

WAC 220-415-090

Fall Black Bear Hunting Seasons and Regulations



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

Stephanie Simek, PhD.
Carnivore and Furbearer Section Manager,
Game Division - Wildlife Program

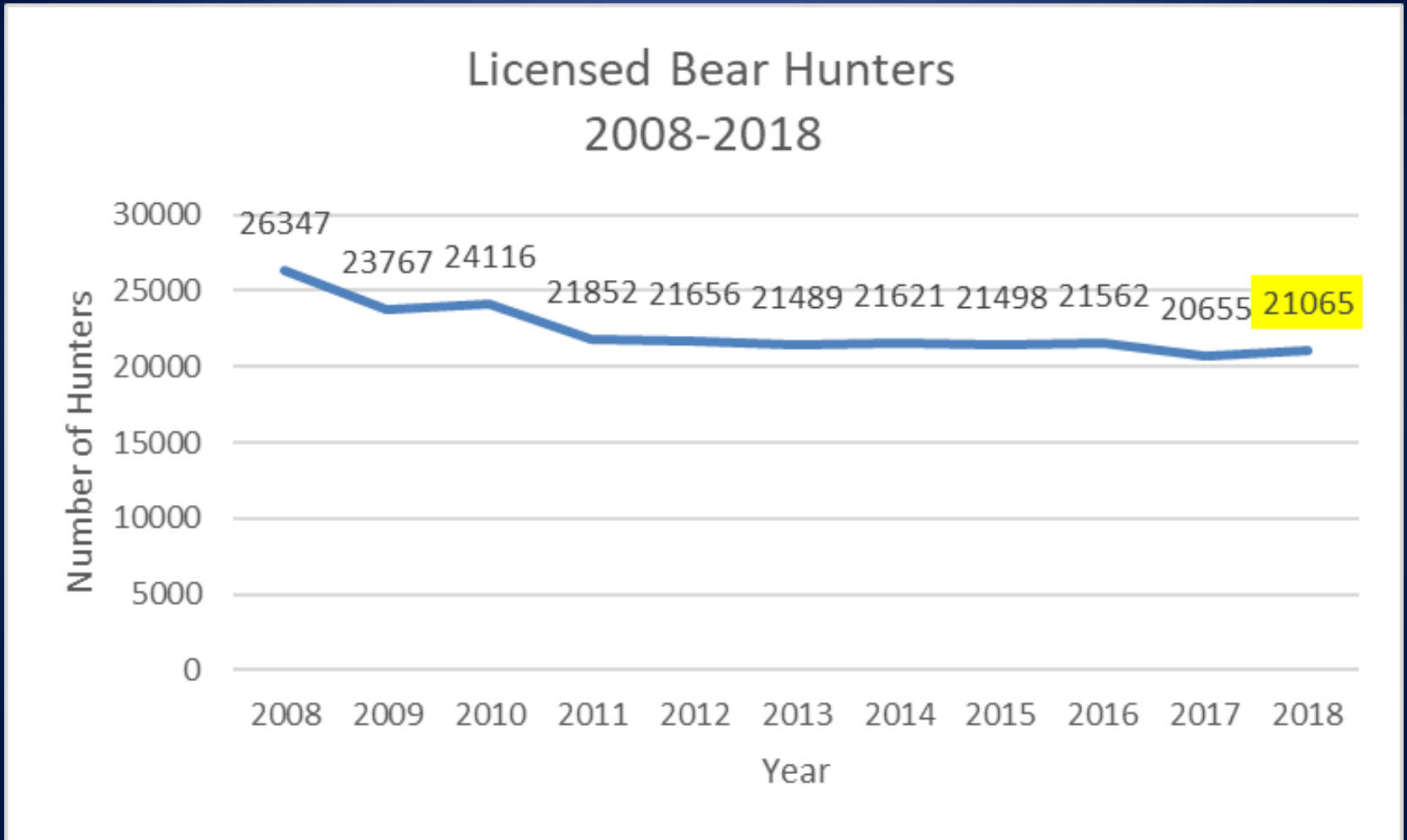
WAC 220-415-090

