

**Chapter 220-440 WAC**  
**WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND WILDLIFE INTERACTION**

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**WAC**

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**WAC 220-440-010 Purpose—Wildlife management and wildlife interaction.** Public support for the recovery and management of healthy wildlife populations is an important aspect of wildlife conservation. Support for wildlife can diminish when people experience negative interactions with wildlife and damage to private property. The intent of the department is to provide technical advice and assistance to property owners to prevent and mitigate damages caused by wildlife. Compensation may be necessary in situations where preventative measures are not successful or when circumstances, outside the control of the private property owner, get in the way of resolving negative wildlife interactions.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-010, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-020, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-020 Definitions.** Definitions used in rules of the fish and wildlife commission are defined in RCW 77.08.010, and the definitions for wildlife interactions are defined in RCW 77.36.010. In addition, unless otherwise provided, the following definitions are applicable to this chapter:

"Act of damaging" means that private property is in the process of being damaged by wildlife.

"Big game" means those animals listed in RCW 77.08.030.

"Claim" means an application to the department for compensation under this chapter.

"Claimant" means owner of commercial crop, livestock, or other property who has filed a wildlife damage claim for cash compensation.

"Commercial crop" means a commercially raised horticultural and/or agricultural product and includes the growing or harvested product, but does not include livestock, forest land, or rangeland. For the purposes of this chapter, Christmas trees and managed pasture grown using agricultural methods including one or more of the following: Seeding, planting, fertilizing, irrigating, and all parts of horticultural trees, are considered a commercial crop and are eligible for cash compensation.

"Compensation" means a cash payment, materials, or service.

"Completed written claim" means that all of the information required on a department property damage claim form is supplied and complete, including all supplemental information and certifications required to process the claim.

"Damage" means economic losses caused by wildlife interactions.

"Damage claim assessment" means department approved methods to evaluate crop loss and value caused by deer or elk damage to commercial crops, livestock losses and value caused by bear, cougar, or wolves, or damages to other property.

"Domestic animal" means any animal that is lawfully possessed and controlled by a person.

"Eligible farmer" means an owner who satisfies the definition of eligible farmer pursuant to RCW 82.08.855 (4) (b) (i) through (iv).

"Emergent" means an unforeseen circumstance beyond the control of the landowner or tenant, that presents a real and immediate threat to crops, domestic animals, or fowl.

"Game animal" means wild animals that shall not be hunted except as authorized by the commission.

"Guard dog" means dogs trained for the purpose of protecting livestock from attack by wildlife or for herding livestock.

"Immediate family member" means spouse, state registered domestic partner, brother, sister, grandparent, parent, child, or grandchild.

"Immediate threat of physical harm" means that animal-to-human bodily contact is imminent; and the animal is in attack posture/mode.

"Livestock" means horses, cattle, sheep, goats, swine, donkeys, mules, llamas, and alpacas.

"Owner" means a person who has a legal right to commercial crops, livestock, or other private property that was damaged during a wildlife interaction.

"Physical act of attacking" means actual or imminent animal-to-human or animal-to-animal physical contact.

"Public hunting" means an owner satisfies the "public hunting" requirement for his or her land, as defined in WAC 220-440-190.

"Wild animal" means those species of the class Mammalia whose members exist in Washington in a wild state.

"Wildlife control operator" means a person who has successfully completed the training and obtained one or more levels of certification from the department to assist landowners to prevent or control problems caused by wildlife.

"Wildlife interaction" means the negative interaction and the resultant damage between wildlife and commercial crops, livestock, or other property.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-020, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-030, filed 11/4/13,

effective 12/5/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.36.120. WSR 13-05-003 (Order 13-19), § 232-36-030, filed 2/6/13, effective 3/9/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-030, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-030 Public safety cougar removals.** (1) Definitions:

As used in this section and in the context of public safety cougar removals, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Confirmed" means qualified department staff is led to believe a cougar(s) was at the scene of the incident by interview of the complainant or observation of evidence at the scene.

(b) "Human-cougar safety incident" means aggressive or unusual behavior by a cougar which presents an actual or perceived threat to an individual.

(c) "Livestock or pet depredation" means incidents where livestock and/or pets are killed and/or injured by cougar.

(d) "Nuisance activity" means incidents associated with property disturbance, property damage, or livestock/pet harassment.

(e) "Public safety need" means there exists a reasonable threat to human safety or property by one or more cougar, as indicated by the level of confirmed human-cougar safety incidents or livestock/pet depredations.

(f) "Removal" means the act of killing one or more cougar with the aid of dogs.

(g) "Sighting" means a confirmed direct observation of one or more cougar, in urban or rural settings, near individuals or residences; typically more than chance observations.

(h) "Human-cougar interaction" means a confirmed human-cougar safety incident, or confirmed livestock or pet depredation.

(i) "Dog hunter" means a person that owns and hunts with dogs that are capable of detecting, tracking and treeing a cougar.

(2) Public safety cougar removal authorization: The commission authorizes the director to issue public safety cougar removal permits consistent with this rule. Prior to issuing public safety cougar removal permits, the department shall use other practical alternatives to address a public safety need, including livestock or pet depredations. Other practical alternatives may include, but are not limited to, general cougar hunting seasons, general public information, educational programs, information to recreational hunters, cougar depredation/kill permits, and department capture and relocation/euthanasia of specific cougars.

(3) Public safety cougar removal criteria:

(a) The commission determines that when the above practical alternatives have been utilized within a game management unit, an annual or seasonal increase in confirmed human-cougar interactions above the 2005-2010 level, therein demonstrates that the practical alternatives have been inadequate to address the public safety need. The director then is authorized by the commission to remove one or more cougar, with the aid of dogs, in a selected area of that game management unit or nearby geographic area suitable for the use of dogs. The commission authorizes the director to remove one cougar per three hundred square kilometers of complaint area.

(b) If warranted by conditions of this rule, a public safety cougar removal(s) will be conducted annually between December 1st and March 31st in selected areas of game management units designated by

the director to address a public safety need presented by one or more cougar.

(c) The department shall not target more than one hundred nine cougar during a public safety cougar removal period unless otherwise authorized by the commission.

(4) Public safety cougar removal permit issuance procedure.

(a) To participate in a public safety cougar removal, individuals must request that his/her name be placed on a list of available participants (participant list) by mailing their request to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Enforcement Program - Public Safety Cougar Removal, 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091. The request must include the individual's name, address, phone number, and game management units being applied for. Individuals may apply for no more than four game management units. An individual's request to be placed on a participant list for a removal period must be postmarked no later than October 15, or be received at the department's Olympia office no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 15, during the year the removal period begins.

(b) To be eligible for a public safety cougar removal permit (permit), the participant must be a Washington resident dog hunter who, at the time of application for a permit, possesses a valid big game license with cougar as a species option. The permit holder must use dogs while participating in a cougar management removal.

(c) Individuals eligible for participation in a public safety cougar removal will be randomly selected from the participant list. The department will issue a permit to the person whose name is selected from the participant list. Individuals selected will be notified by telephone or mail. Individuals selected must contact the department's enforcement program in Olympia and accept the public safety cougar removal permit within fifteen days of being notified. Failure to contact the department will result in forfeit of the permit and the individual will be placed on the participant list for later selections. Permits may not be sold or reassigned.

(d) Permit holders and all individuals who will accompany the permit holder must complete the department's public safety cougar removal education course prior to participating in a public safety cougar removal.

(5) Public safety cougar removals: Quota system and participation in public safety cougar removal.

(a) This is a public safety cougar removal administered by a WDFW designated coordinator. Permit holders will be contacted on an as-needed basis to conduct removals in portions of GMUs. Not all permit hunters will be contacted in a given year.

(b) Public safety cougar removals will be based on a quota system, where permit holders may hunt cougar until the allotted numbers of cougar have been killed from each game management unit or March 31, whichever is first.

(c) To verify if the public safety cougar removal season is open or closed in each game management unit, the permit holders shall notify the department's enforcement program in Olympia within twenty-four hours prior to exercising a public safety cougar removal permit.

(d) No more than four total individuals may participate per public safety cougar removal, including the permit holder(s). Only the permit holder, whose name appears on the permit, may take a cougar.

(e) Hunters killing a cougar during a public safety cougar removal must notify the department's enforcement program in Olympia within twenty-four hours after harvesting the cougar.

(f) The department reserves the right to accompany permit holders while participating in a public safety cougar removal.

(6) Public safety cougar removal general requirements.

(a) A valid big game hunting license which includes cougar as a species option is required to hunt cougar.

(b) It is unlawful to kill or possess spotted cougar kittens or adult cougars accompanied by spotted kittens. Individuals selected for a public safety cougar removal permit may take one cougar per permit.

(c) Hunters may use any lawful big game modern firearm, archery, or muzzleloader equipment for hunting cougar. The use of dogs to hunt cougar is prohibited except during a public safety cougar removal.

(d) Any person who takes a cougar must notify the department within twenty-four hours of kill (excluding legal state holidays) and provide the hunter's name, date and location of kill, and sex of animal. The raw pelt of a cougar must be sealed by an authorized department employee within seventy-two hours of the notification of kill. Any person who takes a cougar must present the cougar skull, in such a manner that teeth and biological samples can be extracted, to an authorized department employee at the time of sealing.

