

STATE GAME COMMISSION MEETING AND RULE MAKING NOTICE

The New Mexico State Game Commission (“Commission”) will be hosting a meeting and rule hearings on Friday June 3, 2022 beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the Eagle Nest Lake State Park Visitor Center, 42 Marina Way, Eagle Nest, NM 87718. The purpose of this meeting is to hear and consider action as appropriate on the following: presentation of proposed changes to the Bighorn Sheep, Pronghorn, and Javelina rules.

Synopsis:

The proposal is to amend the Bighorn Sheep Rule 19.31.17 NMAC, Pronghorn Rule 19.31.15 NMAC, and Javelina Rule 19.31.21 NMAC, all of which will become effective April 1, 2023. The most recent version of each rule will expire on March 31, 2023.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BIGHORN SHEEP RULE: 1) opening the Jemez population for hunting Aug. 10-24 and Sept. 1-15, likely beginning in the 2024 season; 2) splitting the Hatchet Mountains hunt area into the Little Hatchets and Big Hatchets hunt areas and shifting hunt dates to September 15-30 and October 1-15; 3) creating 2 hunt windows in the Peloncillos (Nov. 1-15 & Nov. 16-30) and Ladrones (Dec. 1-15 & Dec. 16-31); 4) creating a 3rd hunt window in the Rio Grande Gorge population, Nov. 1-15; 5) including the Double E Wildlife Management Area as open to hunters that hold a valid license for that GMU; 6) making small adjustments to season dates in some areas.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PRONGHORN RULE: 1) modifying the definition of a muzzle-loader to include only those muzzle-loading firearms that do not have a scope (for all big game species); 2) shifting hunt structure slightly to begin later in August and have some hunts begin in September and October; 3) creating a pronghorn hunt on Melrose Air Force Range in GMU 32; 4) decreasing license numbers in the combined hunts in GMUs 2, 7, 9, 10 from 15 bow licenses to 10 and from 15 any sporting arm licenses to 5; 5) GMU 15: eliminate the 2nd any legal sporting arm hunt but reallocate the 5 licenses to the first any legal sporting arm hunt; 6) GMU 16: eliminate the 2nd any legal sporting arm hunt but reallocate the 10 licenses to the remaining hunts; 6) decreasing each hunt in GMU 57 by 5 licenses each and moving these licenses to adjacent GMU 58 that has more public access; 7) allowing pronghorn hunting on Prairie Chicken Areas in the SE part of the state; 9) adjusting licenses on McGregor Range from 5 MB non-military and 10 MB military to 7 MB of each.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE JAVELINA RULE: 1) including a population management hunt option; 2) expanding the Wildlife Management Areas where javelina will be hunted, including the Double E, River Ranch, and Red Rock properties; 3) increasing the bootheel licenses by 10% and increasing the statewide licenses by 20%; 4) modifying season dates for both the bootheel and the statewide hunts: archery - January 1-31 annually; any legal sporting arm - February 1-March 31 annually; 5) removing the ability to hunt javelina during a deer or elk hunt.

A full text of changes for all rules will be available on the Department’s website at: www.wildlife.state.nm.us.

Interested persons may submit comments on the proposed changes as follows: Bighorn Sheep Rule: DGF-Bighorn-Rule@state.nm.us; Pronghorn Rule: DGF-Pronghorn-Rule@state.nm.us; Javelina Rule: DGF-Javelina-Rule@state.nm.us. Individuals may also submit written comments to the physical address below. Comments are due by 8:00 a.m. on June 3, 2022. The final proposed rules will be voted on by the Commission during a public meeting on June 3, 2022. Interested persons may also provide data, views or arguments, orally or in writing, at the public rule hearings to be held on June 3, 2022.

Full copies of text of the proposed new rules, technical information related to proposed rule changes, and the agenda can be obtained from the Office of the Director, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, 1 Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507, or from the Department’s website at www.wildlife.state.nm.us/commission/proposals-under-consideration/. This agenda is subject to change up to 72 hours prior to the meeting. Please contact the Director’s Office at (505) 476-8000, or the Department’s website at www.wildlife.state.nm.us for updated information.

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of a reader, amplifier, qualified sign language interpreter, or any other form of auxiliary aid or service to attend or participate in the hearing or meeting, please contact the Department at (505) 476-8000 at least one week prior to the meeting or as soon as possible. Public documents, including the agenda and minutes, can be provided in various accessible formats. Please contact the Department at 505-476-8000 if a summary or other type of accessible format is needed.

Legal authority for this rulemaking can be found in the General Powers and Duties of the State Game Commission 17-1-14, et seq. NMSA 1978; Commission's Power to establish rules and regulations 17-1-26, et seq. NMSA 1978.