

STATE GAME COMMISSION MEETING AND RULE MAKING NOTICE

The New Mexico State Game Commission (“Commission”) will be hosting a meeting and rule hearing on Friday October 27, 2023 beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the Farmington Civic Center, 200 W. Arrington St., Farmington, NM 87401. The purpose of this meeting is to hear and consider action as appropriate on the presentation of proposed changes to the Bear and Cougar Rule 19.31.11 NMAC.

Synopsis

The proposal is to amend the Bear and Cougar Rule 19.31.11 NMAC which will become effective April 1, 2024. The most recent version of the rule will expire on March 31, 2024.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BEAR AND COUGAR RULE

Allow licensed deer or elk hunters who draw WMA hunts to harvest a bear or cougar during their hunt if the zone is open and they possess a Bear and/or Cougar License.

Bears

- Increase bear harvest limits in BMZs 1 and 10 based on population estimates from new NMDGF research from 2019-2021;
- Adjust BMZs 5, 6, and 7 such that GMU 57 will be moved from BMZ 7 into BMZ 5, and GMUs 56 and 58 will be moved from BMZ 7 into BMZ 6, thus dissolving BMZ 7 into those zones. Harvest limit allocations from those GMUs in previous BMZ 7 will be re-allocated to the new BMZs of which they are a part;
- Increase number of permits for bear draw permit BER-1-104 from 32 permits to 60 permits to increase opportunity. Draw hunters will still be subject to the existing harvest limit structure;
- Increase number of permits for bear draw permit BER-1-103 from 5 permits to 10 permits, in recognition of the expanded hunt area resulting from the Department’s acquisition of the LBar property. Draw hunters will still be subject to the existing harvest limit structure;
- Move the season start date for BMZs 12 and 13 from September 1st back to August 16th.

Cougars

Reduce harvest limits for CMZ Q based on research studies and statistical modelling efforts.

A full text of changes for all rules will be available on the Department’s website at: www.wildlife.state.nm.us.

Interested persons may submit comments on the proposed changes for the Bear and Cougar Rule to: DGF-Bear-Cougar-Rules@state.nm.us. Individuals may also submit written comments to the physical address below. Comments are due by 1:00 p.m. on October 25, 2023. The final proposed rules will be voted on by the Commission during a public meeting on October 27, 2023. Interested persons may also provide data, views or arguments, orally or in writing, at the public rule hearings to be held on October 27, 2023.

Full copies of text of the proposed new rules, technical information related to proposed rule changes, and the agenda can be obtained from the Office of the Director, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, 1 Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507, or from the Department’s website at www.wildlife.state.nm.us/commission/proposals-under-consideration/. This agenda is subject to change up to 72 hours prior to the meeting. Please contact the Director’s Office at (505) 476-8000, or the Department’s website at www.wildlife.state.nm.us for updated information.

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of a reader, amplifier, qualified sign language interpreter, or any other form of auxiliary aid or service to attend or participate in the hearing or meeting, please contact the Department at (505) 476-8000 at least one week prior to the meeting or as soon as possible. Public documents, including the agenda and minutes, can be provided in various accessible formats. Please contact the Department at 505-476-8000 if a summary or other type of accessible format is needed.

Legal authority for this rulemaking can be found in the General Powers and Duties of the State Game Commission 17-1-14, et seq. NMSA 1978; Commission's Power to establish rules and regulations 17-1-26, et seq. NMSA 1978.