



Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission proposed regulation changes at its quarterly meeting on Dec. 5

CWD Surveillance Zone expanded by nine additional counties following a positive detection in a deer taken in Pulaski County

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 15, 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 Dec. 5, 2025, regular meeting as presented in the [detailed agenda of the meeting](#).

In addition to approving the Sept. 19, 2025, quarterly commission 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 6:030 – Waterway safety requirements](#) to create regulations to define the waterbodies and area of some waterbodies where wakesports will be allowed.
 - Propose that wakesports will only be permitted at least 200 feet from shore on all sides, and at least 200 feet from a commercial dock or moorage harbor on eligible waterbodies.
 - Propose a provision that wakeboat users shall drain the ballast tanks of their boats to the fullest extent practicable upon leaving a body of water and before leaving the ramp area.
 - Wakesports eligible waters shall be: Mississippi River, Ohio River, Kentucky Lake, Lake Cumberland, Lake Barkley, Barren River Lake, Green River Lake,

Cave Run Lake, Dale Hollow Lake, Laurel River Lake, Nolin River Lake, Rough River Lake, Taylorsville Lake, Herrington Lake, Yatesville Lake, Dewey Lake, and Lake Linville. All other waters in Kentucky shall be ineligible for wakesports.

- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity.
- Amend [301 KAR 1:201 – Taking of fish by traditional fishing methods](#) to modify Black Bass size and daily limits, Shovelnose Sturgeon daily limit, Skipjack Herring daily limit and additions to the Fishing in Neighborhoods (FINs) Program.
 - Remove the slot limit on Largemouth Bass at Cave Run Lake and enact that there will be no size limit on Largemouth Bass and the aggregate daily limit on black bass will be 10 fish but only five may be above 12-inches (18-inch minimum size limit on Smallmouth Bass will remain).
 - Remove the slot limit on Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass on Otter Creek in Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area.
 - On the following waterbodies with a black bass protective slot limit, change the black bass aggregate daily limit from 6 fish to 10 fish. The lakes are: Beaver Lake, Bert Combs Lake, Beulah Lake, Boltz Lake, Carter Caves State Park Lake, Cave Run Lake, Corinth Lake, Elkhorn Creek, Elmer Davis Lake, General Butler State Park Lake, Grayson Lake, Lake Blythe, Lake Malone, Lake Pennyrile, Lincoln Homestead State Park Lake, McNeely Lake, Panbowl Lake, and Wood Creek Lake.
 - Add a daily limit of 2 fish for Shovelnose Sturgeon.
 - Add a daily limit of 100 fish for Skipjack Herring.
 - Add two small lakes to the Fishing In Neighborhoods (FINs) Program. The following two lakes would be added to the “List of Special Lakes and Ponds” that is material incorporated by reference and thus would be managed under FINs program regulations.
 - Owens’ Lake – 8.6-acre lake in Boone County owned by the City of Walton
 - Harry T. Clark Community Park Pond – 1.2-acre county-owned lake in Rowan County
 - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity
- Amend [301 KAR 3:010 – Public use of Wildlife Management Areas](#) to clarify that the guiding of hunters on a WMA for profit constitutes commercial activity and would therefore be prohibited, and to clarify that fishing tournaments that launch at a Wildlife Management Area (WMA) boat ramp is not a commercial activity under the current WMA regulations. Also, amend [301 KAR 3:001 – Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 3](#) to define commercial activity and modify the group definition.
 - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

- Amend [301 KAR 2:178 - Deer hunting on public properties](#) to modify deer hunting regulations to allow hunting on properties owned by county or local governments to include wildlife management areas, state parks, other public lands and federally controlled areas.
 - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity
- Amend [301 KAR 4:090 - Taxidermy and the buying and selling of inedible wildlife parts](#) to incorporate by reference applications and reporting forms for Resident Fur Buyer, Resident Fur Processor, Non-Resident Fur Buyer, and Non-Resident 3-Day Fur Buyer licenses.
 - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity
- Amend [301 KAR 5:210 - Special agency fundraising permits](#) to update the special fundraising permits drawing regulation to modify definitions and re-order permit drawing sequence. Also, amend [301 KAR 5:022 – License, tag, registration, and permit fees](#) for conformity.
 - Modify definitions
 - Re-order of permit drawing sequence
 - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

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

- In response to a CWD positive detection in Pulaski County, approved expansion of Kentucky's Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance Zone, to include Pulaski, Wayne, Whitley, McCreary, Lincoln, Laurel, Rockcastle, Russell, and Casey counties, with accompanying related restrictions.
 - Authorize baiting under Commissioner's authorization
 - Prohibit deer rehabilitation within the designated Surveillance Zone
 - Implement carcass restrictions
 - Expand deer scrape study into the designated Surveillance Zone
- Approved Commission member Meade's request for the formation of a limited number of Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission committees to include input on potential issues and business items by Kentucky sportsmen and sportswomen, pending approval of the format structure to be presented as a New Business item at the next quarterly meeting in February 2026.

The commission also heard new business and discussion items that will be considered further at its next quarterly meeting.

The meeting was livestreamed on the [Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' YouTube channel](#), where a [replay of the December 2025 meeting](#) is available on demand.

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.

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. Both proposed and recently enacted amendments are posted on the department's [Administrative Regulations](#) webpage.

The next quarterly commission meeting date is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 27, 2026, in Frankfort, Ky. An agenda and meeting location will be posted on the [Commission Meeting Dates](#) webpage on the department's website at fw.ky.gov when available.

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Public Notice:

The next commission meeting date will be rescheduled; the updated date will be announced. Please check fw.ky.gov for future updates.