(e) The public safety cougar removal permit (permit) belongs to the state of Washington. The permit holder may be required to return to or turn over to the department the permit when, in the judgment of the department, the permit holder violates any conditions of the permit, violates trespass laws while acting under this permit, or violates any other criminal law or hunting regulation of the state while acting under this permit. If the permit holder is required to return to or turn over to the department the permit, the permit holder may request an appeal of that action in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW. Appeal request shall be filed in writing and returned within twenty days of the date of action and be addressed to WDFW Legal Services Office, 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-440-030, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. WSR 12-11-005 (Order 12-70), § 232-12-243, filed 5/2/12, effective 6/2/12. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.15.245, and 2007 c 178. WSR 11-19-074, § 232-12-243, filed 9/16/11, effective 10/17/11. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.040, 77.12.020, 77.12.570, 77.12.210. WSR 08-17-034 (Order 08-197), § 232-12-243, filed 8/13/08, effective 9/13/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. WSR 04-21-036 (Order 04-284), § 232-12-243, filed 10/14/04, effective 11/14/04; WSR 03-17-037 (Order 03-186), § 232-12-243, filed 8/14/03, effective 9/14/03; WSR 02-17-013 (Order 02-183), § 232-12-243, filed 8/9/02, effective 9/9/02; WSR 01-20-011 (Order 01-198), § 232-12-243, filed 9/20/01, effective 10/21/01.]

**WAC 220-440-040 Wildlife/human interaction and conflict resolution for private property damage.** The department is the primary source for property owners seeking to determine legal and effective remedies for addressing wildlife interactions. Protection of property using nonlethal techniques is the primary response encouraged by the department. Harassment and/or lethal removal may also be important techniques to protect human safety or to protect property. The following criteria describe the compensation available to protect property:

(1) Cash compensation will only be provided to property owners by the department if the funds are appropriated by the legislature or provided through local or federal grants or contracts.

(2) Compensation will be prioritized in the following order:

(a) As conditioned by the legislature or granting entity.

(b) Property prioritization:

(i) Private property that is primarily designed for public use, where there is a human safety risk not addressed by other entities.

(ii) Private property that directly contributes to commercial crop or to livestock production.

(iii) Private property used for other business purposes.

(iv) Public property.

(v) Residential property.

(vi) Recreational property.

(c) Species prioritization:

(i) Damages caused by wildlife listed as endangered, threatened, sensitive, or categories of concern by the state or federal government.

(ii) Damages caused by big game animals.

(iii) Other federal and state protected species.

(iv) Other wildlife species except unclassified species and predatory birds.

(3) The department may make agreements with private landowners to prevent property damage. These agreements may include the use of:

(a) Best management practices to reduce risk of private property damage;

(b) Scaring or hazing materials;

(c) Fencing materials;

(d) Volunteers referred by the department for hazing, fence repair, etc; and

(e) Lethal removal options.

(4) Private property owners must utilize nonlethal abatement techniques prior to requesting other compensation from the department or before utilizing lethal techniques.

(a) Use of nonlethal techniques must be documented and consistent with procedures and requirements established by the department.

(b) Evidence of damage (e.g., photographs) must be provided by the property owner.

(c) Property owner must comply with reporting requirements of the department.

(5) Wildlife may not be captured and transported or relocated off the owner's property (parcel where damage occurred) unless:

(a) Authorized by rule of the commission; or

(b) By written permit from the department; and

(c) Owner is in compliance with department rules, permits, and reporting requirements.

(6) The department will establish written procedures for assisting private property owners, using the criteria and priorities provided in this rule. The procedures will include enlistment of partners and volunteers through agreements, permits, and incentives to help mitigate wildlife interactions.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-440-040, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-040, filed 11/4/13,

effective 12/5/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-040, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-050 Killing wildlife for personal safety.** (1) The fish and wildlife commission is authorized to classify wildlife as game, as endangered or protected species, or as a predatory bird consistent with RCW 77.08.010 and 77.12.020. The commission is also authorized, pursuant to RCW 77.36.030, to establish the limitations and conditions on killing or trapping wildlife that is threatening human safety.

(2) The conditions for killing wildlife vary, based primarily on the classification of the wildlife species and the imminent nature of the threat to personal safety. Additional conditions defined by the department may also be important, depending on individual situations. Killing wildlife for personal safety is subject to all other state and federal laws including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 220 WAC.

(3) Killing wildlife for personal safety.

(a) It is permissible to kill wild animals engaged in the physical act of attacking a person.

(b) It is permissible to kill game animals posing an immediate threat of physical harm to a person.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-050, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-050, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-060 Killing wildlife causing private property damage.** The fish and wildlife commission is authorized to classify wildlife as game, and/or as endangered species or protected wildlife, and/or as a predatory bird consistent with RCW 77.08.010 and 77.12.020. The commission is also authorized, pursuant to RCW 77.36.030, to establish the limitations and conditions on killing or trapping wildlife that is causing damage on private property. The department may authorize, pursuant to RCW 77.12.240 the killing of wildlife destroying or injuring property.

The conditions for killing wildlife vary, based primarily on the classification of the wildlife species, the imminent nature of the threat to damage private property, the type of private property damage, and the preventive and nonlethal methods employed by the person prior to the damage event. Additional conditions defined by the department may also be important, depending on individual situations. Killing wildlife to address private property damage is subject to all other state and federal laws including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 220 WAC.

(1) It is unlawful to kill protected wildlife or endangered species (as defined in RCW 77.08.010) unless authorized by commission rule or with a permit from the department, with the following additional requirements:

(a) Federally listed threatened or endangered species will require federal permits or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.

(b) All migratory birds are federally protected and may require a federal permit or federal authority, in addition to a state permit.

(2) Killing wildlife causing damage to a commercial crop or to livestock.

It is permissible to kill unclassified wildlife, predatory birds, and game animals that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or attacking livestock or other domestic animals, under the following conditions:

(a) Predatory birds other than crows and magpies (defined in RCW 77.08.010) and unclassified wildlife that are in the act of damaging commercial crops or attacking livestock or other domestic animals may be killed with the express permission of the crop, livestock, domestic animals, or property owner at any time on private property, to protect domestic animals, livestock, or commercial crops.

(b) It is unlawful to take crows or magpies in violation of requirements published in Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), Sec. 21.43.

(c) If an owner has attempted nonlethal damage control techniques and acquires verbal or written approval from the department, they may kill an individual (one) deer or elk during the physical act of damaging commercial crops within a twelve-month period. The owner must notify the department within twenty-four hours of kill. The department will document animals harvested under this subsection and will ensure harvest is consistent with herd management objectives developed cooperatively with comanagers where available.

(d) Multiple deer or elk may be killed if they are in the act of damaging commercial crops if the owner, owner's immediate family member, agent of the owner, or owner's documented employee is issued damage prevention or kill permits and the owner has a valid, written damage prevention cooperative agreement with the department.

(e) An owner may kill an individual (one) black bear or cougar during the physical act of attacking livestock or domestic animals with or without an agreement or permit within a twelve-month period. The owner must notify the department within twenty-four hours of kill.

(3) Killing wildlife causing damage or killing wildlife to prevent private property damage.

(a) Predatory birds other than crows and magpies (as defined in RCW 77.08.010), unclassified wildlife, and eastern gray squirrels may be killed by the owner of private property, owner's immediate family, agent of the owner, or the owner's documented employee with the express permission of the private real property owner at any time, to prevent private property damage on private real property.

(b) It is unlawful to take crows or magpies in violation of requirements published in Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), Sec. 21.43.

(c) Subject to subsection (7) of this section, the following list of wildlife species may be killed by the owner of the property, owner's immediate family member, agent of the owner, owner's documented employee, or licensed hunters/trappers in a lawful manner with the express permission of the private real property owner, when causing damage to private property: Raccoon, fox, bobcat, beaver, muskrat, mink, river otter, weasel, hare, and cottontail rabbits.

(d) The department may make agreements with landowners to prevent private property damage by wildlife. The agreements may authorize permits to remove animal(s) to abate private property damage.

(e) Landowners are encouraged to allow general season hunting and trapping on their property to help minimize damage potential and concerns.

(4) Wildlife control operators may assist property owners under the conditions of their certification or permits to remove animals causing damage.

(5) Tribal members may assist property owners under the conditions of valid comanagement agreements between tribes and the department. Tribes must be in compliance with the agreements including, but not limited to, adhering to reporting requirements, possession, and harvest restrictions.

(6) Hunting licenses and/or associated tags are not required to kill wildlife under this section unless the killing is pursuant to subsections (2)(c) and (3)(b) of this section. Hunters and trappers participating in harvesting wildlife under this section must comply with provisions of each permit. Tribal members operating under subsection (5) of this section are required to meet tribal hunting license, tag, and permit requirements.

(7) Except as specifically provided in a permit from the department or a rule of the commission, people taking wildlife under this rule are subject to the laws and rules of the state.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, and 77.12.240. WSR 20-12-080 (Order 20-76), § 220-440-060, filed 6/1/20, effective 7/2/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-060, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-051, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-051, filed 11/4/13, effective 12/5/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.36.120. WSR 13-05-003 (Order 13-19), § 232-36-051, filed 2/6/13, effective 3/9/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, and 77.36.030. WSR 10-23-026 (Order 10-291), § 232-36-051, filed 11/8/10, effective 12/9/10. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-051, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-070 Use of body-gripping traps and exceptions. (1)**

It is unlawful to trap for wild animals with body-gripping traps without a special permit from the director.

