

SUBJECT: Approval of bear harvest quotas for the 2011 season.

FOR: JANUARY, 2011 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Linda Olver, Assistant Bear Biologist

SUMMARY:

The department recommends a bear harvest quota of 5,235 and an overall permit level of 9,005 for the 2011 season. In individual management units the recommended 2011 permit level is: A) 3,465; B) 1,510; C) 2,550; D) 1,480.

This permit level is similar to 2010. Since 2008, bear harvest permit levels increased 22% (7,310) in 2009 and 91% (8,910) in 2010, following the results and recommendations of the bear population study completed in 2008 and the results of other population indices measured by the department.

Regulated hunting is the primary management tool for Wisconsin's black bear population. Interest in bear hunting remains high as evidenced by the over 27,796 individuals who applied for a harvest tag in 2010. A total of 103,860 people applied for either a preference point or a harvest tag last year. Harvest quotas are determined using the department's bear population model and various population indices to assess the effects of various harvest levels on the bear population estimate.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of bear harvest quotas for the 2011 hunting season.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- No Fiscal Estimate Required
- No Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement Required
- No Background Memo

- Yes Attached
- Yes Attached
- Yes Attached

APPROVED:

Tom Hauge
Bureau Director, Tom Hauge

Laurie J. Osterndorf
Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf

Cathy Stepp
Secretary, Cathy Stepp

12/22/10
Date

12/22/10
Date

1/7/11
Date

cc: Laurie J. Ross - AD/8
Tom Hauge - WM/6

Keith Warnke - WM/6

Scott Loomans - WM/6

DATE: December 22, 2010

TO: Natural Resources Board Members

FROM: Cathy Stepp

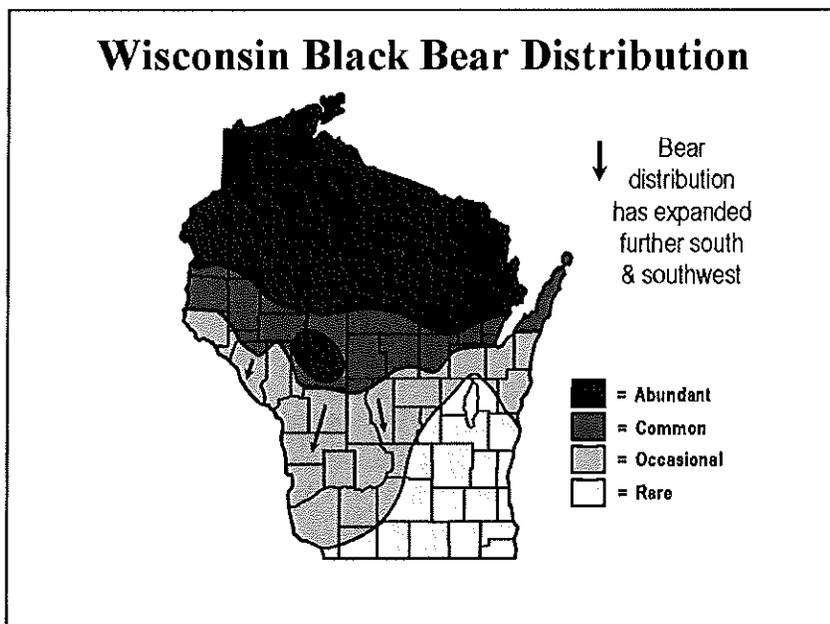
SUBJECT: 2011 Bear Season Quotas

FILE REF: 2300

Background

The department recommends maintaining the same bear harvest goal for 2011 as was used in 2010. This results in a bear harvest quota of 5,235 and an overall permit level of 9,005 for the 2011 season. In individual management units the recommended 2011 permit levels are: A) 3,465; B) 1,510; C) 2,550; D) 1,480.

The permit levels for 2011 are increased slightly for 2011 as result of hunter success rates experienced in last 3 years. As you are aware, the recent increase in harvest goals and permit levels is the result of increased bear population estimates from the tetracycline mark-recapture study done several years ago. Another tetracycline population estimate will begin in spring 2011. Following the bear season in 2011, the department will re-evaluate bear population information, population indices, and harvest to develop a population estimate reflecting any changes in 2011.



The Conservation Congress Bear Committee has reviewed the permit proposals and supports the recommended quota and harvest permit levels. The DNR bear committee consulted with the Voigt Tribal Task Force through their representative to the committee when determining these recommendations. The final permit levels will be adjusted if necessary to reflect tribal bear harvest.

Zone Harvest Quotas and Permits

Zone A:

The population in Zone A is estimated to be approximately 9,880 bears. The established population goal is 4,600 bears. The 2010 harvest quota was 2,200. The preliminary 2010 harvest was 2,066 with 3,470 harvest permits available, resulting in a 59% success rate. The 3-year average success rate is 63.5%. The recommended harvest quota for 2011 is 2,200, the same quota established for the 2010 bear season. A harvest of 2,200 is expected to decrease the estimated population in Zone A from 9,880 in 2011 to 9,060 in 2012, and result in 3,465 permits (Table 1).

Zone B:

The population in Zone B is estimated to be approximately 5,360 bears. The established population goal is 2,200 bears. The 2010 harvest quota was 1,075. The preliminary 2010 harvest was 989 with 1,440 harvest permits available, resulting in a 68% success rate. The 3-year average success rate for Zone B is 71.2%. The recommended harvest quota is 1,075, the same quota established for the 2010 bear season. The decrease in the 3-year average success rate results in an increase in the number of permits available with a harvest quota unchanged from 2010 to 2011. A harvest quota of 1,075 will provide 1,510 permits (Table 1). The proposed harvest quota is expected to decrease the estimated population in Zone B from 5,360 in 2011 to approximately 4,950 in 2012.

Zone C:

The population in Zone C is estimated to be approximately 3,880 bears. The established population goal is 1,200 bears. The 2010 harvest quota was 860. The preliminary 2010 harvest was 741 with 2,430 harvest permits available, resulting in a 30% success rate. The 3-year average success rate for Zone C is 33.7%. The recommended harvest quota for 2010 is 860, which will result in 2,550 harvest permits (Table 1). The proposed harvest quota is expected to decrease the estimated population in Zone C from 3,880 in 2011 to approximately 3,750 in 2012.

Zone D:

The population in Zone D is estimated to be approximately 4,260 bears. The established population goal is 3,300 bears. The preliminary 2010 harvest was 1,182 with 1,570 harvest permits available, resulting in a 74% success rate. The 3-year average success rate for Zone D is 74.4%. A quota of 1,100 will result in 1,480 permits for 2010 (Table 1). The proposed harvest quota is expected to decrease the estimated population in Zone D from 4,260 in 2011 to approximately 3,640 in 2012.

Recommendation

The Department recommends that the Natural Resources Board approve the bear harvest quotas and permit levels in Table 1. When the Department receives Tribal harvest declarations, we will incorporate those along with Tribal harvest history into the final permit availability.

Table 1. Proposed black bear harvest quotas and permit levels for the 2011 black bear season.

Bear Management	2010 permits	2010 harvest	2011 harvest quota	2011 permit level
Zone A	3,470	2,066	2,200	3,465
B	1,440	989	1,075	1,510
C	2,430	741	860	2,550
D	1,570	1,182	1,100	1,480
Total	8,910	4,978	5,235	9,005