

RECEIVED

DEC 14 2015

TOWNSHIP CLERK  
TWP. OF WEST MILFORD



## DEP NEWS RELEASE

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Chris Christie, Governor  
Kim Guadagno, Lt. Governor  
Bob Martin, Commissioner



**IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
December 13, 2015

**Contact:** Bob Considine (609) 292-2994  
Lawrence Hajna (609) 984-1795  
Caryn Shinske (609) 984-1795

### **NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE EXTENDS BLACK BEAR HUNT AN ADDITIONAL FOUR DAYS**

*DECISION BASED ON REVIEW OF TAGGED BEARS HARVESTED OVER THE PAST WEEK*

**(15/P116) TRENTON** –The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife announced today a four-day extension of the black bear hunting season in the northern part of the state based on an analysis of data on the past week's harvest.

The second phase of the hunt is scheduled to begin a half-hour prior to sunrise this Wednesday, December 16 and will continue until a half-hour after sunset on Saturday, December 19.

“The harvest numbers recorded this week have fallen short of our six-day wildlife management goal, which was arrived at through extensive science and research that has been ongoing since 2010,” Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin said. “With the four-day extension, we will reach a harvest number that will keep the black bear population healthy and sustainable, while reducing the potential for conflicts with people.”

Northwestern New Jersey has one of the nation's densest populations of black bears, a situation that is forcing bears to expand territory into more populated areas of the state. New game code regulations, proposed earlier this year and adopted by the DEP on Nov. 16, provide the opportunity to extend the bear hunting season by four days should the hunting season not achieve goals deemed necessary to provide better ecological balance to the bear population and reduce the potential for bear-human encounters.

The decision to extend the hunt was based on a review of data of bears that were tagged by the Division of Fish and Wildlife over the past year and brought by hunters to check stations within the bear hunting zones.

Of 133 tagged bears available to the Division of Fish and Wildlife for the purposes of calculating hunt harvest rates this year, 24 were brought to check stations, for an 18 percent harvest rate. The Comprehensive Black Bear Management Policy allows for a season extension if the harvest rate during the six-day season finishes below 20 percent.

The state's annual black bear hunt began Monday, December 7, in all or portions of eight northern New Jersey counties. Totals posted on the Division of Fish and Wildlife website today

show that, thus far, 472 bears were harvested through Saturday, with the highest totals on the first two days of the hunt.

The bear hunting zones include all of Sussex, Warren, Morris and Hunterdon counties, as well as portions of Passaic, Somerset, Bergen and Mercer counties.

The updated 2015 policy was developed after extensive research and review of the five bear hunting seasons that have taken place since 2010. The Division of Fish and Wildlife determined that expanded hunting opportunities were necessary to reduce the population and to reduce the potential for conflicts with people.

Hunters who have already harvested a bear this season are not eligible to continue hunting for bear during the four-day extension. For hunters continuing to hunt this season, there will be three mandatory bear check stations open for the remaining period. They are located at the Whittingham Wildlife Management Area in Newton, the Pequest Wildlife Management Area in Oxford, and the Green Pond Gold Course in Rockaway.

For more details on the bear check stations, visit: [www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/bearchksta.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/bearchksta.htm).

For information on New Jersey's 2015 black bear hunt, current and past harvest numbers, and game code amendments adopted on Nov. 16, visit: [www.njfishandwildlife.com/bearseason\\_info.htm](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/bearseason_info.htm)

For more information on black bears, including black bear biology and behavior, bear safety tips and bear education, visit: <http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/bearfacts.htm>

####