

Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources



Commission Meeting

March 21, 2025 | 8:30 AM (ET)

In-person: #1 Sportsman's Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601

Livestream: [YouTube.com/FishandWildlifeKY](https://www.youtube.com/FishandWildlifeKY)

Minutes

Call to Order and Welcome (Video 17:14)

Invocation (Video 17:55) Wes Little, Regional Wildlife Program Coordinator

Pledge of Allegiance (Video 19:29) Marcus Bowling, Department Statewide Boating Coordinator

Roll Call (Video 19:51) Dr. Robin Floyd, Josh Lillard, Chuck Meade, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, and Walter Robertson

Chair's Remarks (Video 20:35)

Commissioner's Remarks (Video 21:27)

Informational Item:

- Quarterly Financial Reports (Video 26:43)
 - Melissa Trent, Director of Administrative Services, presented the quarterly financial reports.
- Update on CWD (Video 30:02)
 - Director of Wildlife, provided an update on the department's ongoing efforts to monitor Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

Action items:

- Minutes from December 6, 2024 Quarterly Commission Meeting (Video 51:44)

- Modify the language regarding the definition and usage of electric trolling motors on selected water bodies (Video 52:58)
 - Dave Dreves, Director of Fisheries, proposed amending [301 KAR 6:001](#) – Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 6 and amending [301 KAR 1:015](#) – Boat and motor restrictions. These amendments would:
 - Define “electric trolling motor” as an electric motor equal to or less than 3 hp, 1.3 kilowatts input power, or 120 lbs of thrust.
 - Clarify that there is a restriction to idle speed only on selected water bodies when using electric motors exceeding 10 hp and 6.0 kilowatts input power.
 - Move 301 KAR 1:015 to Chapter 6 and recodify as a new regulation.
 - Commission member Rhodes made a **motion to accept as submitted**, seconded by Walter Robertson. Votes were as follows: Yes; Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- Boating Registration Fees and Definitions (Video 55:15)
 - Colonel Jeremy McQueary, Director of Law Enforcement, proposed amending [301 KAR 6:001](#) Chapter Definitions. The amendments are as follows:
 - Add [KRS 235.010 \(4\)](#) definition of “Personal Watercraft” (PWC)
 - Add [KRS 235.010 \(1\)](#) definition of “Vessel”
 - Modify “Class A” definition to include PWC
 - Define hydrofoil/eFoil boards and mechanically propelled surfboards
 - Repeal [301 KAR 6:005](#) (Boat registration fees) and replace into [301 KAR 5:022](#) (License, tag and permit fees)
 - Clean up and removal of antiquated language in Section 1
 - Clarify all vessels will be registered based upon vessel length
 - Remove the trolling motor only registration fee
 - Remove the inboard motor only registration fee
 - Commission member Rhodes made a **motion to accept as submitted**, seconded by Jeff Raymer. Votes were as follows: Yes, Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- Recommendations for Guides and Outfitters (Video 57:14)
 - Gabe Jenkins, Deputy Commissioner, on behalf of the Fisheries, Law Enforcement, and Wildlife divisions, presented recommendations for Guides and Outfitters to conform with [HB586](#) changes to [KRS 150.175](#) and [KRS 150.190](#). The amendments are as follows:
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:030](#)- Commercial guide license regulation and recodify in [Chapter 3](#)

- Change the regulation title to “Fishing and Hunting Guide and Outfitter Licenses”
- Create Fishing Outfitter, Hunting Outfitter, Fishing Guide and Hunting Guide license types for both a resident or non-resident.
- Establish Tiering of outfitter license’s based upon number of guides working under the outfitter
- Require the holder of an outfitter license to report on any guiding activity that the license holder provides
- Modify the license suspension and revocation parameters for all 4 license types
- Create new applications for all 4 license types
- Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) – License, tag and permit fees
- Establish the following licenses and fees:

	Tier 1		Tier 2	
	Resident	Non-Resident	Resident	Non-Resident
Fishing Outfitter	\$250	\$1,000	\$750	\$1,500
Hunting Outfitter	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000

	Tier 3		Tier 4	
	Resident	Non-Resident	Resident	Non-Resident
Fishing Outfitter	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hunting Outfitter	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$3,000

