

WAC 220-415-080

2021 Spring Black Bear Seasons and Regulations



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

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Spring Bear Permit Seasons

Excerpt from GMP: Spring hunts are designed to address emerging management needs, such as bear damage to trees in commercial timberlands, bear-human conflict, or to more evenly distribute harvest compared to fall seasons.

Proposed Changes WAC 220-415-080

Spring Black Bear Season and Regulations

- **Changes:** Standardize season dates and adjust to reflect 2021 season.
- **Changes:** Clarify language associated with bear check-in.



Proposed Changes

WAC 220-415-080

Spring Black Bear Season and Regulations

- **Changes:** Remove Weyerhaeuser-Columbia Timber Lands from the North Skagit Hunt area because they are not allowing access.
- **Changes:** Reduce permit numbers on the Long Beach hunt by 2.



Public Comments

- 835 comments received. (328 online survey, 3 emailed letters and 504 form emails)
 - 44% (146) of survey respondents had a neutral stance or failed to provide a stance on the rule change.
 - 63% (114) of survey respondents who specified their stance were in general support.
 - 37% (68) of survey respondents who specified their stance generally opposed.

Public Comments

Common themes from the online survey

- Would like a general spring bear season (15)
- Would like to see more permits (17)
- Would like more GMUs included in the spring bear season (5)
- Would like more free access to private timber lands (4)
- Oppose spring bear hunting (6)
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Public Comments

We received 3 email delivered letters from 2 organized groups and one member of the public All 3 opposed spring bear hunting. The reasons they gave include:

- Not enough bear population information
- Possible cub orphaning
- No evidence that these hunts are having the desired effects
- The general public may not agree with these hunts

Public Comment

- 14 People testified at the Dec 4 briefing commission meeting
- One person spoke in favor of the proposed rule change
- All others who testified were opposed to a spring bear season
- The Department did not consider removing the spring bear season during the rule making process
- The Department could evaluate the spring bear season during the Game Management Plan revision process if the commission instructs us to do so

Recommendation

Motion: I move to adopt the recommended rule changes as presented.



Questions?