

Citizen Resolution # 040123



Amend Black Bear Bait Regulations

Wisconsin's lengthy, liberal bear baiting rules allow 5.5 months of baiting an unlimited number of bait stations. In sharp contrast, Minnesota and Michigan limit baiting to three tended bait stations per registered hunter for two months. Stations can be easily moved online using a relocation from. Wisconsin has NO bait registration requirements. Wardens lack time and manpower to respond to all calls received during summer months, and baiting violations are not a priority compared to boating and ATV calls. Our baiting season increases the chances of disease transmission among all wildlife at these sites, hound-wolf conflict, and bear habituation to human food at campgrounds and homes. DNR article "Take Steps To Avoid Conflicts With Bears" asks citizens to not feed bear in spring, remove bird feeders, keep pet food, garbage, and recycling in closed buildings, and to clean grease from grills. Bait sites set at this very same time are filled with all of these same foods and scents. Bacon grease and scents are routinely sprayed in trees to attract bear. This is a double standard.

States that mandate fixed identification of bear bait stations include a combination of: GPS coordinates, name, address, driver's license or DNR hunting license number, township section and range, and signage. Required identification results in more hunter accountability and allows wardens to swiftly identify violations. A shorter baiting season decreases the number of conflicts at these stations and encourages bears to eat a natural diet readily available in the woods where they belong. A shorter season would create a more even playing field for non-local hunters who travel long distances to establish and maintain their baits. Bait station overcrowding is becoming more problematic. Signage equates to accountability.

Currently the WDNR has no numerical data regarding bait sites They can't properly manage what they don't measure. They have stated that this information could be useful.

Do you support the WCC working with the WDNR to amend bear baiting regulations through the introduction of rule changes to require that bait sites be identified and to limit baiting to no earlier than 30 days prior to bear hunting season?

Additional Information provided by author:

<https://wildlife.org/jwm-study-bait-is-major-food-source-for-northern-wisconsin-bears>

https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/recreation/hunting/bear/bait_form.pdf

<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1533&context=>

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/43461>

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