Fall Black Bear Hunting Season

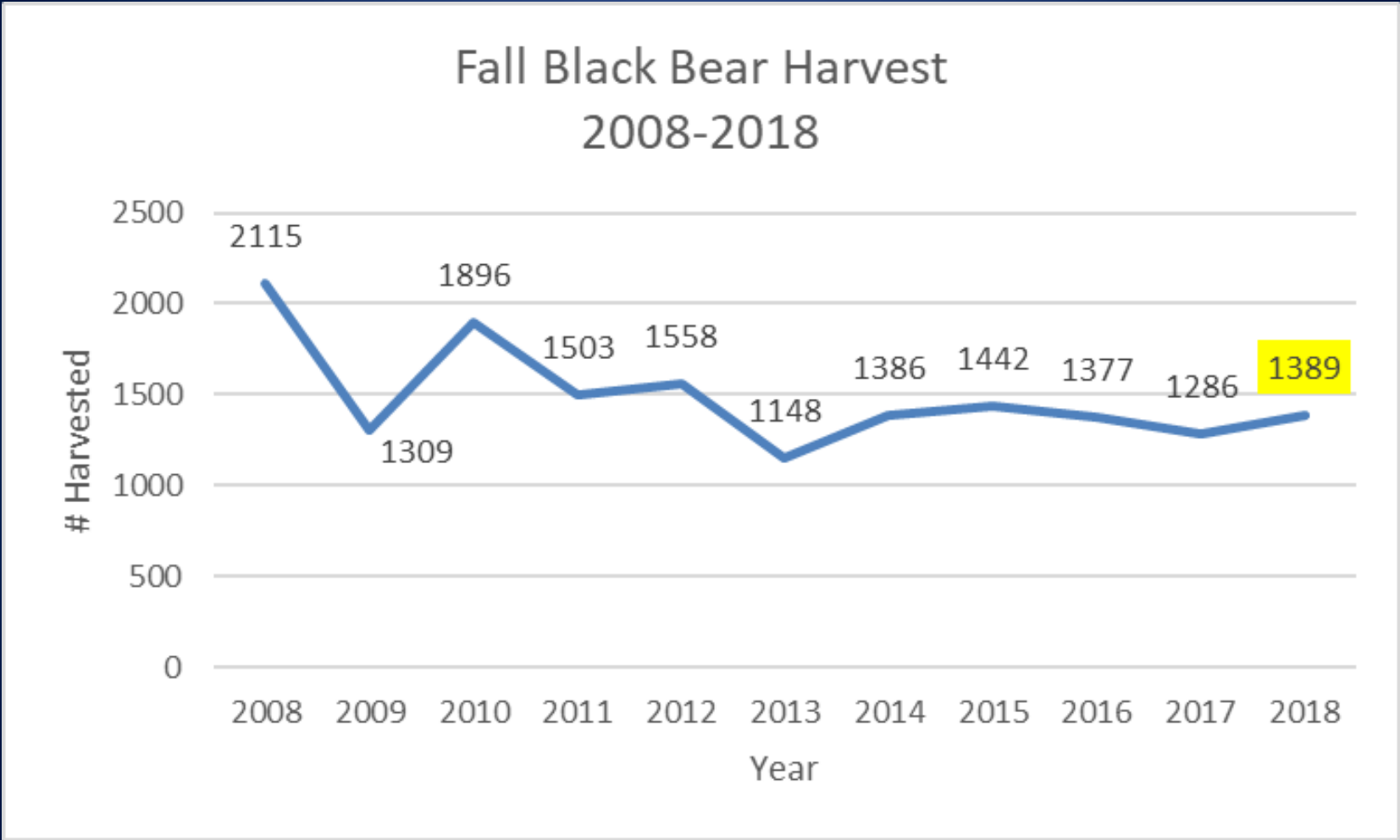
- Summary: Outlines the requirements related to participating in recreational fall bear hunts; which the annual bear bag limit is two animals with only one allowed harvested from Eastern Washington.