	Resident	Non-Resident
Fishing Guide	\$100	\$400
Hunting Guide	\$100	\$400

- Commission member Rhodes made a **motion to accept as submitted**, seconded by Dr. Robin Floyd. Votes were as follows: Yes, Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- Recommendations for Biennial Adjustments in License and Permit Fees (Video 1:00:30)
 - Gabe Jenkins, Deputy Commissioner, proposed amending [301 KAR 5:022](#) – License, tag and permit fees. This amendment would:

- Establish a biennial fee adjustment in 301 KAR 5:022.
 - Exclude fee adjustment for all fees in Section 8 (application fees)
 - Exempt Federal Duck Stamp (e-stamp) fee as the amount is set by the federal government
 - Include boat registration fees ([301 KAR 6:005](#)), contingent on passage of the boating registration and definitions agenda item
 - Include the boat dealers application fee and remove it from the regulation ([301 KAR 6:070](#))
- Biennial adjustment amount would be determined by summing the 12-month percent changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) over the previous two years, as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The final amount would be rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent. Note Appendix 1 as a reference that reflects the 2023 and 2024 CPI-U.
- Initial implementation to coincide with the start of the 2026 license year and use the 2024 and 2025 CPI-U
- Establish a reduced price for first-time resident license buyers to obtain a sportsman's license - \$35
- Establish a bobcat permit fee of \$10
- Remove the dog kennel and horse stall rental fees
- Add the \$50 3-day non-resident fur buyer license to the regulation
- Amended the following regulations for conformity: [301 KAR 1:016](#), [301 KAR 1:115](#), [301 KAR 1:125](#), [301 KAR 1:152](#), [301 KAR 2:030](#), [301 KAR 2:041](#), [301 KAR 2:075](#), [301 KAR 2:081](#), [301 KAR 2:082](#), [301 KAR 2:083](#), [301 KAR 2:195](#), [301 KAR 2:230](#), [301 KAR 3:120](#), [301 KAR 4:070](#), [301 KAR 5:210](#)
- Commission member Raymer made a **motion to approve**, seconded by Walter Robertson. Votes were as follows: Yes, Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- Establish a free annual shooting range permit for holders of a valid Kentucky annual hunting or fishing license, as well as a paid annual permit and a paid one-day permit for shooting range use on any KDFWR managed, leased or KDFWR affiliated shooting ranges. (Video 1:14:24)
 - Kevin Kelly, Director of Information and Education, proposed to make the following amendments:
 - Amend [301 KAR 3:015](#) - Shooting ranges on department-owned or managed lands
 - Require a shooting range permit for shooters ages 16 and older on any KDFWR-managed, -leased or -affiliated shooting range
 - Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, tag, and permit fees

- Establish a free annual shooting range permit for holders of a valid Kentucky annual hunting or fishing license
 - Establish an annual shooting range permit for \$25
 - Establish a 1-day shooting range permit for \$5
 - Amend [301 KAR 3:010](#) – Public use of Wildlife Management Areas
 - Require groups or clubs with valid WMA use permits that hold events on shooting ranges to maintain a sign-in sheet for event participants and regularly submit this information to the department.
 - Amend [301 KAR 4:100](#) and [301 KAR 3:012](#) for conformity
 - Commission member Dr. Robin Floyd made a **motion to approve**, seconded by Matt Rhodes. Votes were as follows: Yes, Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- Black Bass (Video 1:21:24)
 - Commission member Meade would like to propose the stocking of 5,000 F1 Florida-strain bass on Paintsville Lake, funded by the department.
 - Commission member Meade made a **motion to table this item to the next meeting as an Action Item due to a scheduling conflict with the Chairman. As a result, the individuals scheduled to present on this item need additional time to prepare**, seconded by Walter Robertson. Votes were as follows: No: Dr. Robin Floyd, Matt Rhodes. Yes: Jeff Raymer, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carries.***

5 Minute Break (1:24:07)

Discussion Items:

- Create definitions and regulations to define the waterbodies and the area of some waterbodies where wakesports will be allowed (Video 1:36:24)
 - Dave Dreves, Director of Fisheries, and Colonel Jeremy McQueary, Director of Law Enforcement, proposed amending [301 KAR 6:001](#) – Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 6 as follows:
 - Define a wakeboat and wakesports
 - Amend [301 KAR 6:030](#) – Waterway safety requirements.
 - Use standard minimum distances of at least 300 feet from shore on all sides, and at least 300 feet from a commercial dock or moorage harbor, to delineate zones at least 300 feet wide, and is a minimum of ¼ mile in length to inform decisions on waterbodies and areas of waterbodies where wakesports will be permitted.
 - Add 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.
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.