(2) Body-gripping traps, including conibear-type traps in water, as defined in RCW 77.15.192 may be used for the following purposes with a special trapping permit issued by the director:

(a) To protect public health and safety, in consultation with the department of health or the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

(b) To abate damages caused to private property, domestic animals, livestock or timber, which cannot be reasonably abated by nonlethal control tools. Any person requesting a special trapping permit must apply in writing, stating the threat or damages, the nonlethal control methods attempted or why they cannot be applied, and agree to

use the above traps for no more than thirty days under the permit granted, pursuant to RCW 77.15.194 and WAC 220-417-040.

(c) To protect threatened or endangered species, if such traps are used by department employees or agents of the state.

(d) To conduct wildlife research, except that conibear-type traps are prohibited for this purpose.

(3) Traps must be checked every twenty-four hours and animals removed, pursuant to RCW 77.15.194.

(4) It is unlawful to trap within thirty feet of any exposed animal carcass, meat bait or nonedible game parts which are visible to flying raptors, except that nothing in this section prohibits department employees or agents of the state from trapping within thirty feet of exposed animal carcass, meat bait or nonedible game parts.

(5) Animals taken with the use of a body-gripping trap may not be retained and must be disposed as conditioned in the special trapping permit or as specified in WAC 220-440-090. Raw fur may only be retained for personal use or educational purposes which do not result in retail sale or commerce.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-070, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-054, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16.]

**WAC 220-440-080 Killing wolves attacking domestic animals.** The commission is authorized, pursuant to RCW 77.36.030, to establish the limitations and conditions on killing or trapping wildlife that is causing damage on private property. The department may authorize, pursuant to RCW 77.12.240 the killing of wildlife destroying or injuring property. Killing wildlife to address private property damage is subject to all other state and federal laws including, but not limited to, Titles 77 RCW and 220 WAC.

(1) An owner of domestic animals, the owner's immediate family member, the agent of an owner, or the owner's documented employee may kill one gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) without a permit issued by the director, regardless of its state classification, if the wolf is attacking their domestic animals.

(a) This section applies to the area of the state where the gray wolf is not listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.

(b) Any wolf killed under this authority must be reported to the department within twenty-four hours.

(c) The wolf carcass must be surrendered to the department.

(d) The owner of the domestic animal must grant or assist the department in gaining access to the property where the wolf was killed for the purposes of data collection or incident investigation.

(2) If the department finds that a private citizen killed a gray wolf that was not attacking a domestic animal, or that the killing was not consistent with this rule, then that person may be prosecuted for unlawful taking of endangered wildlife under RCW 77.15.120.

(3) In addition to the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, the director may authorize additional removals by permit under the authority of RCW 77.12.240.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-080, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-052, filed 11/4/13, effective 12/5/13.]

**WAC 220-440-090 Disposal of wildlife killed for personal safety or for causing private property damage.** The fish and wildlife commission is authorized pursuant to RCW 77.36.030, to establish the limitations and conditions on disposal of wildlife killed or trapped because they were threatening human safety or causing property damage.

Except as specifically provided in a permit from the department or a rule of the commission, people taking wildlife under this title are subject to the laws and rules of the state including, but not limited to, those found in Titles 77 RCW and 220 WAC. Wildlife taken under this chapter remains the property of the state and may be disposed of in the manner and under the conditions that follow:

(1) Wildlife killed subsequent to a permit provided by the department shall be possessed or disposed of in accordance with permit provisions and consistent with RCW 77.15.170.

(2) Except as otherwise provided, all parts of wildlife killed in protection of private property without a permit authorized by the department must be lawfully disposed of as specified by the department or as otherwise provided in statute, rule, or local ordinance.

(3) Except as otherwise provided, big game animals or parts of big game animals killed in protection of private property without a permit must be reported to the department within twenty-four hours.

(4) Disposal methods: Unless otherwise specified in permits issued by the department:

(a) The person killing wildlife, or their designee, is responsible for disposal of killed wildlife and must dispose of the animal, within twenty-four hours or as soon as feasible, in a manner so as not to become a public or common nuisance or cause pollution of surface or groundwater.

(b) The person responsible for disposal of dead wildlife must dispose of it by burial, landfilling, incineration, composting, rendering, or another method approved (such as natural decomposition) that is not otherwise prohibited by federal, state, or local law or regulation.

(c) A person disposing of dead wildlife by burial must place it so that every part is covered by at least three feet of soil; at a location not less than one hundred feet from any well, spring, stream or other surface waters; not in a low-lying area subject to seasonal flooding; and not in a manner likely to contaminate groundwater.

(d) A person disposing of a dead animal must not bury or compost it within the sanitary control area of a public drinking water supply source.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-090, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-055, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Au-

thority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-055, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-100 Certification of wildlife control operators.**

For purposes of training individuals to assist landowners with employing nonlethal management techniques, or to harass, kill, trap, release, wildlife that is causing damage to private property, the director or his/her designee may certify wildlife control operators (WCOs).

(1) To be eligible to apply for WCO certification, applicants must:

(a) Be at least eighteen years of age;

(b) Must pass the Washington state trapper education exam and possess a minimum of two years experience that demonstrates the knowledge and ability to control wildlife species causing conflict or property damage. Methods of documenting experience include, but are not limited to, possessing a trapper's license for two years, providing a letter of recommendation from a currently certified WCO or trapper, providing evidence being employed in the wildlife abatement field for two years, providing a written statement verifying they are currently working with a certified WCO, or other method as identified by the department;

(c) Take and pass the department's approved WCO basic certification course(s);

(d) Be legally eligible to possess a firearm and without a felony or domestic violence conviction including, but not limited to, convictions under chapter 9.41 RCW, unless firearm possession rights have been restored;

(e) Not have within the last three years:

(i) More than one finding of paid or committed as a final disposition for an infraction under chapter 77.15 RCW; or

(ii) A conviction for a fish and wildlife crime under chapter 77.15 RCW.

(f) Pay the enrollment fee for each certification training/education (RCW 77.12.184). This fee shall be fifty dollars per certification.

(2) The department may grant a WCO certification if the applicant meets the criteria for eligibility in subsection (1) of this section and passes the basic certification courses.

(3) If the department grants WCO certification, the WCO must apply for a permit to lawfully engage in killing, trapping, or dispatching wildlife using a body gripping trap.

(4) WCO certification is valid for three years.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-440-100, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-060, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-060, filed 11/4/13, effective 12/5/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-060, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-110 Use of wildlife control operators to address wildlife interactions.** The director or director's designee may issue permits to persons that fulfill the requirements to become a certified wildlife control operator (WCO) for purposes of assisting property owners in managing animals causing damage to private property. Only persons meeting the WCO certification requirements qualify for such a permit.

(1) Certified WCOs may use nonbody-gripping traps or body-gripping traps with a special trapping permit, outside of designated harvest season to capture wildlife causing damage or creating an animal problem, as defined in RCW 77.15.192.

(2) WCOs with a valid trapping license may retain raw fur of wildlife taken using a special trapping permit, for personal use or educational purposes that does not result in retail sale or commerce. The carcass must be disposed of in a lawful manner according to WAC 220-440-090.

(3) WCOs who trap wildlife under the authority of a department permit may not release wildlife outside of the property boundary where they were captured without a permit from the department, except for beaver released according to RCW 77.32.585, or dispose of such wildlife without the consent of the property owner where wildlife is to be disposed.

(4) It is unlawful to trap, harass, or otherwise control wildlife on the property of another for a fee without a WCO certification.

(5) WCOs must submit a complete annual report of all control activity as directed by the department. Failure to submit a report may result in revocation of the WCO's certification or permits and denial of future certifications or permits.

(6) The department may develop additional conditions and procedures to include training requirements for WCOs consistent with this rule.

(7) WCO certification and associated permits will be revoked and future certification and permits may be denied by the director or director's designee if the department determines:

(a) Information contained in a WCO's application was inaccurate or false;

(b) The WCO fails to comply with department statutes or rules;

(c) The WCO violates a trapping or other fish and wildlife law;  
or

(d) The WCO is no longer eligible to possess a firearm, has been convicted of a felony or domestic violence conviction including, but not limited to, convictions under chapter 9.41 RCW.

(8) Revocation of certifications and permits shall remain in effect until all issues pertaining to revocation are resolved.

(9) If the initial application or the application to renew a WCO's certification is denied or revoked, the department will provide the applicant, in writing, a notice containing a statement of the reason(s) for the denial or revocation.

(a) The applicant may request an appeal to contest the denial or revocation pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW. The department must receive an appeal request in writing within twenty days from the mailing date of the notice of denial or revocation. Address appeal requests to WDFW Legal Services Office, 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091.

(b) A notice contested by written appeal is final when that proceeding ends in a final order pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW, or is otherwise dismissed.

(c) If there is no timely request for an appeal, then the department's denial or revocation of the permit is final and effective on the 21st calendar day following the mailing date of the notice of denial or revocation.

(10) WCO certification is valid for three years.

