall black bear hunting seasons and regulations. It is unlawful to fail to comply with the provisions below. ((Violators may be punished)) A violation of this section is punishable under RCW 77.15.410, 77.15.245, ((and)) or 77.15.280 (1)(c).

Black Bear Management Unit	Season	Hunt Area
Coastal	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2012)) <u>2015</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2013)) <u>2016</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2014)) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 501, 504, 506, 530, 601, 602, 603, 607-621, 636-651, 658-663, 672-684
Puget Sound	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2012)) <u>2015</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2013)) <u>2016</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2014)) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 407, 410, 454, 624, 627, 633, 652, 666, 667
North Cascades	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2012)) <u>2015</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2013)) <u>2016</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, ((2014)) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 418-450, 460
South Cascades	Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, ((2012)) <u>2015</u> Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, ((2013)) <u>2016</u> Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, ((2014)) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 466, 485, 503, 505, 510-520, 524, 550-574, 653, 654
Okanogan	Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, ((2012)) <u>2015</u> Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, ((2013)) <u>2016</u> Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, ((2014)) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 203, 209-243

Black Bear Management Unit	Season	Hunt Area
East Cascades	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, (2012) <u>2015</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, (2013) <u>2016</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, (2014) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 244-247, 249-251, 328, 329-368, 382, 388, 578
Northeastern A	Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2012) <u>2015</u> Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2013) <u>2016</u> Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2014) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 101-121, 204
Northeastern B	Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, (2012) <u>2015</u> Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, (2013) <u>2016</u> Aug. 15 - Nov. 15, (2014) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 124-130
Blue Mountains	Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2012) <u>2015</u> Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2013) <u>2016</u> Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2014) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 145-154, 162-186
Columbia Basin	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, (2012) <u>2015</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, (2013) <u>2016</u> Aug. 1 - Nov. 15, (2014) <u>2017</u>	GMUs 133, 136, 139, 142, 248, 254, 260-290, 371-381
Long Island	Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2012) <u>2015</u> Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2013) <u>2016</u> Sept. 1 - Nov. 15, (2014) <u>2017</u>	GMU 699

Bag Limit: Two (2) black bear per annual hunting season, only one of which may be taken in Eastern Washington.

Area Restriction: Special deer permit required to hunt black bear in GMU 485.

License Required: A valid big game hunting license, which includes black bear as a species option, is required to hunt black bear. One black bear transport tag is included with a big game hunting license that has black bear as a species option. A second black bear transport tag must be purchased to take a second bear.

Hunting Method: Hunters may use any lawful big game modern firearm, archery, or muzzleloader equipment for hunting black bear. The use of hounds and bait to hunt black bear is prohibited statewide.

Submitting Bear Teeth: Successful bear hunters must submit the black bear premolar tooth located behind the canine tooth of the upper jaw.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 13-16-056, filed 8/1/13, effective 9/1/13)

WAC 232-28-297 ((2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015)) 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 Cougar hunting seasons and regulations. (1) As used in this section and in the context of general cougar hunting seasons, "harvest guideline" means the estimated allowable harvest; the actual harvest may be less than or more than the harvest guideline.

(2) General cougar season is September 1 to April 30 of the following year. Season dates and harvest guidelines for each ((license year)) season:

Hunt Area	Harvest Guideline	Early Hunting Season	Late Hunting Season	Legal Weapon
GMU 101	7-9	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 105	2	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 108, 111	5-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 113	4-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 117	6-8	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 121	5-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 124, 127, 130	7-9	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 133, 136, 139, 142, 248, 254, 260, 262, 266, 269, 272, 278, 284, 290, 330, 334, 371, 372, 373, 379, 381	None	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 149, 154, 162, 163	4-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 145, 166, 175, 178	3-4	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 169, 172, 181, 186	3-4	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 203	4-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - Mar. 31	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 204	6-8	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 209, 215	4-5	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 218, 231	4-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 224	2-3	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 233, 239	3-4	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 242, 243	4-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 244, 246, 247	5-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - ((Mar. 31)) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon

Hunt Area	Harvest Guideline	Early Hunting Season	Late Hunting Season	Legal Weapon
GMUs 245, 250	5-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 249, 251	5-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 328, 329, 335	6-8	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 336, 340, 342, 346	5-7	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 352, 356, 360, 364, 368	5-7	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 382, 388	3-4	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 407	None	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 418, 426, 437	11-15	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 448, 450	9-13	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 454	None	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 460	5-7	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 466, 485, 490	2-3	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 501, 504, 506, 530	7-10	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 503, 505, 520, 550	6-8	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 510, 513	3-4	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 516	3-5	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 524, 554, 556	3-4	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 560	5-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU(s) 564((, 568))	(3-4) <u>2-3</u>	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
<u>GMU 568</u>	<u>2-3</u>	<u>Sept. 1 - Dec. 31</u>	<u>Jan. 1 - Apr. 30</u>	<u>Any Legal Weapon</u>
GMU 572	3-4	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 574, 578	3-5	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 601, 602, 603, 612	5-7	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 607, 615	4-5	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 618, 636, 638	4-5	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 621, 624, 627, 633	None	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 642, 648, 651	6-8	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon

Hunt Area	Harvest Guideline	Early Hunting Season	Late Hunting Season	Legal Weapon
GMUs 652, 666	None	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 653, 654	4-6	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMUs 658, 660, 663, 672, 673, 681, 684, 699	9-12	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon
GMU 667	3-4	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31	Jan. 1 - (Mar. 31) <u>Apr. 30</u>	Any Legal Weapon

(a) In hunt areas with a harvest guideline, (~~the director may close~~) the cougar late hunting season may close on or after January 1st in one or more GMUs if cougar harvest meets or exceeds the guideline.

(b) In hunt areas with a harvest guideline, starting January 1st, cougar hunters may hunt cougar from January 1st until the hunt area harvest guideline has been met (~~and the director has closed the cougar late hunting season~~), and the department has notified licensed cougar hunters by posting the hunt area closure on the departments web site and on the toll-free cougar hunting hotline, or (~~March 31st~~) April 30th, whichever occurs first.

(3) Harvest guideline system:

(a) All cougar killed by licensed hunters during the early and late hunting seasons, and seasons authorized under WAC 232-12-243 shall be counted toward the harvest guideline.

(b) Individual problem cougar will continue to be killed on an as-needed basis utilizing depredation permits, landowner kill permits, and WDFW depredation authority regardless of harvest guidelines.

(c) It is each cougar hunter's responsibility to verify if the cougar late hunting season is open or closed in hunt areas with a harvest guideline. Cougar hunters can verify if the season is open or closed by calling the toll-free cougar hunting hotline or visiting the department's web site.

(4) Cougar hunting season requirements and special restrictions.

(a) A valid big game hunting license which includes cougar as a species option is required to hunt cougar.

(b) The statewide bag limit is one (1) cougar per license year; excluding removals authorized under WAC 232-12-243. It is unlawful to kill or possess spotted cougar kittens or adult cougars accompanied by spotted kittens.

(c) The use of dogs to hunt cougar is prohibited; except by a commission authorized permit (WAC 232-12-243).

(d) Any person who takes a cougar must comply with the notification and sealing requirements in WAC 232-12-024.

(e) A special cougar permit is required to hunt cougar in GMU 485.