
SENATE BILL 5525

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senator Short

Read first time 01/23/19. Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks.

1 AN ACT Relating to whitetail deer population estimates; and
2 adding a new section to chapter 77.12 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 77.12
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) The department must manage whitetail deer populations in
7 district one of region one with the goal of increasing the deer
8 counted per mile in the late summer surveys to fall within the range
9 of nine to eleven deer counted per survey mile.

10 (2) Each year, beginning with the 2019 population assessment, in
11 district one of region one, the department must conduct a minimum of
12 six traditional transect counts including the Kelly hill standard
13 transect in game management unit 105, the Douglas standard transect
14 in game management unit 108, the Deep creek standard transect in game
15 management units 108 and 111, the Summit valley standard transect in
16 the central portion of game management unit 121, the Clayton standard
17 transect in the southern portion of game management unit 117, and the
18 Daisy-Maud standard transect in the western portion of game
19 management unit 121.

20 (3) (a) In district one of region one, in addition to the transect
21 counts required in subsection (2) of this section, beginning with the

1 2019 population assessment, the department must establish three
2 fifteen mile transects on public lands, including national forest
3 lands, bureau of land management lands, or state lands, and conduct
4 transect counts each year on these public lands. The department must
5 consult with interested hunters and wildlife stakeholders in
6 developing the transects on public lands. Each of the transects on
7 public land must be wholly contained within a single game management
8 unit listed in subsection (2) of this section, and the three public
9 land transects should be dispersed across district one of region one.
10 The department must use the same transects established on public
11 lands for subsequent transect counts under this subsection.

12 (b) The purpose of the data collected under (a) of this
13 subsection is for comparison purposes only and must not be added to
14 the data collected under subsection (2) of this section, in order to
15 preserve the usefulness and veracity of historical trends.

16 (4) The transect counts under this section must track and report
17 buck-to-doe ratios and fawn-to-doe ratios, and also demonstrate
18 whitetail deer density and trends. The department must conduct the
19 first set of transect counts as described in subsections (2) and (3)
20 of this section in the month of August to determine buck-to-doe
21 ratio, density, and overall population. The department must conduct
22 the second set of transect counts as described in subsections (2) and
23 (3) of this section in the month of September to determine fawn-to-
24 doe ratio, density, and overall population. The ratios are an
25 important factor to understand the current and future health of the
26 whitetail deer population.

27 (5) To increase meaningful public participation in the
28 establishment of hunting seasons, the department must provide the
29 public with timely access to both compliant and noncompliant hunter
30 harvest data. The department must make compliant hunter harvest data
31 available to the public fourteen days after the January 31st deadline
32 for hunters to report their harvest to the department. The department
33 must make noncompliant hunter harvest data available no later than
34 thirty days prior to a commission meeting to establish hunting
35 seasons. The data must include a description of the assumptions and
36 methodology used for determining noncompliant hunter harvest data.

37 (6) The department must recalculate the estimate of noncompliant
38 hunter harvest data for 2015 through 2019 using the methodology used
39 in 2013 and 2014. By December 31, 2019, the department must report
40 the recalculation and the differences between the two methodologies

1 to the natural resources committees of the legislature and the
2 commission and make the information available to the public.

3 (7) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this
4 section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

5 (a) "Clayton standard transect" in game management unit 117
6 (south) means: Start at the intersection of Garden Spot road and
7 highway 395 near Loon lake. Go east on Garden Spot road six miles to
8 Grove road, which is where the original transect began. Take Grove
9 road south to Oregon road; turn right on Oregon road and go to
10 Spotted road; turn left on Spotted road and go to Bridges road; turn
11 left onto Bridges road; follow Bridges road to Grove road again and
12 turn right on Grove road; follow Grove road to Mason road and turn
13 right on Mason road; follow Mason road to where it ends at Furze
14 road. Go north on Furze road to where the county road ends in a cul-
15 de-sac. Then do a u-turn back and pick up again where you turned on
16 to Furze road from Mason road. Go another seven-tenths of a mile
17 southerly on Furze road until you cross the railroad track, which is
18 where the transect ends. Be sure to note deer observed on the first
19 six miles as well as the last one and eight-tenths miles beyond the
20 large field west of Furze road, as this is not on the original
21 transect. Total length equals seven and two-tenths miles for the
22 original transect and fifteen miles for the standard.