Black Bear Harvest

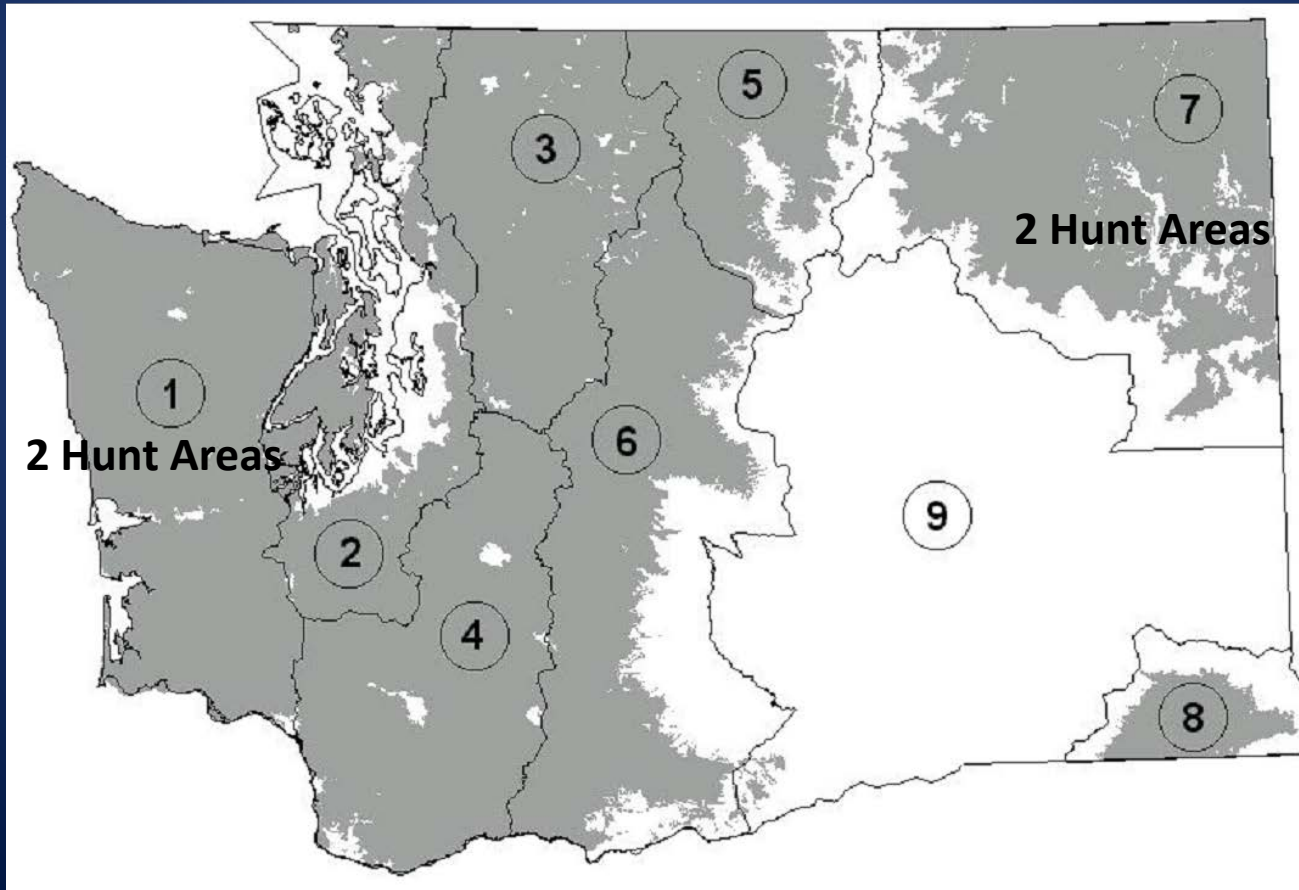


Black Bear Harvest

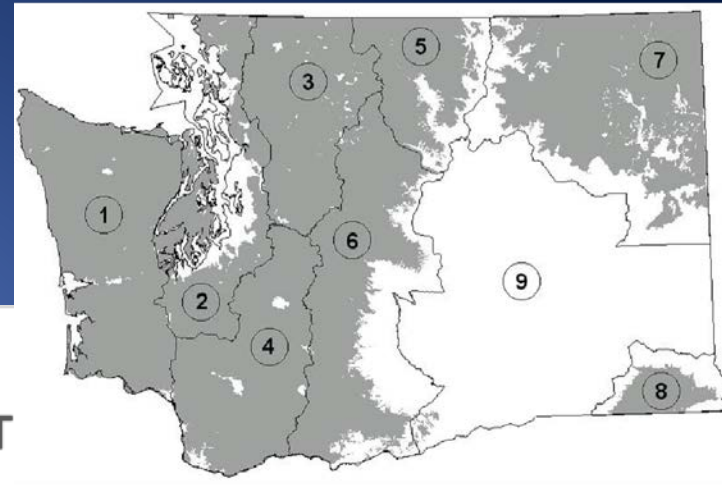


