

Concise Explanatory Statement

Rules amended as part of this rulemaking:

WAC 220-415-080 2018 Spring black bear seasons and regulations.

Reasons for adopting these rules:

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

The proposal is intended to establish harvest guidelines for 21 spring bear hunts around the state during 2018. The proposal will: 1) remove the 2017 season from the current rule, 2) extend the season ending date to June 15 for GMUs 154, 162, 166, 169, 172, 175, 181, and 186, and 3) remove the Monroe hunt area. The anticipated effects include mitigation of nuisance and damage activity while providing distributed recreational hunting opportunities within harvest management levels described in the 2015-2021 Game Management Plan.

Reasons supporting proposal:

Spring bear seasons are typically used to address specific management needs such as nuisance and damage to property, and improve distribution of harvest. These amendments will remove a hunt area where the Department no longer requires removals to mitigate damage because damage occurrences have diminished. Additionally, the amendments will extend season dates by 15 days in areas where the Department has determined there is a need to use hunting pressure to mitigate damage and improve distribution of harvest and further minimize confusion for those who are permitted to participate in WDFW's Region 1.

Differences between the proposed rule and the rule as adopted:

Change: Reduce the number of permits offered in the Long Beach Hunt, GMU 684, from 20 permits to 12 permits.

Rationale: The Department has determined that damage occurrences have diminished and thereby hunting pressure can be reduced in this hunt area.

Change: Add GMUs 638 and 648 (excluding US Forest Service lands) to the Copalis Hunt.

Rationale: This adjustment will distribute hunting pressure across areas where damage mitigation and distribution of harvest is needed.

Comments received during the official public comment period and as testimony received at the public hearing:

There were no public comments.