

WDFW opens public comment for bear timber damage proposal



By The Chronicle staff

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has filed a proposed rule change to revise how the department issues black bear timber damage depredation permits. The public is invited to submit comments about the proposed rule through Oct. 2.

The proposal would provide a process for the department to issue permits for individuals to kill black bears in specific locations where black bears damage commercial timber. The proposed rule, if adopted, would identify how permits could be applied for, the conditions of the permits and how the department would manage applications.

A copy of the rule making proposal is available at <https://tinyurl.com/38rut5n6>. The comment period opens Aug. 23 and the public can submit comments via web form at <https://publicinput.com/black-bear-timber-damage>, by email at black-bear-timber-damage@PublicInput.com or by phone at 855-925-2801, project code 5474. The public may also mail written comments to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife ATTN: Wildlife Program, PO Box 43200, Olympia, WA 98504.

WDFW will accept in-person and virtual public comments on the proposed rule change at a public hearing during a Sept. 28-30 Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting in Yakima. Those interested in providing comments during the meeting should pre-register online. Information on how to pre-register will be made available at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/commission/meetings/2023>.

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission is tentatively scheduled to consider the rulemaking proposal on or after its October 2023 meeting.