Black Bear Management Units

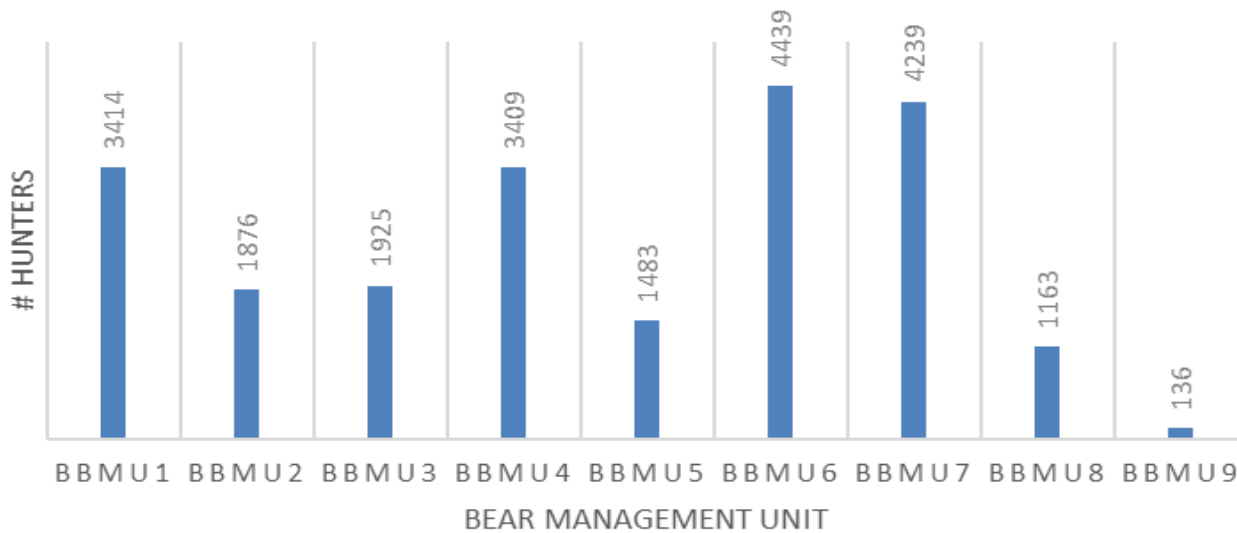
- 9 Black Bear Management Units
 - 11 Fall Black Bear Hunt Areas