(11) A WCO who provides false or misleading information in his or her WCO certification application may be subject to prosecution under RCW 9A.76.175 or 40.16.030. A WCO who fails to comply with department statutes or rules as required by his or her WCO certification and associated permit may be subject to prosecution under RCW 77.15.750. A WCO who violates trapping or other fish and wildlife laws may be subject to prosecution under the appropriate statute in Title 77 RCW for that crime or infraction.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-110, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-065, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-065, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-120 Report required of certified wildlife control operators.** All wildlife control operators (WCOs) must report all WCO related activity, regardless of trapping success or whether they trapped or not for the previous year on or before April 20th of each year.

(1) Reports must be made using the department's designated WCO annual report form or web-based WCO reporting system.

(2) If a WCO chooses to report using the WCO annual report form versus the web-based WCO reporting system, it is the responsibility of the certified WCO to obtain a form from the department and ensure the form is received by Washington department of fish and wildlife as conditioned on the form, prior to the reporting deadline.

(3) A WCO who fails to report his or her activity by April 20th will be in violation of reporting requirements.

(4) Knowingly providing false or misleading information on reports is considered a gross misdemeanor per RCW 77.15.270.

(5) Failure to report trapping activity as required under this section is an infraction, punishable under RCW 77.15.160.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-440-120, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-066, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16.]

**WAC 220-440-130 Limitations to managing damage caused by big game on private property.** Pursuant to this section the department shall establish guidelines for assisting landowners with minimizing big game damage to private property. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the department to seek landowners that may be experiencing damage. It is incumbent upon the landowner to notify the department if they are experiencing damage.

(1) A landowner, lessee, or employee of and on behalf of the landowner may contact the department for assistance upon recognition of a damage or depredation event.

(2) Upon confirmation of damage or depredation, the department will offer assistance and work cooperatively with the landowner, lessee, or employee of the landowner on damage prevention measures.

(a) Damage prevention measures offered by the department shall be reasonable, fiscally responsible, and deemed effective in abating damage by the wildlife damage management profession. New techniques may be employed to determine feasibility.

(b) Practical long-term response for damage resolution shall be considered and written into agreements when feasible.

(3) The department will document when prevention measures are rejected by the landowner, lessee, or employee of the landowner.

(4) If the landowner, lessee, or employee of the landowner, rejects prevention measures offered by the department:

(a) The department is not required to take further action if at least three attempts to offer the prescribed prevention measures have been rejected.

(b) The landowner, lessee, or employee of the landowner may submit, within thirty days of offer of preventative measures, a written refusal statement documenting reasons supported by facts why they reject the prescribed measures and offer alternative solutions with justification. This written refusal statement must be submitted to the department and illustrate that the prevention measures prescribed by the department will not result in lessening the damage or depredation and/or would cause physical damage to persons or property.

(i) The department shall take no further action until a written refusal statement has been received by the department and approved by the director or director's designee for assistance to continue.

(ii) If the written refusal letter is approved by the director or director's designee, the department may continue working with the landowner to develop alternative measures.

(5) A landowner, lessee, or employee of the landowner, is ineligible for a compensation claim and the department shall take no further action unless agreed upon prevention measures have been employed.

(6) Nothing in this section prohibits a landowner, lessee, or employee of the landowner, from killing wildlife pursuant to WAC 220-440-060.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-130, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-090, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16.]

**WAC 220-440-140 Payment for deer and elk commercial crop damage—Eligibility and limitations.** Owners, who have worked with the department to prevent deer and elk damage, but continue to experience commercial crop losses, may be eligible to file a damage claim and receive cash compensation from money appropriated by the legislature.

Eligibility:

Damages payable under this section are limited to the lost or diminished value of a commercial crop, whether growing or harvested, and

will only be paid to the owner of the crop at the time of damage, without assignment.

Cash compensation for claims from deer and elk damage does not include damage to other real or personal property, including other vegetation or animals, lost profits, consequential damages, or any other related damages.

The department is authorized to pay up to the amount provided in RCW 77.36.130.

Limitations:

Claims for cash compensation will be denied when:

- (1) The claim is for a noncommercial or an ineligible crop;
  - (2) The owner of the commercial crop does not meet the definition of "eligible farmer" in RCW 82.08.855 (4)(b)(i) through (iv);
  - (3) The loss estimate is less than \$1,000;
  - (4) The owner does not have a valid damage prevention cooperative agreement signed by the owner and the department or a waiver signed by the director and does not provide a department approved checklist of the preventative and nonlethal means that have been employed to prevent damage;
  - (5) The owner has not complied with the terms and conditions of his or her agreement(s) with the department;
  - (6) An owner or lessee has accepted noncash compensation to offset crop damage in lieu of cash consistent with conditions of the damage prevention cooperative agreement with the department. Acceptance of noncash compensation will constitute full and final payment for crop damages within the growing season of the damaged crop or for the time period specified by the department in writing to the owner;
  - (7) An owner or lessee has denied the department's offer of cost-share fencing as a long-term preventative measure;
  - (8) The owner or lessee has denied prevention measures offered by the department. The prevention measures offered shall be applicable, legal, practical, and industry recognized;
  - (9) Damages to the commercial crops claimed are covered by insurance or are eligible for payment from other entities. Any portion of the actual deer or elk damage not covered by others that exceeds \$1,000 is eligible for compensation from the department;
- The department may delay completion of processing the claim until the insurance claim or other third-party entities' claim process has either been paid or denied. After the third party claim has been paid or denied, the department's claim processing will continue;
- (10) The property where the damage occurred was not open to public hunting consistent with WAC 220-440-190 for the species, deer or elk, causing the damage, unless, as determined by the department, the property is inconsistent with hunting or hunting would not address the damage problem. This includes all properties owned or leased by the owner adjacent to, contiguous to, or in the vicinity of the property where crop damage occurred;
  - (11) The crop is grown or stored on public property;
  - (12) The owner or lessee fails to provide on-site access to the department or designee for inspection and investigation of alleged damage or to verify eligibility for a claim;
  - (13) The owner has not provided a completed written claim form and all other required information, or met required timelines prescribed within WAC 220-440-150;
  - (14) The owner fails to sign a statement affirming that the facts and supporting documents are truthful to the best of the owner's knowledge;

(15) The owner or designee harvested commercial crops prior to providing a 72 hour notice to the department;

(16) The department will prioritize payment for commercial crop damage as set forth in RCW 77.36.100. The claimant must provide records in support of the prioritization method as proscribed therein. Before payment, claims in the current fiscal year will be prioritized after all crop damage claims have been received and approved, and any claim appeals have been resolved.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, and 77.36.120. WSR 25-15-035 (Order 24-10), s 220-440-140, filed 7/8/25, effective 8/8/25. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.020, 77.36.080, 77.36.100, and 77.36.130. WSR 24-22-007 (Order 24-09), s 220-440-140, filed 10/23/24, effective 11/23/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and re-codified as § 220-440-140, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-100, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.36.120. WSR 13-05-003 (Order 13-19), § 232-36-100, filed 2/6/13, effective 3/9/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-100, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-150 Application for cash compensation for deer or elk commercial crop damage—Procedure.** The department shall develop claim procedures and application forms consistent with this section for cash compensation for commercial crop damage.

Filing a claim:

(1) Claimants who have met the requirements of WAC 220-440-140, yet still experience commercial crop loss, may file a claim for cash compensation.

(2) The claimant must notify the department within 72 hours of discovery of crop damage and at least 72 hours prior to harvest of the claimed crop.

(3) A complete written claim and completed crop assessment must be submitted to the department within 60 days of harvest.

(4) Claimants may only file one claim per year. Multiple partners in a farming operation are considered one claimant. Operations involving multiple partners must designate a "primary grower" to receive payment from the department.

(5) The claim form declaration must be signed, affirming that the information provided is factual and truthful per the certification set out in RCW 9A.72.085, before the department will process the claim.

(6) In addition to a completed claim form, a claimant must provide:

(a) A copy of claimant's Schedule F of Form 1040, Form 1120, or other applicable forms filed with the Internal Revenue Service or other documentation indicating the claimant's gross sales or harvested value of commercial crops for the previous tax year.

(b) The assessment method used is consistent with WAC 220-440-160, valuation of property damage.

(c) Proof of ownership of claimed commercial crops or contractual lease of claimed commercial crops consistent with department procedural requirements for submission of documents.

(d) Written documentation of approved methodology used to assess and determine final crop loss and value.

(e) Records documenting average yield on claimed crop and parcel, certified yield reports, production reports and weight certificates completed at the time weighed for claimed year, and other applicable documents that support yield loss and current market price. Current market price will be determined less transportation and cleaning costs when applicable.

(f) A declaration signed under penalty of perjury as provided in RCW 9A.72.085, indicating that the claimant is eligible for the claim, meets eligibility requirements listed under this section, and that all claim evaluation and assessment information in the claim application is true and accurate to the best knowledge of the claimant.

(g) A copy of the insurance policy, completed claim forms, and payment records on the commercial crop where loss is claimed.

(h) Copies of any applications for other sources of loss compensation and any payment records or denial documentation.

Damage claim assessment:

(7) Completion of a damage claim assessment for the amount and value of commercial crop loss is the responsibility of the claimant. A crop damage evaluation and assessment must be conducted by a licensed crop insurance adjustor in cooperation with the claimant:

(a) The claimant must submit a damage claim assessment prepared by a qualified crop insurance adjustor. A qualified adjustor means a crop adjustor licensed by the state of Washington and certified by the federal crop insurance service.

