

**TO:** Larry D. Voyles, Director

**FROM:** Mike Senn, Assistant Director  
Wildlife Management Division

**PRESENTER:** Brian F. Wakeling, Game Branch Chief

**TITLE:** Consideration of Proposed Commission Orders 5, 6, 8, and 9, for Spring 2010 Hunting Seasons.

**DESCRIPTION:** The Commission will consider and may vote to approve Commission Orders 5, 6, 8, and 9 (spring turkey, spring javelina, spring buffalo, and spring bear) establishing seasons and season dates, bag and possession limits, permit numbers, and open areas. A detailed description of all proposals is available for public review at all Department offices.

**DATE:** July 13, 2009

Summary:

The following text describes Department recommendations for Commission Orders 5, 6, 8, and 9 (see attached proposed Commission Orders) for spring turkey, javelina, buffalo, and bear. An open house was held in each region where the public could review these hunt recommendations prior to the Commission meeting. The recommendations were also posted on the Department web site and press releases were provided to let the public know of their availability.

The Commission provided the Department with direction about enhancing opportunity for hunters in Arizona through the hunt guidelines approved in August 2007. Specific amendments target juniors hunting for turkey and javelina, as well as an archery javelina season in metro units and early season bear hunts. The Department is recommending juniors-only turkey hunting seasons that will be offered as over-the-counter permits in Units 1, 3C, 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 6A, 6B (except Camp Navajo), 7, 8, 10, 12A, 23, and 27. Juniors-only javelina permits are recommended at 1,020 permits, which comprise 3.7% of the spring permits. Javelina seasons in metro units are recommended as over-the-counter archery seasons. Several units will offer over-the-counter general or archery bear permits during the March 19–April 29, 2010 season.

**Commission Order 5 – Spring Turkey**

For spring turkey seasons in 2009, the Commission authorized 7,265 limited weapon shotgun shooting shot and over-the-counter juniors-only seasons in specified units. These draw hunts had 11,885 first choice applicants, 6,112 hunters that participated, and an average of 18% hunt success. These hunters spent 24,391 days hunting to harvest 1,119 turkeys. In spring 2009, preliminary data indicates 1,470 youth purchased turkey nonpermit tags, and 1,319 went afield.

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These youth harvested 349 turkeys in 4,911 days of hunting for a 26% hunt success. Total harvest for 2009 was 1,468 turkeys, an increase of 313 turkeys over spring 2008.

For 2010, spring limited weapon shotgun shooting seasons are recommended at 7,106 permits, a 159-permit decrease from last year. These permits are recommended to be offered during stratified seasons occurring April 23–29 and May 7–20 or April 30–May 20, 2010. New hunts are recommended in Unit 24A (Merriam's turkey, 5 permits), Unit 33 (Gould's turkey, 4 permits, and Unit 34A (Gould's turkey, 2 permits).

Gould's turkeys continue to expand. Five units with Gould's turkeys are now recommended for spring seasons, including Units 29, 31, 33, 34A, and 35A. The total number of permits recommended for this subspecies is 36, a 16-permit increase from last year.

Limited weapon shotgun shooting seasons for juniors-only are recommended in Units 1, 3C, 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 6A, 6B (except Camp Navajo), 7, 8, 10, 12A, 23, and 27. These permits would be unlimited in number and could be purchased over the counter. The season dates for the juniors-only season are recommended to be April 16–May 20, 2010.

#### Recommendation:

The Department recommends that the Commission **VOTE TO ADOPT COMMISSION ORDER 5 – SPRING TURKEY, AS PRESENTED.**

#### Commission Order 6 – Spring Javelina

In 2008, the Department issued about 91% of the 11,696 general permits authorized by the Commission, 81% of the 9,911 archery permits, 85% of the 5,405 HAM permits, and 79% of the 990 juniors-only permits. Last year, 9,235 general season hunters harvested 1,971 javelina for a 22% hunt success, 3,975 HAM hunters took 730 javelina for a 21% hunt success, and 7,204 archery hunters harvested 1,961 javelina for a 27% hunt success. For youth, 702 juniors-only hunters took 231 javelina for a 33% hunt success.