23 (b) "Daisy-Maud standard transect" in game management unit 121
24 (west) means: Begin at the intersection of Records road and Addy-
25 Gifford road and go west two and seven-tenths miles to "Maud" where
26 the Daisy Mine road intersects Addy-Gifford road, which is the
27 original starting point for the traditional transect. Go north on
28 Daisy Mine road to Breckenridge road. Turn west and follow west and
29 north to Beck road. Keep going north on Beck road until reaching
30 Daisy Mine road again and then turn west. Follow Daisy Mine road west
31 downhill to Miles road and turn south. Go south on Miles road back to
32 Addy-Gifford road. Take Addy-Gifford road east to Anderson road and
33 turn southeast. End on Anderson road at a "y" near the "tree farm"
34 sign. Total length equals twelve and three-tenths miles for the
35 original transect and fifteen miles for the standard.

36 (c) "Deep creek standard transect" in game management units 108
37 and 111 means: Start at the intersection of Aladdin road and south
38 fork Mill Creek road, which is where the original transect began. Go
39 north on Aladdin road to four and eight-tenths miles, which is where
40 the new standard transect begins. Note the odometer mileage here

1 along with where deer are observed to distinguish the original and
2 standard transects. Continue north on Aladdin road to the "y" at
3 Spirit Junction. Turn west going toward Northport and end the
4 transect at the fields just west of the South Fork grange hall. At
5 Rocky creek road, which is early in the route, drive in across the
6 bridge and to the first corner past the fields to view these fields
7 and then return to the highway. Few deer are seen early in the route;
8 work slowly so not to be through the route too soon. Total length
9 equals nineteen and eight-tenths miles for the original transect and
10 fifteen miles for the standard.

11 (d) "Deer" means whitetail deer.

12 (e) "District one of region one" means the Sherman, Kelly Hill,
13 Douglas, Aladdin, Selkirk, 49 degrees, and Huckleberry game
14 management units located in Pend Oreille, Stevens, and Ferry counties
15 as defined by the department as of January 1, 2019.

16 (f) "Douglas standard transect" in game management unit 108
17 means: Start at the intersection of Spanish Prairie road and highway
18 395. Go north to Williams Lake road and continue north to Clugston-
19 Onion Creek road. Turn east and only go as far as to Douglas Falls
20 road and then turn south (east at first before curve). Follow Douglas
21 Falls road to its intersection with Gillette road (also known as Lee
22 Hedrick road). Turn left on Gillette road, go northeasterly exactly
23 four miles to the top of the hill, then do a u-turn and come back to
24 Douglas Falls road. Note separately any deer observed on the survey
25 data form for this four-mile segment along Gillette road, as this
26 segment was not on the original transect. Once you return to Douglas
27 Falls road, follow it south as far as Larsen road. Turn east on
28 Larsen road and go to the end for "prime time count" where the
29 transect ends. Total length equals eleven miles for the original
30 transect and fifteen miles for the standard.

31 (g) "Kelly hill standard transect" in game management unit 105
32 means: Start at the intersection of Kettle River road and Burkholz
33 road, which is where the original transect began. Go east on Burkholz
34 to Northport-Flat Creek road. The fifteen mile long "standard
35 transect" then begins at the intersection of Bob Anderson road with
36 Northport-Flat Creek road. Note this new start point odometer mileage
37 on the deer survey data form. Continue to follow Northport-Flat Creek
38 road to its intersection with east fork Crown Creek road, which is
39 where the transect ends. Total length equals seventeen and one-half

1 miles for original Flat Creek transect and fifteen miles for the
2 standard.

3 (h) "Summit valley standard transect" in game management unit 121
4 (central) means: Start on south Basin road at its intersection with
5 McFarlane road. Go southeasterly one and four-tenths miles to Matson
6 road. Turn southerly on Matson road and follow this for two and six-
7 tenths miles where it ends at Naff road. Turn right on Naff road and
8 go one and two-tenths miles to Old C.C. road. Turn to the south on
9 Old C.C. road and follow this four and one-half miles to the start of
10 the original, traditional Dunn mountain transect. Continue on Old
11 C.C. road south to Summit Valley and turn east on the Summit Valley
12 road (also called Border road) and end the transect at the east edge
13 of the big open field before coming to the Addy-Cedonia road. Total
14 length equals five and three-tenths miles for the original Dunn
15 mountain transect and fifteen miles for the standard.

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