

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0186

Bear coupons-game and fish.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Wharff, Rodriguez-Williams,
Schmid, Webber and Winter and Senator(s)
Dockstader, French, Ide and McKeown

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to game and fish; requiring the game and
2 fish commission to issue bear coupons as specified; making
3 legislative findings; requiring the game and fish
4 commission to provide evidence of grizzly bear population
5 recovery as specified; making conforming amendments;
6 requiring rulemaking; and providing for effective dates.

7

8 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

9

10 **Section 1.** W.S. 23-1-703(c), 23-2-101(j)(intro) and
11 23-3-105(a) and by creating a new subsection (d) are
12 amended to read:

13

1 **23-1-703. Limitation of number of certain licenses;**
2 **reservation of certain licenses; reservation of certain**
3 **unused licenses.**

4
5 (c) Except as provided in W.S. 23-3-105(d) and except
6 as provided in this subsection and subsection (f) of this
7 section or by rule of the commission, no person who is
8 issued a hunting license on and after July 1, 2022 for a
9 grizzly bear, or for a mountain goat, any moose or antlered
10 moose, any ram bighorn sheep, any bighorn sheep and any
11 wild bison, and no person who, on July 1, 2022, is subject
12 to the five (5) year restriction under subsection (b) of
13 this section for a moose or bighorn sheep license, shall be
14 eligible to apply for or receive a hunting license for that
15 particular species in any future year. The commission may
16 issue hunting licenses to any person in future years when
17 necessary for wildlife management purposes to harvest
18 grizzly bear, mountain goat, ewe or lamb bighorn sheep or
19 cow or calf moose. The commission may issue hunting
20 licenses to any person to harvest cow or calf wild bison
21 pursuant to W.S. 23-2-107(f).

22

1 **23-2-101. Fees; restrictions; nonresident application**
2 **fee; nonresident licenses; verification of residency**
3 **required; donation of refunded application fees.**

4
5 (j) Subject to W.S. 23-1-705(e), 23-2-101(f),
6 ~~23-1-705(e)~~ and 23-3-105(d) and the applicable fee under
7 W.S. 23-1-701, the following hunting licenses and tags may
8 be purchased for the fee indicated and subject to the
9 limitations provided:

10
11 **23-3-105. Antelope, deer and elk coupons; payment to**
12 **landowner; kill on federal or state land; bear coupons.**

13
14 (a) Antelope, deer and elk licenses shall have two
15 (2) coupons attached, each bearing the same serial number
16 as the body of the permit, one (1) designated "antelope,
17 deer or elk coupon" and one (1) designated "landowner's
18 coupon". Each resident elk license may have an additional
19 coupon attached as provided in subsection (d) of this
20 section.

21
22 (d) Each resident elk license issued for 2026 and
23 2027 in a hunt area that is entirely outside of the greater

1 Yellowstone ecosystem recovery zone as established by the
2 United States fish and wildlife service shall include a
3 bear coupon. Nothing in this subsection shall prohibit the
4 issuance of a bear coupon for a hunt area that is in whole
5 or in part within any demographic monitoring area
6 established outside the greater Yellowstone ecosystem
7 recovery zone. The bear coupon shall not require an
8 additional license fee under W.S. 23-2-101(j) and shall not
9 be considered a license for purposes of W.S. 23-1-703(c). A
10 bear coupon under this subsection shall only authorize the
11 holder of the bear coupon to take not more than one (1)
12 brown or black bear or grizzly bear that is in an area
13 where the licensee would be authorized to take an elk as
14 designated by the elk license. If any licensee takes a bear
15 pursuant to a coupon under this subsection, the licensee
16 shall:

17
18 (i) Attach the bear coupon to the carcass of the
19 bear as provided in W.S. 23-3-104;

20
21 (ii) As soon as practicable, notify the game and
22 fish commission of the time, place and manner of the taking
23 of the bear;

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

(iii) If the bear is a grizzly bear, provide any additional information required by the game and fish commission to ensure that a sustainable population of grizzly bears is maintained within the Yellowstone recovery area.

Section 2.

(a) The legislature finds that grizzly bears have recovered in Wyoming and should be removed from the endangered species and threatened species list and that the state should be responsible for management of grizzly bears in Wyoming.

(b) Not later than July 1, 2025 and prior to issuing any bear coupon in accordance with W.S. 23-3-105(d) as created by section 1 of this act, the game and fish commission shall present all evidence to the United States fish and wildlife service supporting the fact that grizzly bears have recovered in Wyoming and should be removed from the endangered species and threatened species list and that

1 the state should be responsible for management of grizzly
2 bears in Wyoming.

3

4 (c) Nothing in this act shall be deemed to allow any
5 taking of grizzly bears within the greater Yellowstone
6 ecosystem recovery zone as established by the United States
7 fish and wildlife service.

8

9 **Section 3.** The Wyoming game and fish commission shall
10 adopt any rules necessary to implement this act not later
11 than January 1, 2026.

12