Department javelina permit and season recommendations are based on Commission direction, public comment, and hunt guidelines. In August 2007, the Commission directed the Department to equitably distribute permits according to statewide demand. Based on the 5-year average of application demand, the Department targeted about 43% general, 37% archery, and 20% handgun, archery, and muzzleloader (HAM). Actual permits (percentages) recommended for spring 2010 include 11,480 (43.1%) general, 9,620 (36.2%) archery, and 5,510 (20.7%) HAM. This is a decrease of 200 general permits and 275 archery permits and an increase of 105 HAM permits from last spring. The Department also recommends 1,020 juniors-only javelina permits (30-permit increase from last spring), which comprises 3.7% of the total permits recommended. When considering the 1,100 fall juniors-only permits authorized by the Commission for fall 2009, this brings the total allocation of juniors-only permits to 7.4% of the total permits recommended. This allocation is less than the 10% directed by the Commission, but exceeds the

number of permits sold to juniors-only hunters in the last year. Archery seasons are recommended to occur during January 1–21, 2010, juniors-only seasons during January 22–31, 2010, HAM seasons during February 5–15, 2010, and general seasons during February 19–25, 2010. Over-the-counter permits are recommended for archery hunts in metropolitan units, specifically Units 25M, 26M, 38M, and 47M. Season dates for these units correspond with other archery season dates, specifically January 1–21, 2010.

Recommendation:

The Department recommends that the Commission **VOTE TO ADOPT COMMISSION ORDER 6 – SPRING JAVELINA, AS PRESENTED.**

**Commission Order 8 – Spring Buffalo**

During spring 2009, 14 spring permits were authorized for the House Rock Wildlife Area herd in Units 12A and 12B. All hunters participated, and 12 harvested buffalo. The Department is recommending 14 any buffalo permits again for spring 2010, with season dates that will run from January 1–June 13, 2010. Permits and season length are the same as for spring 2009.

For 2009, no spring tags were recommended for the Raymond Wildlife Area herd in Units 5A and 5B. The Department is recommending 5 permits for spring 2010: 1 adult bull permit during January 15–17, 2 yearling-only permits during February 5–7, and 2 yearling-only permits during February 19–21, 2010.

Recommendation:

The Department recommends that the Commission **VOTE TO ADOPT COMMISSION ORDER 8 – SPRING BUFFALO, AS PRESENTED.**

**Commission Order 9 – Spring Bear**

Relatively little harvest occurs during Arizona's spring bear hunts. On average, about 6 bears are harvested, and in 2009 6 female and 14 male bears have been taken to date. Of these 21 bears harvested, 7 (1 female, 6 male) were harvested during the March 20–April 30 season in which most hunts were nonpermit tags were offered over the counter. The remaining 14 bears (5 female and 9 male) were harvested during the permitted archery season that runs from May 1–July 31, 2009. One season in Units 35A and 35B has been closed (on July 15) because the female harvest objective for that unit was met. For spring 2009, 683 nonpermit bear tags have been issued and another 1,022 bear nonpermit tags have been issued in conjunction with the sale of super conservation licenses. There were 519 applications for the 270 permit tags offered in 2009.

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The Department is recommending no change to seasons or season structure, female harvest limits, or permits for spring 2010. General bear hunts (Units 22, 23N, 24A, 27, 29 and 30A, 31, 32, 34A, and 35A and 35B [except Fort Huachuca]) and archery (Units 3B and 3C, 33) are recommended to offer over-the-counter permits during the March 19–April 29, 2010 season. This period has had relatively low bear harvests historically, with an average of about two bears per year. Generally three times more male than female bears are taken during this time period. Each hunt will have a female harvest limit, and any female bears taken during this time will apply to the annual female harvest limit that would close subsequent hunts if met.

One permitted general bear hunt is recommended in Unit 6B (except Camp Navajo) with 5 permits and a female harvest objective of one. Permitted archery-only bears hunts are recommended to occur in Units 3B and 3C, 22, 23N, 33, 34A, 35A and 35B (except For Huachuca), and Fort Huachuca. Total permits are recommended at 270. On average, about 4 bears are harvested annually during the later season, and one fourth of this harvest comprises female bears.

Female harvest limits for general hunts total 13 and for archery hunts total 12 (Fort Huachuca harvest limits are a subset of Unit 35A). This is no change from 2009. Annual female harvest limits for each unit remain unchanged from 2009 as well.

Recommendation:

The Department recommends that the Commission **VOTE TO ADOPT COMMISSION ORDER 9 – SPRING BEAR, AS PRESENTED.**

MJS:BFW:bw

Attachment