

Governor Phil Murphy

Murphy Administration Takes Actions to Facilitate the Reinstatement of a Regulated Black Bear Hunt This Year to Protect the Safety of Residents

11/15/2022

Governor Also Signs Executive Order Paving Way for Regulated Hunt to Occur on State Lands

TRENTON – Today, the Fish and Game Council voted to approve emergency regulations amending the Game Code and adopting a new Comprehensive Black Bear Management Plan (CBBMP) to control the black bear population and reduce the threat of dangerous encounters between bears and humans through regulated hunting and non-lethal management measures.

Following the Council's vote, the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approved the new CBBMP and agreed with the Council's finding that a hunt is necessary this December to protect the safety of New Jersey residents. Governor Murphy then concurred with the Council's finding and signed Executive Order No. 310, which rescinds a prior executive order (No. 34) from 2018 instructing the Commissioner to take action to protect black bears on State-owned land.

In accordance with Executive Order No. 310, the Commissioner then rescinded the Department's own prior Administrative Order (No. 2018-24), which prohibited the hunting of black bears on all State-owned land.

"The facts on the ground have shown that we cannot rely on nonlethal methods alone to protect New Jersey residents from a growing black bear population," said Governor Murphy. "Today's actions will facilitate the reinstatement of a regulated black bear hunt this year to help limit dangerous interactions between people and bears to protect public safety."

This action is being taken in response to an increase in the black bear population and a rise in black bear incidents of 237% from January through October this year as compared to the same time period in 2021. These incidents include 62 aggressive encounters with humans, 89 instances of property damage, and attacks on both livestock and pets.

For additional information about bear hunting season this year, visit https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/bears/bear-hunting-season-information/ (https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/bears/bear-hunting-season-information/).

For a copy of Executive Order No. 310, click here (https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-310.pdf).

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