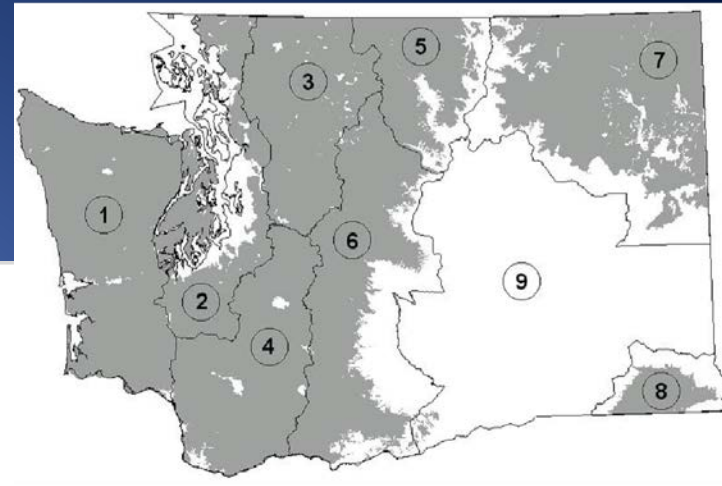
Black Bear Harvest



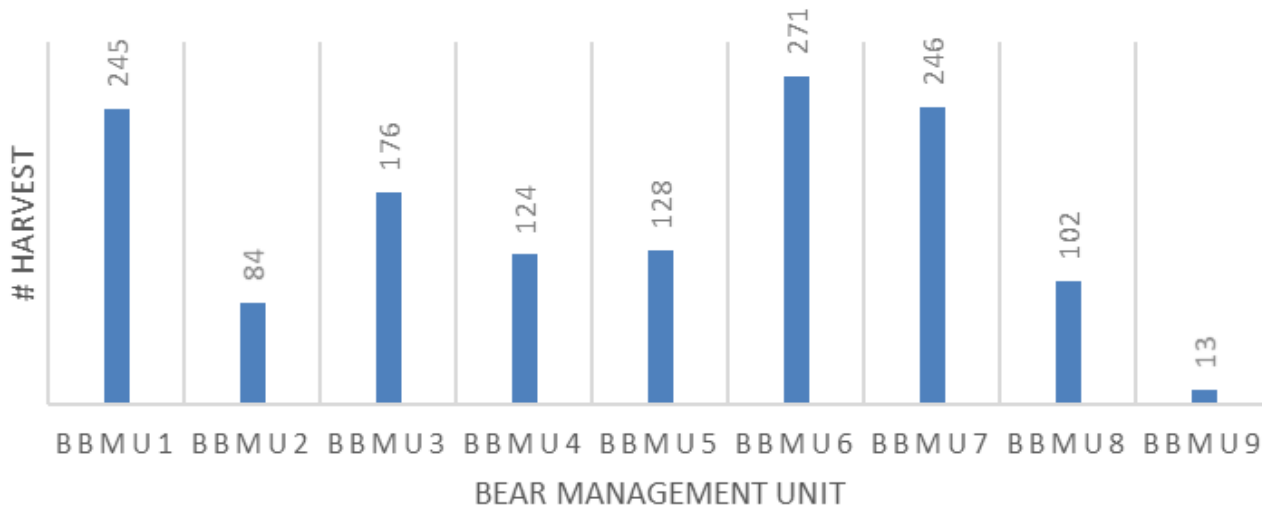
**NUMBER OF HUNTERS BY
BLACK BEAR MANAGEMENT UNIT
2018**



Black Bear Harvest



**TOTAL HARVEST BY BLACK BEAR MANAGEMENT UNIT
2018**



Black Bear Management

- Provide recreational regulated hunting while maintaining sustainable bear populations in each black bear management unit.
- Game Management Plan Objective 88

Parameter	Harvest		
	Liberalize	Acceptable	Restrict
% Females in harvest	< 35%	35-39%	> 39%
Median age of harvested females	> 6 years	5-6 years	< 5 years
Median age of harvested males	> 4 years	2-4 years	< 2 years

Black Bear Management

Game Management Plan: Objective 88

Percent female black bear mortality, by year and Black Bear Management Unit, 2007-2017.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	10-yr Avg	5-yr Avg
BBMU 1	34	36	39	36	N/A	30	32	28	27	29	35	29	30
BBMU 2	36	39	38	44	N/A	36	42	39	34	43	36	35	39
BBMU 3	26	40	27	35	N/A	36	32	38	31	42	26	30	34
BBMU 4	31	33	32	39	N/A	31	31	44	24	37	35	31	34
BBMU 5	26	24	35	31	N/A	33	27	32	27	32	36	27	31
BBMU 6	28	34	37	36	N/A	27	30	34	34	35	31	30	33
BBMU 7	36	33	33	35	N/A	33	31	33	34	32	37	30	33
BBMU 8	32	33	38	39	N/A	35	29	29	38	37	39	30	32
BBMU 9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NA	NA	N/A

Current Fall Black Bear Harvest Season: Dates and Bag Limits

- 5 Areas open August 1
- 3 Areas open August 15
- 3 Areas open September 1
- 5 Areas with 2 bear limit
- 6 Areas with 1 bear limit



Fall Black Bear			
Hunt Area	Season	Bag Limit	Hunt Area GMUs
Coastal	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	2	GMUs 501, 504, 506, 530, 601, 602, 603, 607-621, 636-651, 658-663, 672-684
Puget Sound	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	2	GMUs 407, 454, 624, 627, 633, 652, 666, 667
North Cascades	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	2	GMUs 418-421, 426-450, 460
South Cascades	Aug. 15 - Nov. 15	2	GMUs 466, 485, 503, 505, 510-520, 524, 550-574, 653, 654
Okanogan	Aug. 15 - Nov. 15	1	GMUs 203, 209-243
East Cascades	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	1	GMUs 244-247, 249-251, 328, 329-368, 382, 388, 578
Northeastern A	Sept. 1 - Nov. 15	1	GMUs 101-121, 204
Northeastern B	Aug. 15 - Nov. 15	1	GMUs 124-130
Blue Mountains	Sept. 1 - Nov. 15	1	GMUs 145-154, 162-186
Columbia Basin	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	1	GMUs 133, 136, 139, 142, 248, 254, 260-290, 371-381
Long Island	Sept. 1 - Nov. 15	2	GMU 699


Current Fall Black Bear Harvest Season: Test Requirement

- Black bear identification test
 - 3 Hunt Areas require annual black bear identification test
 - North Cascades, Okanogan, and Northeastern A

BEAR IDENTITY: INTRODUCTION

Dear Black Bear Hunter,

Black bear hunters in Washington are strongly encouraged to complete a bear identification course before hunting bears in the northern tier of Washington's counties including: Pend Oreille, Stevens, Ferry, Okanogan, Whatcom, and Skagit as endangered grizzly bears are known to occur in these areas. This identification program is intended to prevent mistaken-identity killings of grizzly bears.




