

Office of Regulatory Management
Economic Review Form

Agency name	Board of Wildlife Resources
Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) Chapter citation(s)	4VAC15-50
VAC Chapter title(s)	Game: Bear
Action title	General firearms season; 3-day early firearms season
Date this document prepared	June 13, 2023
Regulatory Stage (including Issuance of Guidance Documents)	Exempt Final

Cost Benefit Analysis

Complete Tables 1a and 1b for all regulatory actions. You do not need to complete Table 1c if the regulatory action is required by state statute or federal statute or regulation and leaves no discretion in its implementation.

Table 1a should provide analysis for the regulatory approach you are taking. Table 1b should provide analysis for the approach of leaving the current regulations intact (i.e., no further change is implemented). Table 1c should provide analysis for at least one alternative approach. You should not limit yourself to one alternative, however, and can add additional charts as needed.

Report both direct and indirect costs and benefits that can be monetized in Boxes 1 and 2. Report direct and indirect costs and benefits that cannot be monetized in Box 4. See the ORM Regulatory Economic Analysis Manual for additional guidance.

Table 1a: Costs and Benefits of the Proposed Changes (Primary Option)

<p>(1) Direct & Indirect Costs & Benefits (Monetized)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding the bear general firearms season in 35 southern and eastern counties. <p>Direct Costs: No direct costs are believed to be experienced from this change.</p> <p>Indirect Costs: No indirect costs are believed to be experienced from this change.</p> <p>Direct Benefits: Increasing the length of the bear general firearms season will increase hunting opportunity for this species and may stimulate additional revenue generation for local businesses and localities through hunter expenditures on gas, groceries, and lodging.</p> <p>Indirect Benefits: Expansion of the bear general firearms seasons is designed to help stabilize bear population levels in these localities consistent with those levels outlined in the department’s publicly generated bear management plan. While not a direct relationship, increased hunting opportunities and bear harvests will help mitigate human-bear conflicts by removing bears involved in such conflicts from the population. Removal of these bears should result in lower instances of crop and residential property damage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate the early, 3-day bear firearms season in 26 northern and western counties. <p>Direct Costs: No direct costs are believed to be experienced from this change.</p> <p>Indirect Costs: No indirect costs are believed to be experienced from this change.</p> <p>Direct Benefits: Bear populations in this area has declined significantly over the past 4-5 years. Part of the decline was expected to help achieve publicly desired population reductions. However, an outbreak of mange in the bear population also appears to be contributing to this decline. Eliminating this season will help maintain bear population levels at publicly acceptable levels as desired by the department, hunters, and the general public.</p> <p>Indirect Benefits: Eliminating the early, 3-day season will ensure that bear hunting can continue with minimal impact on bear hunting opportunities, helping maintain current revenue streams for local businesses and localities in these areas which result from hunters pursuing bears.</p>
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(2) Present Monetized Values	Direct & Indirect Costs	Direct & Indirect Benefits
	(a) None	(b) Indeterminate
(3) Net Monetized Benefit	Indeterminate	
(4) Other Costs & Benefits (Non-Monetized)	Hunting contributes nearly \$900 million dollars to Virginia's economy, of which hunting for bears is an important economic contributor. In addition to economic benefits, hunting also generates personal benefits such as physical exercise, mental wellness and preparedness, and a healthy source of protein.	
(5) Information Sources	2011 National Survey of Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife-Based Recreation and Michigan State University	

Table 1b: Costs and Benefits under the Status Quo (No change to the regulation)

(1) Direct & Indirect Costs & Benefits (Monetized)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not expanding the bear general firearms season in 35 southern and eastern counties from 3-weeks to 5-weeks. <p>Direct Costs: The status quo is not anticipated to have any direct costs.</p> <p>Indirect Costs: Maintaining the status quo would result in increased bear populations with resulting increases in human-bear conflicts that damage crops and residential property.</p> <p>Direct Benefits: The status quo is not anticipated to have any direct benefits.</p> <p>Indirect Benefits: The status quo is not anticipated to have any indirect benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not eliminating the early, 3-day bear firearms season in 26 northern and western counties. <p>Direct Costs: The status quo is not anticipated to have any direct costs.</p> <p>Indirect Costs: Maintaining the status quo would likely result in further bear population declines, lost hunting opportunity, and reductions in expenditures such as gas, groceries, and lodging associated with hunting trips for bears.</p> <p>Direct Benefits: The status quo is not anticipated to have any direct benefits.</p>
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	Indirect Benefits: The status quo is not anticipated to have any indirect benefits.	
(2) Present Monetized Values	Direct & Indirect Costs	Direct & Indirect Benefits
	(a) Indeterminate	(b) None
(3) Net Monetized Benefit	Indeterminate	
(4) Other Costs & Benefits (Non-Monetized)	None	
(5) Information Sources	N/A	

Table 1c: Costs and Benefits under Alternative Approach(es)

(1) Direct & Indirect Costs & Benefits (Monetized)	<p>Direct Costs: The only alternatives to the proposals or the status quo would be changing the length of time for which a season is expanded or reduced. However, the existing proposals are consistent with the department’s historical season structures and modifying them would inadvertently create multiple, likely confusing season structures that are not familiar to the department’s hunting constituency.</p> <p>Indirect Costs: N/A</p> <p>Direct Benefits: N/A</p> <p>Indirect Benefits: N/A</p>	
(2) Present Monetized Values	Direct & Indirect Costs	Direct & Indirect Benefits
	(a) N/A	(b) N/A
(3) Net Monetized Benefit	N/A	
(4) Other Costs & Benefits (Non-Monetized)	None	

(5) Information Sources	N/A
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Impact on Local Partners

Use this chart to describe impacts on local partners. See Part 8 of the ORM Cost Impact Analysis Guidance for additional guidance.