An adjustor who is under contract with the department that has a current state of Washington insurance adjuster license with at least four years of verifiable deer and elk caused crop damage investigation experience may substitute that experience for the federal crop insurance certification.

(b) The department will provide the claimant with a list of approved contracted department adjustors. The claimant may select an adjustor from the approved list and work with the department and the adjustor to arrange for the completion of a crop damage assessment or select a qualified adjustor of their own choosing.

(i) If the claimant selects an adjustor from the approved list, the department will provide the adjustor written authorization to proceed with an assessment. Adjustor fees, including for multiple site visits, will be the shared responsibility of the owner and the department. The claimant portion of each assessment visit fee may not exceed one half or a maximum of \$600, whichever is smaller, and will be deducted from the final payment.

(ii) If, at the end of the claim evaluation process, no payment for the claim is made, the claimant's portion of a contracted adjustor's assessment fees shall be billed to the claimant for prompt reimbursement to the department and funds returned to the appropriate claim fund source.

(iii) If the claimant selects a qualified adjustor of their own choosing, then the claimant accepts full responsibility for the assessment fees.

(c) The department or the claimant may accept the damage claim assessment provided by the qualified adjustor or may hire a qualified adjustor of their choosing and conduct a separate assessment or evalu-

ation of the crop loss amount and value. The party hiring an adjustor to conduct a separate assessment or evaluation is responsible for payment of all related fees.

(8) Disagreement between the claimant and the department over the crop loss value may be settled through an adjudicative proceeding pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW and WAC 220-440-230, subject to the limit provided in RCW 77.36.130.

Settlement of claims:

(9) Compensation paid by the department, in addition to any other compensation received by the claimant, may not exceed the total value of the assessed crop loss.

(10) The claimant will be notified by the department upon completion of the evaluation and has 60 days to accept or appeal the department's offer for settlement or denial of the claim, or the claim offer or denial is considered accepted and not subject to appeal.

(11) The department will prioritize payment for commercial crop damage as set forth in RCW 77.36.100.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, and 77.36.120. WSR 25-15-035 (Order 24-10), s 220-440-150, filed 7/8/25, effective 8/8/25. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.020, 77.36.080, 77.36.100, and 77.36.130. WSR 24-22-007 (Order 24-09), s 220-440-150, filed 10/23/24, effective 11/23/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-150, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-110, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-110, filed 11/4/13, effective 12/5/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-110, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-160 Valuation methods for commercial crop damage assessment.** Several methods may be used to determine the extent of a crop damaged by deer and elk and the lost value of the commercial crop resulting from the damage. Assessment methods used by qualified crop adjustors under WAC 220-440-150 will be considered by the department. Evaluation of crop losses must consider other impacts to crop production including, but not limited to, fertilization, irrigation, precipitation, weather, timing of planting or harvest, and weed control and shall deduct those impacts from the loss value calculation. At least one of the following methods listed must be used to assess the crop damage:

(1) Amount consumed - Relies on wildlife-proof exclosures in the field; clipping similar sized plots inside and outside of exclosures; then comparing yields.

(2) Amount of stored crops consumed or damaged - Determine the bales or pounds of stored crops consumed or destroyed; then determine replacement value.

(3) Replacement value of horticultural trees lost as a result of damage; partial loss due to damage can be estimated per tree based on the percentage destroyed.

(4) Damage vs. undamaged areas - Using random sampling methods to compare the yields of damaged to undamaged portions of a field or two similar fields can provide an estimate of loss. Comparing similar fields assumes the fields are truly "similar" (soil type, aspect, slope, irrigation, fertilization, stand age, etc.).

(5) Animal use - Count the number of animals causing damage and the number of days they were present; then estimate the percentage of daily intake provided by the crop (generally less than 50 percent), and the amount of waste, trampling, or trailing; the result should also consider the timing of the damage and potential recovery of the vegetation prior to crop harvest.

(6) Decrease from average yield - Historic yields can be used for comparison; the difference between average yield and current yield may shed light on the extent of damage; changing weather or crop growing conditions from one year to the next make this technique less reliable.

(7) The department may require additional information about the assessment process used and may request additional assessment be undertaken, or may request additional documentation in order to consider the assessment accurate and complete.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, and 77.36.120. WSR 25-15-035 (Order 24-10), s 220-440-160, filed 7/8/25, effective 8/8/25. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), re-codified as § 220-440-160, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-120, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-170 Payment for livestock damage and other domestic animals—Limitations.** Commercial livestock owners who have worked with the department to prevent depredation but continue to experience losses, or who experience unforeseen losses, may be eligible to file a damage claim and receive cash compensation. Cash compensation will only be provided to livestock owners by the department when specifically appropriated by the legislature or other funding entity. Damages payable under this section are limited to the lost or diminished value of livestock caused by wild bears, cougars, or wolves and shall be paid only to the owner of the livestock, without assignment. Cash compensation for livestock losses from bears, cougars, and wolves shall not include damage to other real or personal property, including other vegetation or animals, consequential damages, or any other damages except veterinarian services may be eligible. However, livestock owners under written agreement with the department will be compensated consistent with their agreement which may extend beyond the limitations in this section. The department is authorized to pay the market value for the eligible livestock or guard dog lost or the market value of indirect livestock losses as a result of harassment by wolves, including reduced weight gains for livestock, and no more than ten thousand dollars to the livestock owner per claim.

Claims for cash compensation will be denied when:

(1) Funds for livestock compensation have not been specifically appropriated by the legislature or other funding entity;

(2) The claim is for livestock other than sheep, cattle, or horses, when only state funds are available; or any domestic animals not allowed by the funding entity;

(3) The owner fails to provide the department with an approved checklist of the preventative and nonlethal means that have been employed, or the owner failed to comply with the terms and conditions of his or her agreement(s) with the department;

(4) The owner has accepted noncash compensation to offset livestock losses in lieu of cash. Acceptance of noncash compensation will constitute full and final payment for livestock losses within a fiscal year;

(5) Damages to the livestock or other domestic animals claimed are covered by insurance or are eligible for payment from nonprofit organizations. However, any portion of the damage not covered by nonprofit organizations is eligible for filing a claim with the department;

(6) The owner fails to provide on-site access to the department or designee for inspection and investigation of alleged attack or to verify eligibility for claim;

(7) The owner has not provided a completed written claim form and all other required information, or met required timelines prescribed within this chapter;

(8) No claim will be processed if the owner fails to sign a statement affirming that the facts and supporting documents are truthful to the best of the owner's knowledge; or

(9) The owner or designee has salvaged or rendered the carcass or allowed it to be scavenged without an investigation completed under the direction of the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.36.170, and 77.36.180. WSR 18-04-049 (Order 18-15), § 220-440-170, filed 1/31/18, effective 3/3/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-440-170, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-200, filed 11/4/13, effective 12/5/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.36.120. WSR 13-05-003 (Order 13-19), § 232-36-200, filed 2/6/13, effective 3/9/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-200, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-180 Application for cash compensation for livestock damage or domestic animal—Procedure.** Pursuant to this section, the department may distribute money specifically appropriated by the legislature or other funding entity to pay commercial livestock or guard dog losses caused by wild bear, cougar, or wolves up to the amount set forth in RCW 77.36.130. The department will develop claim procedures and application forms consistent with this section for cash compensation of commercial livestock or guard dog losses. Partnerships with other public and private organizations to assist with completion of applications, assessment of losses, and to provide funding for compensation are encouraged.

Filing a claim:

(1) Claimant must notify the department within 24 hours of discovery of livestock or other domestic animal attack or as soon as feasible.

(2) Damage claim assessment of amount and value of eligible livestock or guard dog loss is the primary responsibility of the claimant.

(3) Investigation of the loss and review and approval of the assessment will be conducted by the department:

(a) The claimant must provide access to department staff or designees to investigate the cause of death or injury to eligible livestock or guard dogs and use reasonable measures to protect evidence at the depredation site.

(b) Federal officials may be responsible for the investigation when it is suspected that the attack was by a federally listed species.

(4) To be eligible a claimant must submit a written statement, electronic or hard copy, within 30 days of discovery of a loss to indicate his or her intent to file a claim.

(5) A complete claim package must be submitted to the department within 90 days of a discovery of an attack on livestock or guard dogs to be eligible for compensation.

(6) A claim form declaration must be signed, affirming that the information provided is factual and truthful, per the certification set out in RCW 9A.72.085 before the department will process the claim.

(7) In addition to a completed claim form, a claimant must provide:

(a) Proof of legal ownership or contractual lease of claimed livestock.

(b) Records documenting the value of the livestock or guard dog depending upon the determination for cause of loss.

(c) Declaration signed under penalty of perjury indicating that the claimant is eligible for the claim, meets eligibility requirements listed under this chapter and in RCW 77.36.100, 77.36.110, and 77.36.120, and all claim evaluation and assessment information in the claim application is to the best knowledge of the claimant true and accurate.

(d) A copy of any insurance policy covering loss claimed.

(e) Copies of applications for other sources of loss compensation and any payment or denial documentation.

(f) The department approved checklist of preventative measures that have been deployed, or documented compliance with the terms and conditions of the claimant's agreement with the department, or the director approved waiver.

Settlement of claims:

(8) Subject to funds appropriated to pay for livestock or guard dog losses, undisputed claims will be paid up to ten thousand dollars.

