



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

1/27/2023

Agenda item:

Petition to immediately initiate rule making that would contemplate a 2023 and future year(s) spring Black Bear management hunts.

Presenter(s):

Anis Aoude, Game Division Manager, Wildlife Program.

Background summary:

The existing spring bear rule WAC 220-415-080 authorized the 2021 spring black bear hunting season and remains unchanged after the Commission did not authorize a 2022 season. The Commission has informed Department staff and the public through a Commission motion on November 18, 2022, that it will not adopt recreational hunting of black bear in the Spring. Commission discussion also indicated on the record that the commissioners would consider hunts that would use recreational licensed hunters when needed to address certain management objectives, such as timber damage, achieving ungulate management objectives, or human-wildlife conflict issues. Department staff currently do not have any new or different management-based needs than what has been presented in the past. Thus, Department staff are not prepared to recommend a 2023 management-based Spring black bear permit season. The Department may consider a management-based Spring black bear hunting in the future after developing specific thresholds on which to base these recommendations. This may require additional guidance from the commission related to those thresholds.

Staff recommendation:

Department staff recommend denying this petition. There is no new or different information to present at this time that would necessitate a management-based Spring black bear permit hunting season. This could change in the future once the Department develops specific thresholds that trigger management-based Spring black bear hunting.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

If this petition is denied no rule making will take place to contemplate a 2023 spring black bear recreational hunting season.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

The fiscal impact of this decision is minimal and is not different from the status quo, based on previous commission decision.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

The public were given notice of this petition and encouraged to comment. There was no public involvement directly related to this petition prior to its submission. A public engagement process will occur if rule making occurs in the future.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Dependent on Commission decision.

Draft motion language:

I move we deny the petition.

Post decision communications plan:

Communicate the outcome of the Commission's decision to the petitioner.
