



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Furbearer regulations are adopted on a two-year basis. Regulations were set by Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) action in June 2022 and will expire June 30, 2024.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (department) Furbearer Program oversees the conservation and management of over 20 species in Oregon and include those that are common (e.g., bobcat, raccoon), rare (e.g., fisher, kit fox) or non-native (e.g., nutria, opossum). Considerable program time focuses on research and conservation actions to benefit rare or sensitive species, especially forest carnivore species such as fisher, marten, Sierra Nevada red fox, and wolverine. The Furbearer Program is also committed to implementing the department's Action Plan for Beaver Modified Landscapes which outlines specific goals and actions the department is implementing over 36 months (August 2022 – 2025) to protect and restore beaver habitat and beaver-modified habitat.

The management of species that are common or abundant often includes addressing conflict and the setting of allowable harvest, both of which provide opportunities for information collection and species monitoring. The management of determining allowable harvest necessitates a rigorous public process utilizing the best available information to establish administrative rules and harvest regulations. Department staff will recommend seasons and bag limits for the 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 seasons for adoption as OARs. Recommendations based on population information and reported harvest for furbearing species from the 2021–2022 and 2022–2023 seasons.

Oregon Senate Bill 1501 (2022) and the Private Forest Accord requires any beaver taken on private forest lands to be reported to the department. The department is required to submit a summary of these reports and will do so as a part of the furbearer regulation adoption process.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- In anticipation of the Commission consideration of the proposed rules, the department published notice of the proposed rulemaking (Attachment 2).
- Additionally, the public has an opportunity to provide comment prior to (in writing) or (orally) during the hearing that occurs at the Commission meeting.
- Communication with local sporting groups, state and federal agencies, Oregon Trappers Association, Center for Biological Diversity, Oregon State Police, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon United Sporting Dog Association, working groups, wildlife professionals, and other interested parties was received and meetings coordinated.
- Questions from interested persons, including the news media, were answered.
- The public will also have the opportunity to provide input leading up to and during the June Commission meeting.

ISSUE

Proposals for 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 Furbearer Harvest and Pursuit Season Regulations are presented in Attachment 3.

ANALYSIS

Staff provided background and recommendation for regulations and seasons for the 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 Furbearer Trapping and Hunting Regulations in Attachment 3. The recommendations are supported by available information regarding population monitoring and trends, age data, harvest, catch per unit effort, market prices, licenses, and reporting for furbearer species from the 2021–2022 and 2022–2023 seasons, as well as communications with public stakeholders. Due to late reports continuing to arrive through much of the 2024-2025 license year, the 2023-2024 data will not be complete for nearly another year. However, 2023 data, including new beaver data, are presented when available.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt staff recommendations.
2. Amend staff recommendations.
3. Reject staff recommendations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. Option 1

DRAFT MOTION:

I move to amend Oregon Administrative Rule Chapter 635, Division 045 and 050 as proposed by staff to set regulations and seasons for the harvest and pursuit of furbearing mammals.

Effective Date: July 01, 2024 or *Upon Filing*