(9) Valuation of the lost livestock;

(a) The department may utilize the services of an independent certified appraiser to assist in the evaluation of livestock or guard dog claims.

(b) For losses caused by wolves, the compensation value for livestock or guard dogs will be based on the value at the time the animal would normally be sold at market or the cost to replace the animal, and based on comparable types and/or weight of livestock or guard dogs, such as comparable calves, steers, cows, ewes, and lambs; except bulls will be replaced based on the actual purchase price prorated on a four-year depreciation cycle minus salvage value if applicable. The market or replacement value will be determined by an independent cer-

tified appraiser, the sales receipts from the most recent sale of comparable animals by the owner, or the sales receipts from the next sale of comparable animals by the owner.

(c) The payment amount for wolf depredations to livestock will be based on the following criteria:

(i) Where the livestock grazing site was greater than or equal to 100 acres, there is a rebuttable presumption that the number of commercial livestock wolf depredations that are eligible for compensation is twice the number of wolf livestock depredations documented by the department, unless all remaining livestock are accounted for. On these grazing sites, the payment for each confirmed wolf depredation will be the full market value for two commercial livestock. The payment for each probable wolf depredation will be half the full market value for two commercial livestock. Payments will be reduced by half if all the remaining livestock are accounted for.

(ii) Where the livestock grazing site was less than 100 acres, there is a rebuttable presumption that all the commercial livestock wolf depredations are discovered by the livestock owner. On these grazing sites, the payment for each confirmed wolf depredation will be the full market value for one commercial livestock. The payment for each probable wolf depredation will be half the full market value for one commercial livestock.

(d) For losses caused by bear or cougar, livestock value will be determined by the market value for an animal of the same breed, sex, and average weight at the time the animal is lost.

(10) Claims for higher than normal livestock losses, reduced weight gains, or reduced pregnancy rates due to harassment of livestock caused by wolves must include:

(a) At least three consecutive years of records preceding the year of the claim. Claims will be assessed for losses in excess of the preceding three-year running average;

(b) The losses must occur on large pastures or range land used for grazing, lambing, or calving where regular monitoring of livestock is impractical (and therefore discovery of carcasses infeasible) as determined by the department;

(c) Verification by the department that wolves are occupying the area;

(d) The losses cannot be reasonably explained by other causes;

(e) Compliance with the department's preventative measures checklist, or damage prevention cooperative agreement, or a waiver signed by the director.

(11) Compensation paid by the department combined with any other compensation may not exceed the total assessed value of the loss.

(12) Upon completion of an evaluation, the department will notify the claimant of its decision to either deny the claim or make a settlement offer (order). The claimant has 60 days from the date received to accept, sign, and mail to the department the original offer for settlement of the claim. If the claimant wishes to appeal the offer, they must request an informal resolution or adjudicative proceeding as described in WAC 220-440-230. The appeal must be in writing and may be mailed or submitted by email. If no written acceptance or request for appeal is received within 60 days of receipt of the settlement offer, the offer is considered rejected and not subject to appeal.

(13) If the claimant accepts the department's offer, the department will provide payment to the claimant within 30 days from receipt of the written acceptance document(s).

(14) The department will prioritize payment for livestock losses as set forth in RCW 77.36.100, 77.36.170, and 77.36.180.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.020, 77.36.080, 77.36.100, and 77.36.130. WSR 24-22-007 (Order 24-09), s 220-440-180, filed 10/23/24, effective 11/23/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.36.170, and 77.36.180. WSR 18-04-049 (Order 18-15), § 220-440-180, filed 1/31/18, effective 3/3/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-180, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-210, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-210, filed 11/4/13, effective 12/5/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-210, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-190 Public hunting requirements.** "Public hunting" generally means that land is open for licensed hunters. The intent of this provision is to allow hunting at an appropriate time, manner, and level to help prevent property damage.

As specified in WAC 220-440-140, cash compensation for crop damage claims will only be paid when the property where the crop damage occurred is open to public hunting; unless the department determines that hunting is not practical. Public hunting is defined as:

(1) The landowner opens the property on which the damage or loss is claimed for general access to all licensed hunters during the season for the species causing damage, other species may be included to provide additional hazing, prior to the occurrence of damage; or

(2) The landowner has entered into and complied with any agreement with the department covering the land(s) on which the damage is claimed. Agreements shall require that:

(a) The land is open to general access to licensed hunters; or

(b) The landowner allows the department to select a limited number of hunters who are authorized to access the land to minimize or prevent damage; or

(c) The landowner and the department determine the number of hunters, timing, weapon options and the required permission for access to hunt on the landowner's property to effectively minimize damage.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-190, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-300, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-300, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-200 Damage prevention permit hunts—Deer, elk, and turkey.** (1) A landowner may enter into a damage prevention cooperative agreement (contract) with WDFW. The landowner may receive a damage prevention permit, if deemed necessary by the department. Hunts conducted pursuant to a damage prevention permit must adhere to the special seasons provided in this section. Nothing in this section prevents a landowner from protecting their property.

(a) The landowner agrees not to file a damage claim unless damage exceeds the threshold established by the department and conditioned in the damage prevention cooperative agreement, except for Elk Areas 3721 and 3722. Landowners will work with the department to allow access to hunters during the general hunting seasons as determined by the department.

(b) A damage prevention cooperative agreement may include:

(i) An approved checklist of the reasonable preventative and non-lethal means that must be employed prior to lethal removal;

(ii) A description of the properties where lethal removal is allowed;

(iii) Other conditions developed within department procedural documents.

(c) A damage prevention permit issued to a landowner by the department and provided to the hunter by the landowner authorizes the hunter to use a deer or elk damage license or tag to hunt and take a legal animal as prescribed on the permit.

(d) A damage prevention permit may include:

(i) A description of the properties where lethal removal is allowed;

(ii) The species and sex of the animal that may be taken; the terms of the permit; the dates when lethal removal is authorized; and

(iii) Other conditions developed within department procedural documents.

(2) **General deer and elk removal criteria:**

(a) Only persons with a damage prevention permit may hunt and take one deer or one elk as designated on the permit.

(b) Hunters must have a valid big game license, damage deer/elk license or tag to participate in a damage prevention hunt during the prescribed damage prevention permit period, unless the damage permit specifies otherwise.

(c) Hunters who fill their deer or elk damage tag are ineligible to participate in another damage prevention hunt utilizing a damage prevention permit during the same season in which they already harvested wildlife under a damage prevention hunt; this does not preclude a landowner from utilizing a kill permit or their right to protect their property under WAC 220-440-060.

(d) Persons participating with a damage prevention permit may only hunt within the prescribed area, during the specified season dates, and for the specified animal (e.g., antlerless, deer, elk) as indicated on the permit. If a deer or elk is wounded inside the damage hunt area, it may be pursued outside permit boundaries with adjacent landowner permission.

(e) A hunter who fails to comply with this subsection may be ineligible to participate in the next year's damage permit opportunities.

(3) **Deer:**

(a) Tag Required: Deer hunters must have a current valid big game license, damage deer hunting license or tag and a damage prevention permit on his/her person.

(b) Hunting Method: Any legal weapon (or as specified on the damage prevention permit).

(c) Location: Statewide.

(i) Season Framework: July 1 - March 31.

(ii) Legal Deer: Antlerless Only.

(iii) Kill Quota: 300 per license year.

(d) Location: Region One.

(i) Season Framework: July 1 - March 31.

(ii) Legal Deer: Antlerless Only.

(iii) Kill Quota: 300 per license year.

(e) Location: GMUs 105-124.

(i) Season Framework: July 1 - March 31.

(ii) Legal Deer: Whitetail Antlerless Only.

(iii) Kill Quota: 300 per license year.

(4) **Elk:**

(a) Tag Required: Elk hunters must have a valid big game license, a damage elk hunting license or tag and damage prevention permit on his/her person.

(b) Hunting Method: Any legal weapon.

(c) Location: Eastern Washington - GMUs 100, 200, and 300 series.

(i) Season Framework: July 1 - March 31.

(ii) Legal Elk: Antlerless Only.

(iii) Kill Quota: 200 per license year.

(d) Location: Western Washington - GMUs 400, 500, and 600 series.

(i) Season Framework: July 1 - March 31.

(ii) Legal Elk: Antlerless Only.

(iii) Kill Quota: 100 per license year.

(e) Location: Hanford Area - GMUs 372 and 379.

(i) Legal Elk: Antlerless Only.

(ii) Season Framework: July 1 - March 31.

(iii) Kill Quota: 70 per license year.

(f) Location: Elk Area 3721.

(i) Legal Elk: Spike or antlerless July 1 - March 31; any bull May 15 - June 30.

(ii) Season Framework: May 15 - March 31; as described in (f)(i) of this subsection.

(iii) Kill Quota: 100 Spike or antlerless per license year; 60 bulls per license year.

(g) Location: GMUs 501-578.

(i) Legal Elk: Antlerless Only.

(ii) Kill Quota: 100 per license year.

(h) Access in Elk Area 3721 may not be sold as a condition of use of these permits. The director may consider damage claims from landowners in Elk Areas 3721 and 3722 who accept these permits and do not charge for access.

(5) **General turkey removal criteria:**

(a) Only persons with a damage prevention permit may hunt and take one turkey as designated on the permit.

(b) Hunters must have a valid small game license and an unfilled turkey tag to participate in a damage prevention hunt during the prescribed damage prevention permit period, unless the damage permit specifies otherwise.

