



Director Delegated Petition Summary Sheet

Decision must be made on or before:

12/31/2024

Agenda item:

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

Presenter(s): Stephanie Landry, Carnivore Section Manager

Background summary:

The petitioner is asking WDFW to begin rulemaking for a spring black bear hunting season. The petitioner included a news clipping of New Hampshire Fish and Game's announcement stating they are pleased to welcome their new Executive Director, who previously worked for WDFW as the Carnivore Section Manager. The petitioner states that the individual left the agency due to the commission's controversial spring bear hunt decision, and that the commission should have listened to the individual while they were a WDFW employee. The petitioner's last sentence states, "Begin rulemaking for the Washington State Spring Bear Hunting Season".

Staff recommendation:

Department staff do not recommend initiating rulemaking to consider adding a spring black bear hunt at this time. Our reasoning for this follows:

In fall 2022, the Commission gave the Department policy direction related to spring black bear hunting. In addition, the Commission has repeatedly voted to deny similar rulemaking petitions since then. Until the Commission signals an intent to reverse that policy direction, the Department staff will continue recommending no recreational spring bear hunting opportunity. Additionally, Department staff currently do not have new management-based needs beyond what has been presented to the Commission in the past to justify a new spring black bear hunting season, despite a robust bear population. At the October 2024 FWC meeting, the Department staff briefed the Commission on the staff's on-going assessment of the Washington black bear population and a management framework that contains future black bear hunting decision-making.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

If the Director denies the petition, no rule making will occur.

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.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

The Wildlife Program recommends the petition be denied.

Post decision communications plan:

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