

## Agenda Item Summary

### BACKGROUND

The 1993–1998 Oregon Black Bear Management Plan (Plan) and its associated technical rules were adopted by the Commission in March 1993. The updated 2012 Plan includes changes in management and advances in research and monitoring techniques and provides overall management framework and direction for Oregon’s black bear populations compatible with primary land use, human-bear conflicts, other wildlife species, and recreational benefits to the public.

The 2012 Plan emphasizes the importance of monitoring black bear populations using contemporary field and statistical techniques. The Plan also provides biological information, summarizes the history and current status of Oregon’s black bear populations, and discusses options and approaches to address human-bear conflicts. Management needs, issues effecting the management of black bear populations, and strategies to address those issues are identified in the 2012 Plan.

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Communication with local sports groups and other interested parties.
- Questions from interested persons, including the news media, were answered.
- The Department invited three stakeholder groups that expressed an interest in providing input to attend independent in-person meetings. Two groups accepted the invitation, met with staff during January 2012, and provided comments.
- The draft Plan provided in the April Commission packet was distributed for public review, placed on the Department website, and the public was notified via press release.

### ISSUE 1

Adoption of the 2012 Oregon Black Bear Management Plan proposed by staff. The staff proposal would replace the existing 1993-1998 Oregon Black Bear Management Plan.

### ANALYSIS

The 2012 Plan includes information on biology and ecology of bears, with a focus on Oregon; historical and current management approaches; and biological data collection. The Plan establishes four objectives designed to balance ecological, social, and economic considerations for informed decision making when managing populations of black bears. These objectives are not considered mutually exclusive; therefore, some level of trade-off is to be expected under certain situations.

Objective 1 is to maintain a healthy bear population while considering other wildlife population objectives and the level of human-bear conflicts.

Objective 2 is to work to reduce the number of human-bear conflicts that result in the removal (lethal and nonlethal) of bears.

Objective 3 is to develop, refine, and evaluate population abundance estimation through modeling techniques.

Objective 4 is to continue to improve basic understanding of black bear management and ecology through applied research.

Decisions related to management of black bears in Oregon will be made taking into consideration the four Plan objectives. The Department will strive to maintain optimum bear populations with overall harvest in low to moderate categories (as described in the Plan) based on sex-age harvest criteria. The Department will continue to work on issues related to human-bear conflicts, including public education and preventative measures to reduce problems associated with bears habituated to humans. The Department will also continue to work to improve population monitoring methods and integrate field research into management decisions.

## **OPTIONS**

1. Approve staff recommendation.
2. Modify staff recommendation.
3. Deny staff recommendation.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

1. Option 1.

<b>DRAFT MOTION</b>	I move to approve the 2012 Oregon Black Bear Management Plan and adopt the associated administrative rules in OAR Chapter 635, Division 170.
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	Upon filing.