

Wildlife Program

Master Hunter Moose Permit Changes for 2018

Master Hunter Moose Permit – Master Hunter Moose Permits historically were used to remove moose causing damage in the Spokane county area. These permits were managed by the Enforcement program. The hunts were generally few and far between. Finding Master Hunters who were able to respond to the scene in a reasonable amount of time was very difficult.

Seasons Changes – During the three year season setting process that started in May 2017, WDFW proposed changes to the Master Hunter Moose Permit hunt. The three year season setting process is as follows:

Regions Submit 3-Year Hunting Season Setting Ideas: May – June 2017

WDFW Regions submitted 2018-2020 three-year hunting season setting ideas. Regional ideas were incorporated with ideas received from the public since the last 3-year hunting season setting process. The public had an opportunity to comment through a survey conducted from mid-July through August.

Formulate Recommendations and Alternatives: July – August 2017

Members of the public provided comments to help shape the 2018-2020 hunting seasons at a series of public "open house" meetings hosted by the department in July and August. The public also provided online comments from July 17 through August 31, 2017. Public comments received at the meetings and through the survey helped the department understand the level of support and opposition to the proposed hunting regulations for 2018-20. Using that feedback, department staff members further refined the proposals.

Public Comment Period: January 24 - February 14, 2018

The public was able to comment on the proposed rule changes from January 24, 2018 to February 14, 2018. These comments helped shape the final proposed rules that were presented at the Fish and Wildlife Commission on March 15-17, 2018 meeting.

Approved Change – The Master Hunter Moose permits were discontinued due to difficulties in deploying hunters and the time required.

Rationale for Rule Change – The Master Hunter Moose permit hunt was administered by the Enforcement Program to deal with nuisance moose in the greater Spokane area. The Enforcement Program asked the Wildlife Program to eliminate this special permit hunt because the moose situations for which Enforcement could use a Master Hunter were rare. When the situations did occur, the Master Hunter was typically needed to report to the area immediately. Since the pool of hunters was statewide, it took a lot of calling to find someone who could report so quickly. Also Master Hunters drawn for this hunt had very high expectations for participation and this excitement resulted in numerous contacts to Enforcement and Wildlife Program staff asking about the status of the hunt and when the hunter might expect to be able to go. The Enforcement Program determined that the Master Hunter Moose Permit process was not as efficient and effective as anticipated. Coordination efforts became problematic and the permit list was seldom used.