Before taking the test, review the training text, study the photos that visually depict ways to differentiate between black bears and grizzly bears, and take the interactive class "I See A Bear". It is informative and fun! Thoroughly review these materials, then take the test. The bear identification test consists of 16 yes or no questions. You may retake the test until you feel competent in identifying grizzly bears.

At this time, this is a voluntary course/test, but it a good training for everyone wanting to hunt black bears in Washington.

You may also want to review some additional educational materials on bears. Scroll down for more educational links.

Whos Who? Washingtons Grizzly and Black Bears



Bear Identification in Washington

Introduction Page

Washington is home to both grizzly bears and black bears. Grizzly bears are rare in Washington, but a small population exists in the Selkirk Mountains of northwest Washington, and their presence has been documented in the Okanogan Highlands and the North Cascades.



This identification program is intended to prevent the killing of grizzly bears as a result of mistaken identity.

Start

WAC 220-415-090

Fall Black Bear Hunting Seasons and Regulations

- **Summary of Proposed Changes:**

Note: 2019-2020 season changes (one year proposal)

- Remove 2018 dates

- Adjust the North Cascades Hunt Area within BBMU 2

- Remove GMUs 419, 420, and 421



WAC 220-415-090

Fall Black Bear Hunting Seasons and Regulations

- **Summary of Proposed Changes:**
 - Adjust season dates for the 2019-2020 season to open Aug 1 statewide
 - 6 hunt areas currently open Aug 15 or later
 - Change bag limit to 2 bears/license year statewide
 - Remove the 1 bear/license year in Eastern Washington

WAC 220-415-090

Fall Black Bear Hunting Season and Regulations

- **Rationale:** Provides improved recreational hunting opportunity by:
 - Increasing hunting season by 15 - 30 days in six Black Bear Hunt Areas
 - Increasing the limit from 1 bear to 2 in six Black Bear Hunt Areas
 - Removing areas with no resident black bear population



WAC 220-415-090

Fall Black Bear Hunting Seasons and Regulations

- **Rationale (continued):** Simplify the fall bear hunting seasons by:
 - Standardizing - season open date and bag limit statewide
 - Remove GMUs 419, 420, 421 – where there is no resident bear population

Fall Black Bear		
Hunt Area	Season	Hunt Area GMUs
North Cascades	Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	GMUs 418- 421 , 426-450, 460
South Cascades	Aug. 15 Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	GMUs 466, 485, 503, 505, 510-520, 524, 550-574, 653, 654
Okanogan	Aug. 15 Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	GMUs 203, 209-243
Northeastern A	Sept. 1 Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	GMUs 101-121, 204
Northeastern B	Aug. 15 Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	GMUs 124-130
Blue Mountains	Sept. 1 Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	GMUs 145-154, 162-186
Long Island	Sept. 1 Aug. 1 - Nov. 15	GMU 699

Range of Potential Outcomes

- **Harvest numbers**
At most may double the current harvest or have a moderate increase in harvest or have no change to minimal impact
- **Harvest composition**
May have a shift in sex and age ratios; may see more females or younger aged animals in harvest
- **Hunter participation**
May have an increase in hunter participation through first-time bear tag or second bear tag purchases



Public Comments

- 738 comments
 - 718 comments: Support the proposed changes
 - Ungulate populations
 - Simplicity
 - More opportunity
 - 9 comments: Opposition to any of the proposed changes.
 - 2 bear bag limit = too much pressure on population
 - August 1 opener may result in spoilage due to heat
 - 11 comments: Neutral

Summary

These changes promote more opportunity for black bear hunting in Washington.

- Increase the number of hunting days; particularly when other opportunities are minimal
- Allow hunters to harvest 2 bears in Eastern Washington.
- Direct hunters to areas where there are resident black bear populations.



Questions?

