GAME, FISH, AND PARKS COMMISSION ACTION
FINALIZATION

Bobcat Trapping and Hunting Season
Chapter 41:08:01

Commission Meeting Dates:  
Proposal: July 16-17, 2020  
Public Hearing: September 2, 2020  
Finalization: September 2-3, 2020  
Virtual Meeting

COMMISSION PROPOSAL

Duration of Recommendation: 2020-21 and 2021-22 trapping and hunting seasons

Season Dates: December 26, 2020 – February 15, 2021  
Area: Statewide

Nonresident Season Dates: January 9, 2021 – February 15, 2021  
Area: Statewide

Requirements and Restrictions:

1. Trappers or hunters who participate in the bobcat season east river are limited to one bobcat per trapper or hunter.

2. A bobcat taken must be presented to a conservation officer or wildlife damage specialist for registration and tagging of the pelt within 5 days of harvest. Additionally, once the season has closed, an individual has 24 hours to notify a conservation officer or wildlife damage specialist of any untagged bobcats harvested during the season. The pelt must be removed from the carcass and the carcass must be surrendered to the conservation officer or wildlife damage specialist. After the pelt has been tagged, it shall be returned to the hunter or trapper. Upon request, the carcass may be returned to the hunter or trapper after the carcass has been inspected and the lower jaw has been removed. A person may only possess, purchase or sell raw bobcat pelts that are tagged through the eyeholes with the tag provided by the department.

Proposed changes from last year:

1.) Modify the season dates in eastern South Dakota to align with western South Dakota. Proposed season dates would be December 26 to February 15, statewide.

2.) Modify the open area in eastern South Dakota to include all counties. The proposed open area would be statewide.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Recommended changes from proposal: None

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

Bobcats occur in several areas of eastern South Dakota where the current bobcat season is not open. Minimal harvest in those areas would not be detrimental to bobcat populations and are protected by the limit of one bobcat per hunter or trapper. This expansion would create additional opportunity and aligning the two seasons’ dates (eastern South Dakota and western South Dakota) and brings consistency and simplifies regulations.

APPROVE _____  MODIFY _____  REJECT _____  NO ACTION _____
### Bobcat Harvest Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>West River</th>
<th>East River</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>363</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>618</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>784</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>323</td>
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<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Statewide Bobcat Harvest / Number of People Harvesting Bobcats

- Bobcat Harvested
- Number of People Harvesting a Bobcat

The chart shows the number of bobcats harvested and the number of people harvesting them for each year from 2009-2010 to 2019-2020.
RESIDENT/NONRESIDENT CRITERIA

1. The Issue
   - Why make the change, what are the change alternatives, how will public/stakeholder input be solicited, and how will the change be evaluated if implemented?
     i. The proposed change was brought forward to expand the open area and provide more opportunity and align season dates.
     ii. Input will be sought through the commission process and be evaluated with GFP's annual bobcat harvest report.

2. Historical Considerations
   - In 2012, the east river bobcat season was established. At the same time, nonresident trappers were allowed to participate in the bobcat trapping and hunting season (in all open areas) with a shorter season, which remains today.

3. Biological Considerations
   - What is the current and projected status of the population and habitat conditions for these populations?
     i. The majority of bobcat habitat in eastern South Dakota occurs along brushy habitat along rivers and streams (i.e. riparian areas). The limit of one bobcat per hunter or trapper is enough of a restriction to limit overharvest where bobcats occur in eastern South Dakota. No biological effect is expected.

4. Social Considerations
   - The expansion would provide additional opportunities for hunters and trappers in eastern South Dakota, with a longer season and larger geographic area.

5. Financial considerations
   - Not applicable.
1. **Does the regulation or fee inhibit a user’s ability to participate?** Not applicable.

2. **Does the regulation increase the opportunity for new and existing users?** Yes.
   Including the additional counties into the season would allow individuals in those areas to have a chance at harvesting a unique wildlife species and create additional opportunity for hunters and trappers.

3. **How does the regulation impact the next generation of hunters, anglers, trappers and outdoor recreationists?** The expanded open area creates a larger geographic area for people to participate and lengthening the season allows for more opportunity.

4. **Does the regulation enhance the quality of life for current and future generations by getting families outdoors?** The expanded open area creates a larger geographic area for people to participate and lengthening the season allows for more opportunity.