



Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission proposed regulation changes at its quarterly meeting on Sept. 19

Special commission fundraising permits awarded to 12 non-profit organizations for 2026 hunting seasons

NOTE: The following is a summary of actions taken by the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission at its quarterly meeting on Sept. 19, 2025. 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.

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 30, 2025) — The Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission voted to recommend amendments to several hunting, fishing, boating and wildlife regulations and conducted other business in a Sept. 19, 2025, regular meeting as presented in the [detailed agenda of the meeting](#).

In addition to approving the May 21, 2025, meeting minutes, the commission members considered the following action items. If approved by the commission, proposed regulatory changes are filed with the Kentucky legislature to be reviewed and considered for approval. Administrative regulation changes are generally anticipated to take effect within six to nine months of their filing. The public may follow legislative developments on these regulations at [Title 301 • Kentucky Administrative Regulations • Legislative Research Commission](#).

The commission approved the following action items requiring legislative approval before being enacted:

- Amend [301 KAR 2:251 - Hunting and trapping seasons and limits for furbearers](#) to adjust bag limits for river otter and bobcat;
 - The Wildlife Division proposes to increase the otter bag limit to the following: 15 per season, only 10 of which can be taken from Otter Zone 2;
 - The Wildlife Division proposes to increase the bobcat bag limit to the

following: 10 per season, only three of which shall be taken with a gun/by hunting.

- Amend [301 KAR 2:041 - Shooting areas, dog training areas, commercial foxhound training enclosures, and bobwhite shoot-to-train season](#) to establish a permit for rabbit hunting enclosures;
 - Establish requirements for acreage, fencing and containment;
 - Establish requirements for animal holding and treatment, quarantine procedures, and disease reporting and testing;
 - Establish requirements for permits, inspections, record keeping and reporting, possession of wildlife and create definitions for rabbit training enclosure permits;
 - Expand revocation and denial section for standardization across permits;
 - Define species allowed in shooting areas;
 - Standardize naming of shooting area between [301 KAR 2:041](#) and [301 KAR 5:022](#);
 - Standardize shooting area permit transfer requirements.
- Amend [301 KAR 2:081 – Transportation and holding of native wildlife](#);
 - Establish requirements for permitting, possession and transfer of native rabbits to rabbit training enclosures.
- Amend [301 KAR 5:022 – License, tag, and permit fees](#);
 - Create a rabbit training enclosure permit for \$25;
 - Standardize naming of shooting area between [301 KAR 2:041](#) and [301 KAR 5:022](#).
- Amend [301 KAR 6:001 – Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 6](#) to modify Chapter 6 regulations to comply and comport with United States Coast Guard amendments and National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) recommendations.
 - Definitions to include the following definition:
 - Law enforcement vessel;
 - Public safety vessel;
 - Engine cut-off switch link;
 - Engine cut-off switch;
 - Wireless cut-off system;
 - Incorporate other definitions included in Chapter 6 regulations.
 - Amend [301 KAR 6:020 – Boating safety equipment](#) to add a section regarding engine cut-off switch requirements.
 - Amend [301 KAR 6:030 – Waterway safety requirements](#) to include: Section 2 (4) to add wording “coast guard approved.”
 - Add Section 6 to include language regarding enforcement and public safety vessel operations distance passage “Move Over Law” requirement(s).

- Amend [301 KAR 6:001 – Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 6](#) to create definitions for potential future regulation of wakesports.
 - Define wakeboat and wakesports.
 - Please note: this action item was moved forward from a discussion item on the agenda to allow staff to file these definitions with the Legislative Research Commission at the same time as the request in the action item related to definitions in Chapter 6 to comply with those used by the U.S. Coast Guard and NASBLA. This does not constitute an action to approve the proposed restrictions of wakesports in the remaining portion of the discussion item to amend [301 KAR 6:030 – Waterway safety requirements](#). The commission will consider action on that amendment during their next quarterly meeting.

The commission approved the following action items that do not require legislative approval before being enacted:

- Per [301 KAR 5:200 – Special commission permits for incorporated nonprofit wildlife conservation organizations](#), awarded a total of 10 [special commission permits](#) each for deer, turkey, elk and waterfowl hunting in 2026, to the following nonprofit organizations to be used in fundraising for conservation projects in Kentucky:
 - Camp Hero, Inc. (bear, deer, elk, turkey, waterfowl)
 - Carr Creek Fish and Game Club (bear, deer, elk, turkey, waterfowl)
 - Hopkins County Sportsmen and Sportswomen Club (bear, deer, elk, turkey, waterfowl)
 - Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Education and Resource Foundation (bear, deer, elk, turkey, waterfowl)
 - Kentucky Houndsmen Foundation for Sportsmen's Rights (deer, elk)
 - Kentucky River Longbeards NWTF Chapter (bear, deer, elk, turkey, waterfowl)
 - Lights and Sirens Outdoors, Inc. (bear, deer, turkey, waterfowl)
 - National Deer Association (bear, elk, turkey)
 - Northern Kentucky Quail Forever (bear, deer, elk, turkey, waterfowl)
 - Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (bear, elk, waterfowl)
 - The Nature Conservancy in Kentucky (deer, elk, turkey, waterfowl)
 - Wildlife Women, Inc. (bear, deer, turkey, waterfowl)
- Approved All Aboard Boat Rentals, LLC dba All Aboard Pontoon Rentals, to operate a commercial pontoon rental service on Lake Beshear in Dawson Springs, Kentucky with limitations on the number and size of rental pontoon boats.
- Approved expansion of the ongoing deer scrape study into the Breckinridge County Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance Zone, in addition to a current study area

in Ballard County. The study will work to try to determine if there are CWD prions on the landscape that may indicate presence of the disease.

- Approved one land acquisition project. (Details regarding land projects are typically discussed in closed session as allowed under Kentucky's open meetings law, to help preclude adverse impacts to the commonwealth's interests in its negotiations and legal proceedings.)

In other business, the commission received a quarterly financial report as well as informational updates on the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) and summer wild turkey surveys and research. The commission also heard new business and discussion items that will be considered further at its next quarterly meeting.

Business items on the commission's meeting agenda that include proposed changes to regulations typically follow a three-step process at successive quarterly meetings, with items introduced first as new business, then proceeding for further discussion, and finally appearing as action items (at the commission's discretion). This general stepwise process allows for adequate time for public awareness and comment on proposed regulatory changes. Agendas for [commission meetings](#) are posted at fw.ky.gov in advance of the meeting dates, and details about meeting logistics and submitting public comments are included therein.

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. Contact information is available on Kentucky Fish and Wildlife's [district commission members webpage](#). 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 one to two weeks before the meeting date.

[The Kentucky Fish and Wildlife 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 next quarterly commission meeting date is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 5, 2025, in Frankfort, Ky. An agenda and meeting location will be posted at fw.ky.gov when available.

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