- Promulgate fishing and waterfowl hunting reciprocal agreements on bordering waters (Video 1:57:50)
 - Jenny Gilbert, Legislative Liaison, Dave Dreves, Director of Fishers, and Colonel Jeremy McQueary, Director of Law Enforcement, proposed promulgating the following:
 - [301 KAR Chapter 1](#) - establish provisions for fishing reciprocal agreements;
 - Missouri for the Mississippi River
 - Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio for the Ohio River
 - West Virginia for the Big Sandy and Tug Fork Rivers
 - Tennessee for the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River, Dale Hollow Lake, and Kentucky Lake
 - [301 KAR Chapter 2](#) - establish provisions for waterfowl hunting reciprocal agreements;
 - Indiana and Ohio for the Ohio River
 - West Virginia for the Big Sandy and Tug Fork Rivers
 - Jenny Gilbert has requested that this item be considered for a vote today as an action item due to the urgency of the matter. While not all legal agreements are currently in place, once they are finalized and received, the department will be able to proceed with the promulgation. This action would consolidate the separate amendments as proposed for Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 to one new regulation in Chapter 3 for simplicity and for the benefit of end users.
 - Commission member Rhodes made a **motion to pass this item as an action item**, seconded by Dr. Robin Floyd. Votes were as follows: Yes, Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- Update license purchasing regulation to use current terminology in other regulations or statutes and clarify or update other unclear or outdated provisions (Video 2:23:50)
 - Deputy Commissioner Brian Clark proposed amending [301 KAR 5:030](#) - Purchasing licenses and permits. The amendments would be as follows:
 - Replace “combination” with “sportsman’s,” “disability” with “disabled” in license names
 - Clarify distinctions between disability authorization and license or permit authorization numbers
 - Clarify that refunds may be made to credit card accounts
 - Clarify that an electronic harvest log on a mobile device meets the required documentation in the regulation if in possession of the hunter and can be presented to an officer upon request
 - Add bear, bobcat, and sandhill crane to list of species permits referenced
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.

- Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area (OCORA) deed transfer to Meade County Fiscal Court (Video 2:26:11)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed to the following amendments:
 - Amend: [301 KAR 5:022](#) License, tag, and permit fees
 - Amend: [301 KAR 3:012](#) Public use of Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area
 - Amend: [301 KAR 2:178](#) Deer Hunting on Wildlife Management Areas, state parks, other public lands, and federally controlled areas
 - Amend: [301 KAR 2:142](#) Spring wild turkey hunting
 - Amend: [301 KAR 2:049](#) Small game and furbearer hunting and trapping on public areas
 - Amend: [301 KAR 1:201](#) Taking of fish by traditional fishing methods
 - Meade County Fiscal Court would like to assume ownership of OCORA
 - Deed language would solidify KDFWR public access and available acreage for hunting and fishing (no net loss in public access or available acreage) in perpetuity
 - Troy Kok, Meade County Judge Executive, joined Director Robinson at the table and asked if the department could provide equipment and operators to remove the current buildings on the property.
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Wildlife Causing Damage
 - Gabe Jenkins, Deputy Commissioner, and Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed the following amendments:
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:176](#) Deer Control tags, deer destruction permits, and landowner designee and change the regulation title to “Wildlife Causing Damage and Landowner Designee Process”
 - Define terms for disposal tag, destruction tag and control tag
 - Clarify terms for damage, department representative and designee
 - Establish parameters for usage of a destruction tag and control tag and require individuals using either tag carry approved authorization on their person while afield
 - Establish requirements for designees and designee denial parameters
 - Require individuals who receive a control tag or destruction tag for deer in a CWD Surveillance Zone county to turn the head of a harvested deer over to the Department for CWD sampling