Table 2: Impact on Local Partners

(1) Direct & Indirect Costs & Benefits (Monetized)	<p>Direct Costs: The proposal is not anticipated to have any direct costs for local partners.</p> <p>Indirect Costs: The proposal is not anticipated to have any indirect costs for local partners.</p> <p>Direct Benefits: The proposal is not anticipated to have any direct benefits for local partners.</p> <p>Indirect Benefits: Through stabilizing and reducing bear populations, the proposal may help reduce occurrences of and costs associated with local sheriff department involvement in addressing human-bear conflicts. Particularly for human-bear conflicts involving residential property damage, the local sheriff’s office dispatch center receives the call and coordinates with Department of Wildlife Resources staffs. Additionally, some sheriff’s deputies may assist in responding to such calls.</p>	
(2) Present Monetized Values	Direct & Indirect Costs	Direct & Indirect Benefits
	(a) Indeterminate	(b) None
(3) Other Costs & Benefits (Non-Monetized)	None	
(4) Assistance	N/A	
(5) Information Sources	N/A	

Impacts on Families

Use this chart to describe impacts on families. See Part 8 of the ORM Cost Impact Analysis Guidance for additional guidance.

Table 3: Impact on Families

(1) Direct & Indirect Costs & Benefits (Monetized)	<p>Direct Costs: The proposal is not anticipated to have any direct costs for families.</p> <p>Indirect Costs: Through stabilizing and reducing bear populations, some families may experience less issues with human-bear conflicts through reduced damage to crops and residential property.</p> <p>Direct Benefits: The proposal is not anticipated to have any direct benefits for families.</p> <p>Indirect Benefits: The proposal is not anticipated to have any indirect benefits for families.</p>	
(2) Present Monetized Values	Direct & Indirect Costs	Direct & Indirect Benefits
	(a) Indeterminate	(b) None
(3) Other Costs & Benefits (Non-Monetized)	None	
(4) Information Sources	N/A	

Impacts on Small Businesses

Use this chart to describe impacts on small businesses. See Part 8 of the ORM Cost Impact Analysis Guidance for additional guidance.

Table 4: Impact on Small Businesses

(1) Direct & Indirect Costs & Benefits (Monetized)	<p>Direct Costs: The proposal is not anticipated to have any direct costs to small businesses.</p> <p>Indirect Costs: The proposal is not anticipated to have any indirect costs to small businesses.</p> <p>Direct Benefits: Through increasing bear harvest opportunities, taxidermists and businesses which process game meat should benefit from increased customers.</p> <p>Indirect Benefits: The proposal is not anticipated to have any indirect benefits for small businesses.</p>	
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(2) Present Monetized Values	Direct & Indirect Costs	Direct & Indirect Benefits
	(a) None	(b) Indeterminate
(3) Other Costs & Benefits (Non-Monetized)	None	
(4) Alternatives	N/A	
(5) Information Sources	N/A	

Changes to Number of Regulatory Requirements

Table 5: Regulatory Reduction

For each individual action, please fill out the appropriate chart to reflect any change in regulatory requirements, costs, regulatory stringency, or the overall length of any guidance documents.

Change in Regulatory Requirements

VAC Section(s) Involved	Initial Count	Additions	Subtractions	Net Change
4VAC15-50-11	0	0	0	0

Cost Reductions or Increases (if applicable)

VAC Section(s) Involved	Description of Regulatory Requirement	Initial Cost	New Cost	Overall Cost Savings/Increases
4VAC15-50-11	Increase season length in 35 counties	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Indeterminate
4VAC15-50-11	Eliminate 3-day season in 26 counties	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Indeterminate

Other Decreases or Increases in Regulatory Stringency (if applicable)

VAC Section(s) Involved	Description of Regulatory Change	Overview of How It Reduces or Increases Regulatory Burden
4VAC15-50-11	<p>a. Expanding the bear general firearms season in 35 southern and eastern counties from 3-weeks to 5-weeks.</p> <p>b. Eliminate the early, 3-day bear firearms season in 26 northern and western counties.</p>	<p>Expanding the firearms season from 3 weeks to 5 weeks in 35 counties offers an additional 490 days of bear hunting opportunity, while eliminating the 3-day early season in 26 counties reduces the available number of bear hunting days by 78. Prior to this action, there were 3,500 days of firearms bear hunting opportunity in Virginia. The current regulation expands firearms bear hunting opportunity to 3,912 days (11.8% regulatory relaxation).</p>

Length of Guidance Documents (only applicable if guidance document is being revised)

Title of Guidance Document	Original Length	New Length	Net Change in Length
N/A			