(c) Hunters who fill their turkey tag under a damage permit are ineligible to participate in another damage prevention hunt utilizing

a damage prevention permit during the same season in which they already harvested wildlife under a damage prevention hunt.

(d) Persons participating with a damage prevention permit may only hunt within the prescribed area, during the specified season dates, and for the specified animal as indicated on the permit.

(e) A hunter who fails to comply with this subsection may be ineligible to participate in the next year's damage permit opportunities.

(6) **Turkey:**

(a) Tag Required: Turkey hunter must have an appropriate valid, unaltered, unnotched turkey tag or license on his/her person, along with the damage prevention permit.

(b) Hunting Method: Any legal turkey hunting method.

(c) Season Framework: October 1 - March 1.

(d) Location: Statewide.

(e) Legal Turkey: Either sex.

(f) Kill Quota: 300 per license year.

(7) It is unlawful to violate the provisions of this section. Violation of this section is punishable under RCW 77.15.400, 77.15.410, 77.15.430, or 77.15.750(1) depending on the violation. Hunters who violate this section will be punished under RCW 77.15.400, 77.15.410, 77.15.430 depending on the species hunted and circumstances of the violation.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-200, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-310, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16.]

**WAC 220-440-210 Black bear timber damage depredation permits—Requirements, restrictions, and issuance.** (1) **Purpose.** The purpose of the black bear timber damage permit is to reduce damage to commercial timber caused by black bears peeling and consuming tree parts resulting in permanent damage or death to the tree. Only the owner of private commercial timber, or their designee may apply for a black bear timber damage depredation permit. A black bear timber damage permit allows a person to remove one or more black bears as conditioned on the permit. This section does not apply to federal employees and agents while acting in their official capacities for the purpose of protecting private property.

(2) **Black bear timber damage definitions.** As used in this section and in the context of black bear damage removals for damage to commercial timber, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Commercial timber" means trees that are grown for wood or paper product production where the land for growing is designated as forestland under RCW 84.33.130, or, as determined by WDFW meets the definition listed in RCW 84.33.035(5).

(b) "Timber damage" means there is black bear damage evidence on private commercial timber from springtime of the current calendar year.

(c) "Removal" means the act of killing one or more black bears.

(d) "Use of bait" means the use of a substance placed, exposed, deposited, distributed, scattered, or otherwise used for the purpose

of attracting black bears to an area where one or more persons hunt or intend to hunt them. Bait does not include supplemental feeding in prior years.

(e) "Supplemental feeding" means the establishment and operation of black bear feeding stations, solely to prevent damage to commercial timber.

(f) "Use of dogs" means the use of one or more dogs for hunting under a black bear timber damage permit, or the possession of any dog while in the field under such permit.

(g) "Designated hunter" means a person who is named in a permit to hunt a black bear on behalf of the timber owner.

(3) **Permit conditions.**

(a) All permits issued under this section will be subject to the following conditions:

(i) Permittees and designated hunters must only use the lawful methods and implements allowed for hunting black bears in a general bear season;

(ii) Black bears retained for personal use under a permit count toward the annual black bear bag limit;

(iii) Black bears accompanied by cub(s) shall not be removed;

(iv) The use of bait or use of dogs in exercising the timber damage permit is prohibited;

(v) A black bear timber permit does not authorize trespass;

(vi) The permit is not valid on state or federally owned lands;

(vii) Supplemental feeding must cease, and all visible feed on the ground or in containers must be removed within the permit's designated damage hunt area boundary no later than January 1st of the permit year;

(viii) If the permit's designated damage hunt area is in a GMU located in grizzly bear recovery areas, as identified by the department, permittees and designated hunters must carry proof of successfully completing the annual WDFW online bear identification test or equivalent test from another state;

(ix) Permittees and designated hunters must be identified on, and possess the black bear timber damage permit, or a true copy of the valid permit at all times and in places that black bears are being hunted;

(x) Removals must be reported within 24 hours of taking a bear in accordance with the procedures established in the permit;

(xi) An access or other fee may not be charged to any designated hunter using a bear timber damage permit. Requiring a fully refundable key return deposit is not prohibited;

(xii) A black bear timber damage permit is only valid when signed by the permittee, any designated hunter, and the department permitting representative;

(xiii) The black bear timber damage permit belongs to the state of Washington and may not be transferred or sold;

(xiv) A violation of any condition of the permit may result in revocation of the permit and may render the permittee(s) ineligible for future black bear timber permits as determined by the department.

(b) Based upon WDFW's evaluation of the permit application materials and local environmental conditions, the department may establish permit-specific conditions in individual permits including, but not limited to:

(i) The time, manner, and place the permit is valid to remove one or more black bears;

- (ii) The identity of the designated hunters permitted to hunt under the permit;
  - (iii) Requirements for final disposition of the black bear carcass, as a whole or any black bear parts;
  - (iv) The number of black bears that can be removed under the permit; and
  - (v) Procedures for reporting of any removals, including submission of biological samples and reporting documents.
- (4) **Applying for a black bear timber damage permit.**
- (a) A commercial timber owner, or their designee applicant must complete and submit an application using the current application form to the department's wildlife conflict section manager (or designee);
  - (b) A complete permit application package must contain the following:
    - (i) Name, age, phone, and email for the applicant;
    - (ii) List the timber owner and relationship of the applicant to the timber owner;
    - (iii) Name, contact information for any proposed designated hunters and a signed agreement that if a permit is issued, the designated hunter would be acting under the direction of and on the applicant's behalf;
    - (iv) Photos of current timber damage from the site where the permit is being requested;
    - (v) GPS coordinates for the documented timber damage on the site;
    - (vi) A map denoting the proposed permit area, the relative locations of documented timber damage, and the distance(s) and direction(s) to any known continuing supplemental bear feeding sites;
    - (vii) An attestation that supplemental feeding has not occurred within the area that the applicant is requesting to hunt within since January 1st of the current year, and that no feeding is occurring within the proposed permit boundary;
    - (viii) An attestation that public hunting access was allowed within the requested damage permit area boundaries during the general black bear hunting season within the hunting season immediately prior to the permit request; and
    - (ix) Any additional information that WDFW determines is necessary to make the required determinations in subsection (5) of this section and to determine appropriate individual permit conditions under subsection (3)(b) of this section.
  - (c) The applicant must contact the WDFW wildlife conflict specialist at the appropriate geographic department regional office to arrange for property access for a department representative to visit the site and verify timber damage;
  - (d) The applicant may provide additional supporting information as to the extent of damage if the department proposes restrictions on a requested permit location or timing; and
  - (e) If the applicant seeks a permit in GMUs located in grizzly bear recovery areas, as identified by the department, the applicant and the proposed designated hunters must successfully complete the annual WDFW online bear identification test or equivalent test from another state and carry proof of successful completion.
- (5) **WDFW required determinations.** Before the department issues a permit, the department's wildlife conflict section manager (or designee) must find:
- (a) The applicant has submitted a complete application and completed all steps in the application process;

- (b) The applicant is at least 18 years of age and owns, is employed by, or leases commercial timber;
  - (c) Any proposed designated hunter, other than the applicant, possesses a valid unexpired Washington bear hunting license and tag;
  - (d) Reasonable belief that timber damage will continue if a permit is not issued; and
  - (e) Permit issuance shall not impair the department's ability to meet population objectives.
- (6) **Permit denials.** The department may refuse to issue a black bear timber damage permit to an applicant if:
- (a) Within the last year of the date of the application the applicant:
    - (i) Failed to follow the conditions of a prior black bear timber permit;
    - (ii) Failed to report removal success from a prior permit;
  - (b) The application fails to meet any of the above application requirements for a permit; or
  - (c) The department determines the requested permit would create a safety risk and/or a conservation concern.
- (7) **Permittee-requested permit amendments.** A permit may not be changed, or altered without prior approval by the department. A permittee, or their designee may submit a request in writing for permit amendments. These changes, if approved by the department's wildlife conflict section manager (or designee) in writing, may include:
- (a) Change, or addition of designated hunter;
  - (b) Change to any geographic area; and
  - (c) Change to any permit-specific conditions developed pursuant to subsection (3) (b) of this section.
- (8) **Permittee-requested permit renewal.** A permittee, or their designee may submit a request in writing to the department's wildlife conflict section manager (or designee) for permit renewal. The permittee must submit the following documentation at least five days prior to the permit expiration date:
- (a) A current, completed black bear timber damage permit application form with the updated information; and
  - (b) Documentation demonstrating new or continuing timber damage at the site.
- (9) **Permit revocation.** The department may revoke a black bear timber damage permit for the following reasons:
- (a) Failure to follow any of the conditions of a black bear timber permit;
  - (b) The department discovers an overarching safety concern for the permit area;
  - (c) The department discovers a conservation concern from continued use of the permit; or
  - (d) The department discovers false information was provided when the person originally applied for the permit.
- (10) **Appeals.** For any permittee or applicant whose permit is denied, revoked, or modified under this section wishing to challenge a permitting decision, the provisions of this subsection shall apply.
- Informal resolution:
- (a) If the permittee or applicant would like to discuss a department permit denial, revocation, or modification, they may request a meeting by notifying the department wildlife conflict section manager in writing within 10 days of receiving the notice of department action;

(b) A department representative and the permittee or applicant will meet and attempt to come to mutual resolution;

Formal resolution:

(c) If the parties do not reach a resolution through informal discussions, or the permittee or applicant wishes to appeal the department's permit denial, revocation, or modification, they may request an administrative hearing within 30 days of the decision to appeal the department's action. The department will administer such appeals in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW;

Manner and content of request for an administrative hearing. Each request for adjudicative proceeding shall substantially comply with this subsection.

