



Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

ACTION ITEMS RECAP

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Quarterly Commission Meeting Dec. 1, 2023

NOTE: The following is a summary of action taken by the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission at its quarterly meeting on Dec. 1, 2023. Official meeting minutes will be reviewed at a future meeting. Please note that proposed regulation changes are reviewed by the legislative branch for legal conformity, which typically takes several months. Both proposed and recently enacted amendments are posted at fw.ky.gov. The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources provides this summary to enhance the public's awareness about potential changes to hunting, fishing, boating or other related regulations.

In a meeting held Dec. 1, 2023, the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission elected new officers to serve in the coming calendar year. They also voted to recommend a prohibition on recreational hunting of wild pigs in Kentucky; endorse a change in statute pertaining to licensing of guides and outfitters; and recommend the establishment of a new regulation requiring wildlife disease reporting by veterinarians and related facilities.

In addition to approving the September 22, 2023, quarterly meeting minutes and quarterly financial reports, the Commission voted in favor of approving the following Action Items presented at the meeting (authorizing staff to promulgate regulatory changes for legislative approval):

- Prohibit hunting of wild pigs in Kentucky
 - Amend [301 KAR 3:030](#)
 - Remove wild pigs from list of species with year-round seasons
 - Landowners incurring damage will retain rights to shoot
- Recommendation for legislative change on commercial guide licensure authority
- Create new "special agency fundraising permits"

- Promulgate a new regulation 301 KAR 5:210 (and amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) and other regulations as necessary)
- Allot a limited number of special permits for elk (2) and special bonus permits for bear, deer, and wild turkey (3 each), to be used in bonus drawing packages for raising revenue to help meet KDFWR's operational funding needs and provide customers with special hunting opportunities
- Add provisions for special hunting regulations on designated WMAs
 - Amend [301 KAR 3:010](#) – Public use of Wildlife Management Areas
 - Create new section applicable to properties suited to more restrictive uses of firearms than statewide regulations
 - Include restriction of deer hunting to archery and crossbow only, and shotgun used with shotshells as the only firearm allowed for use
 - Allow .177-.25 caliber air rifles for small game
 - Prohibit target shooting with rimfire or centerfire rifles or single-projectile shotgun ammunition
- Elk Hunting – Season and permit recommendations for the 2024 season
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:132](#) – Elk hunting seasons, permits, zones, and requirements
 - Allow pooling of points for Elk Restoration & Elk Voucher-Cooperator Permits (both permit types already have the same elk permit-earning values)
 - Modify Loyalty Redraw provision to reflect “cumulative” rather than “consecutive” for loyalty years applied
- Update WMA deer quota hunts regulation for the 2024 season
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:178](#) – Deer hunting on WMAs
 - Remove December antlerless only hunt on Veteran's Memorial WMA
 - Remove 3-day January open firearms hunt on West KY WMA
 - Clarify language to state that a quota hunt participant shall be given one preference point for each “antlerless” deer instead of each “female” deer_on Ballard, Clay, Taylorsville Lake and Veterans Memorial WMAs
 - Remove the outdated reference to 1 bonus deer quota hunt permit for a quota hunt applicant due to historic changes in the Commission's handling of Special Commission Permits
 - Modify [301 KAR 2:178](#) Section 2 (7) (d) to allow the hunter to plainly label the portable stand with the hunter's customer identification number.
- Promulgate a new administrative regulation requiring wildlife disease reporting from veterinarians, wildlife disease testing facilities and researchers

- Amend [301 KAR 4](#) to include a new administrative regulation for wildlife disease reporting by veterinarians and others upon receiving test-positive results
- Establish a reporting mechanism to address wildlife disease concerns that impacts preservation and conservation of wildlife populations per KRS 150
- Define conditions and procedures for reporting diseases detected in wildlife species
- Departments of Agriculture and Public Health have similar reporting requirements
- Modify regulations for commercial trotlines
 - Amend [301 KAR 1:146](#) – Commercial fishing gear.
 - Commercial trotlines must be tagged at both ends and at least every 100 ft
 - Commercial trotline maximum length reduced from 6,000 ft to 1,000 ft
- Modify water bodies open to commercial fishing
 - Amend [301 KAR 1:150](#) – Waters open to commercial fishing.
 - Establish an upper boundary for waters open to commercial fishing on the mainstem of the Cumberland River above Lake Cumberland, which shall be its confluence with the Rockcastle River
- Modify special regulations for bass at Grayson Lake and eliminate minimum size limit on Channel Catfish in many public waters
 - Amend [301 KAR 1:201](#) – Taking of fish by traditional methods
 - Add a protective slot limit of 12-15 inches for Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass at Grayson Lake
 - Remove the 12-inch minimum size restriction for Channel Catfish on more than 100 water bodies in Kentucky

If approved by the legislature, proposed administrative regulation changes are anticipated to take effect by fall 2024 or spring 2025.

The Commission also voted unanimously to increase Commissioner Rich Storm's salary 6% as of October 1, 2023. This increase brings the commissioner's salary in line with the 6% salary increase for all state employees that was effective July 1, 2023.

The 9-member board elected the following new officers for 2024: Chair - Josh Lillard, 5th District representative; Vice Chair - Greg Cecil, 4th District representative; and, Secretary – Jerry Ferrell, 6th District representative.

The meeting was livestreamed on the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' YouTube [channel](#), where a [replay](#) of the meeting is available on demand.

Individuals or organizations may contact their district representative on the commission about any pertinent topic of concern. Procedures for submitting public comments about current business items via email or in person are outlined in the agenda for each meeting, which is generally posted on the agency's website 1-2 weeks prior to the meeting date.

The commission, a [nine-member board](#) comprised of volunteers who serve four-year terms, recommends hunting, fishing and boating regulations on behalf of the anglers, hunters, and other wildlife-related stakeholders in the commonwealth. Any recommendation by the commission to amend or create a state administrative regulation must receive legislative approval before becoming law. The process of promulgating regulations spans several months.

The next quarterly commission meeting is scheduled for March 1, 2024, in Frankfort. Agendas will be posted at fw.ky.gov when available.

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