



## Director Delegated Petition Summary Sheet

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**Decision must be made on or before:**

5/20/2025

**Agenda item:**

Petition asking the Department to begin rulemaking for a spring black bear hunting season.

**Presenter(s):**

Stephanie Landry; Carnivore, Furbearer, and Small Game Section Manager; Game Division

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**Background summary:**

The petitioner is requesting that the Department begin rulemaking for a spring black bear hunting season that is based on the science and managed by the Department Staff and Director, 'away from the WDFW Commission'. The petition 'calls for the WDFW Director to approve this petition to address "unscientific rule changes by the WDFW Commission on November 19, 2021 and unscientific vote by the WDFW Commission on Friday November 18, 2022."' It calls for rulemaking 'based on the reliability of density and abundance estimates provided by WDFW Staff on December 14-15, 2023' to bring back the spring black bear hunting season.

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**Staff recommendation:**

The Department was given guidance by the Commission that if there were a management need for a spring bear hunt, they would consider it. At this time, there is no need for a spring bear hunt to manage the population, as we are not currently trying to reduce black bear populations. We also do not have evidence for timber damage (managed through the timber damage depredation permit program), human conflict (managed internally between enforcement and conflict staff), or ungulate depredation caused by black bear that warrant a spring black bear hunting season at this time. The guidance from the Commission through their November 2022 motion was to not allow recreational spring black bear hunting. Until the Department receives new guidance from the Commission to allow recreational spring black bear hunting, the Department will not consider a recreational spring black bear hunt. Therefore, Department staff recommend denying this petition.

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**Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:**

If the Director denies the petition, no rule making will take place to contemplate a spring black bear recreational hunting season.

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**Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:**

If the Director denies the petition and no rulemaking occurs, the fiscal impact of this decision is expected to be minimal.

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**Action requested and/or proposed next steps:**

The Wildlife Program recommends the petition be denied.

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**Post decision communications plan:**

WDFW will communicate the outcome of the Director's decision to the petitioner.