(d) The request shall be in writing;

(e) The request shall identify the order that the person seeks to contest. This can be done by reference to the number of the order, by reference to the subject and date of the order, or by reference to a copy of the order attached to the request;

(f) The request shall state the grounds upon which the person contests the order. If the person contests the factual basis for the order, the person shall allege the facts that the person contends are relevant to the appeal; and

(g) The request shall identify the relief that the person seeks from the adjudicative proceeding by specifying whether the person asks to have the order vacated, or provisions of the order corrected.

(11) A violation of this section is punishable under the appropriate statute, depending on the circumstances of the violation, including RCW 77.15.160(6), 77.15.410, 77.15.245, and 77.15.750(1).

(12) Nothing within this section limits the department in the exercise of its existing lawful authority to manage black bears for research, safety, protection of property from damage, including timber damage, or any other management purpose.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.36.030, 77.08.030, 77.15.410, and 77.15.750. WSR 24-04-007 (Order 19-07), § 220-440-210, filed 1/25/24, effective 2/25/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-440-210, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-320, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16.]

**WAC 220-440-220 Bear and cougar depredation permit hunts for domestic animal or livestock loss.** This section applies to any person participating in a director-authorized bear or cougar depredation permit hunt for domestic animal or livestock loss pursuant to RCW 77.12.240 or 77.15.245:

(1) Black bear and cougar removal criteria:

(a) A landowner or the landowner's designee may submit a request for removal to the department following the procedures established by the department.

(b) Areas permitted for bear or cougar removal action must have confirmed bear or cougar caused property damage.

(c) The department will verify reported damage.

(d) The department shall ensure bear and cougar removals are consistent with population management objectives.

(2) Hunter selection:

(a) Landowner or landowner's designee may only select hunters authorized by the department to participate in a bear or cougar removal effort.

(b) The landowner or landowner's designee and the hunters participating in the removal will be identified as depredation permittees on depredation permits issued for bear or cougar removal.

(3) Permit required for participation in bear or cougar removal:

(a) If approved for bear or cougar removal action, the department will issue and condition the depredation permit and selected hunters participating in removals under this section must comply with provisions of the depredation permit.

(b) Selected hunter(s) must be in possession of the depredation permit while conducting the removal.

(c) Only hunters whose names appear on the depredation permit may take part in the hunt.

(4) General requirements:

(a) Removals must be reported within twenty-four hours of take. Biological samples required on the permit must be submitted and the carcass must be disposed of within forty-eight hours as conditioned in the depredation permit.

(b) All harvested animals must be disposed of as designated on the permit.

(c) Failure to comply with this section may render the permittee ineligible for future bear or cougar depredation permits as determined by the department.

(d) The depredation permit belongs to the state of Washington. A violation of any condition of the depredation permit may result in revocation of the depredation permit and may render the permittee(s) ineligible for future bear or cougar damage depredation permits; until all issues pertaining to the revocation are resolved at the department's discretion.

(e) A violation of subsection (3) of this section or this subsection (4) are punishable under RCW 77.15.245, 77.15.410, or 77.15.750, depending on the circumstances of the violation.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-440-220, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-330, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16.]

**WAC 220-440-230 Commercial crop or livestock damage claim—Dispute resolution.** For claims where the owner has met all claim eligibility criteria and procedures, but ultimately rejects the written settlement offer (order) for crop or livestock loss and/or value assessment, the provisions of this section shall apply:

Informal resolution:

(1) If the owner rejects the property loss or value assessment and would like to discuss a negotiated settlement, he or she can request a meeting by notifying the department in writing within 10 days of receiving the settlement offer or claim denial (order).

(2) A department representative and the owner or designee(s) will meet and attempt to come to mutual resolution.

(3) A livestock appeals committee may be established with a minimum of six citizen members appointed by the director, and a representative from the department of fish and wildlife to review and recommend a settlement if requested by the claimant or the department. The citizen members must represent a variety of interests including at least: Three statewide organizations representing the interests of livestock owners; two representing wildlife advocates; and one at large.

(4) Monetary compensation or noncash compensation, mutually agreed upon by both the department and owner, shall be binding and constitute full and final payment for claim.

(5) If parties cannot agree upon damages, or the owner wishes to appeal the claim denial or the department's settlement offer (order), the owner may request an adjudicative proceeding consistent with chapter 34.05 RCW within 60 days of receiving a copy of the department's decision.

(6) The request must comply with the following:

(a) The request must be in writing, and the signed document may be mailed or submitted by fax or email;

(b) It must clearly identify the order being contested (or attach a copy of the order);

(c) It must state the grounds on which the order is being contested and include the specific facts of the order that are relevant to the appeal; and

(d) The request must identify the relief being requested from the proceeding (e.g., modifying specific provisions of the order).

(7) The proceeding may only result in the reversal or modification of an order when the preponderance of evidence shows:

(a) The order was not authorized by law or rule;

(b) A fact stated in the order is not supported by substantial evidence;

(c) The award amount offered is inconsistent with applicable procedures; or

(d) Material evidence was made available by the owner at the time of the damage assessment, but was not considered in the order.

(8) The burden of proof is on the appellant (owner) to show that he or she is eligible for a claim and that the damage assessment is reliable (see RCW 77.36.130 (3)).

(9) Findings of the hearings officer are subject to the annual funding appropriated by the legislature and to the limit found in RCW 77.36.130 and payment rules (WAC 220-440-150 and 220-440-180(9)) of the commission.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.020, 77.36.080, 77.36.100, and 77.36.130. WSR 24-22-007 (Order 24-09), s 220-440-230, filed 10/23/24, effective 11/23/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-230, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, chapter 77.36 RCW, and 2013 c 329. WSR 13-22-056 (Order 13-282), § 232-36-400, filed 11/4/13, effective 12/5/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.36.120. WSR 13-05-003 (Order 13-19), § 232-36-400, filed 2/6/13, effective 3/9/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-400, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-240 Unlawful taking or possession of wildlife for personal safety or causing property damage—Penalties.** (1) The unlawful trapping, killing, or possession of wildlife is punishable under Title 77 RCW including, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) RCW 77.15.120 for endangered wildlife;
- (b) RCW 77.15.130 for protected wildlife;
- (c) RCW 77.15.140 for unclassified wildlife;
- (d) RCW 77.15.170 for wildlife wastage;
- (e) RCW 77.15.190 and 77.15.194 for unlawful trapping or traps;
- (f) RCW 77.15.290 for transportation of wildlife;
- (g) RCW 77.15.400 for wild birds;
- (h) RCW 77.15.410 for big game;
- (i) RCW 77.15.420 for illegally taken or possessed wildlife; and
- (j) RCW 77.15.430 for wild animals.

(2) A person trapping or killing wildlife who fails to notify the department pursuant to WAC 220-440-090 may be in violation of RCW 77.15.750(1).

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-440-240, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-500, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-250 Failure to comply with the conditions of permits, provide completed forms, or submit required documents or reports for the purposes of this chapter.** (1) Failure to abide by the conditions of permits is a misdemeanor pursuant to RCW 77.15.750.

(2) Failure to provide reports or comply with the conditions of landowner agreements is an infraction pursuant to RCW 77.15.160.

(3) Failure to comply with the conditions of wildlife control operator certification or permits is a misdemeanor pursuant to RCW 77.15.750.

(4) A person who provides false or misleading information required by this chapter may be in violation subject to prosecution under RCW 9A.76.175 or 40.16.030.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-440-250, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.150, 77.15.245, and chapter 77.36 RCW. WSR 16-04-066 (Order 16-18), § 232-36-510, filed 1/28/16, effective 2/28/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 10-13-182 (Order 10-156), § 232-36-510, filed 6/23/10, effective 7/24/10.]

**WAC 220-440-260 Prohibition of feeding deer, elk, or moose.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, it is an infraction under RCW 77.15.160 (11)(b) to place, deposit, distribute, or scatter feed including, but not limited to, grain, hay, minerals, salt, fruit, or other such substances or food types to feed, lure or attract deer, elk, or moose not lawfully held in captivity. A person may not allow food to be placed for the purposes of feeding other wildlife that causes deer, elk, or moose to congregate.

(2) This rule does not apply in the completion of any of the following agricultural practices:

(a) Cultivation, production, and harvest of crops including, but not limited to, fruit, vegetable, hay, and grains;

(b) Animal husbandry related to the care and feeding of domestic livestock and poultry.

(3) The director may authorize the feeding of deer, elk, or moose under the following conditions:

(a) Prevent damage to private property;

(b) Mitigate population loss anticipated by a predicted winter mortality;

(c) Support a WDFW research or management program.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.04.020, and 77.12.047. WSR 26-06-063 (Order 25-28), s 220-440-260, filed 2/26/26, effective 3/29/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.610, 77.12.620, 77.12.630, 77.12.071, and 77.145.010. WSR 25-09-079 (Order 24-16D), s 220-440-260, filed 4/16/25, effective 5/17/25.]