- Deputy Commissioner Jenkins verbally asked that this line be removed from the proposal: Discontinue issuance of control tags for deer if damage is occurring in a county that is in a Zone 1 as established in [301 KAR 2:172](#)
 - Require control tag users to have a statewide hunting license and/or necessary permits
 - Require designees and individuals using destructions tags and control tags to have hunter education if required as established in [301 KAR 2:185](#)
 - Clarify that if a trap is used to capture wildlife causing damage using a destruction or control tag that the trap must be tagged and checked as required in [KRS 150.400](#) and [KRS 150.410](#)
 - Clarify that to be eligible to receive control tags that a department representative must determine inadequate control of wildlife through the established hunting/trapping seasons is insufficient and additional wildlife should be taken for damage abatement
 - Clean up regulation to:
 - Remove definitions of deer control tag and deer destruction tag
 - Replace “deer” with “wildlife”
 - Replace “conservation officer” with “game warden”
 - Remove parameters for qualifying for deer control tags
 - Remove language requiring a tag be affixed to the carcass until processing
 - Update Forms Incorporated by Reference
- Deputy Commissioner Jenkins verbally requested for the following amendment be removed from the agenda at this time:
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:172](#) (Deer hunting seasons, zones and requirements) and [301 KAR 5:022](#) (License, tag and permit fees):
 - Modify the statewide deer permit and statewide youth deer permit to allow for unlimited antlerless deer (hunters must still comply with antlerless zone bag limits)
 - Remove the additional deer permit
 - Amend [301 KAR 3:120](#) (Commercial Nuisance Wildlife Control)
 - Allow take of deer for NWCO
 - NWCO can only work in an area or location that has been deemed to be experiencing deer damage by a department representative via the process as outlined in [301 KAR 2:176](#)

- Prohibit take via trapping; firearm or archery/crossbow equipment only
 - All inedible parts must be destroyed
 - Require submission of biological samples as determined by department representative
 - NWCOs must adhere to [301 KAR 2:245](#) with regards to carcass disposal
 - Update the materials incorporated by reference documents to include deer
 - Deputy Commissioner Jenkins verbally requested to remove all references to the word “nuisance” in 301 KAR 3:120 and 301 KAR 5:022 that would change the operators to Wildlife Control Operators
- No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Modifications to furbearer regulations (Video 2:49:24)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:251](#) Hunting and trapping seasons and limits for furbearers as follows:
 - Allow furbearers to be trapped in March using water sets as defined in regulation.
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Modifications to regulations related to rehabilitation of wildlife (Video 2:51:37)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending 301 KAR 2:075 Wildlife rehabilitation permit. The amendments are as follows:
 - Worked with permitted wildlife rehabilitators to recommend changes to the permitting and rehabilitation process
 - Create mechanism to allow volunteers to assist permitted wildlife rehabilitators via a sub-permit
 - Remove specific county names from regulation and instead reference the current USDA Enhanced Rabies Surveillance Zone and incorporate by reference the map
 - Allow the release of rabies vector species back into the county of capture OR any adjacent county (outside of the enhanced rabies surveillance zone)
 - Allow an exemption to hold wildlife for longer than 180 days
 - Designate bats as rabies vector species
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Increase hunter opportunities and simplify quota hunts on selected WMAs (Video 2:56:27)

- Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:178](#) - Deer hunting on WMAs, state parks, other public lands, and federally controlled areas as follows:
 - Barren River Lake WMA: Open the Peninsula Unit (Narrows, Goose, and Grass Islands) to deer hunting under statewide regulations including modern firearms season
 - Big Rivers and Higginson Henry WMA archery quota hunts: Revise annual hunt start date - October 25 and add a one-day break on Friday before first Saturday (i.e., start of quota gun hunt)
 - Cane Creek WMA: Establish quota hunts as follows and remove muzzleloader hunts: Unstaffed archery quota hunt beginning Monday following third Saturday in October until November 30, but closed for 3 days beginning Friday before first Saturday of November; unstaffed firearms quota hunt beginning first Saturday of November for two consecutive days
 - Curtis Gates Lloyd WMA: Establish 2, 8-day unstaffed quota hunts on the WMA during modern firearms season
 - Dewey Lake WMA: Establish a 2-deer limit (1 antlered and 1 antlerless) per year
 - Dewey Lake, Fishtrap Lake, Grayson Lake, Griffith Woods, Kleber, Rich, Knobs State Forest, Kentucky River, Mullins, Paintsville Lake, T.N. Sullivan, Taylorsville Lake, Twin Eagle, Williams, and Yellowbank WMAs: Open during early muzzleloader season for added hunter opportunity
 - Green River Lake WMA: Open to deer hunting for late muzzleloader season
 - Green River Lake and Pennyryle State Forest WMAs: Reward hunters for harvesting antlerless deer (quota hunts only) by awarding a preference point per antlerless deer taken (maximum 4 preference points per year)
 - Miller Welch-Central Kentucky WMA: open to archery and crossbow deer hunting under statewide regulations
 - Mud Camp Creek and R.F. Tarter WMAs: open to deer hunting under statewide regulations
 - Yatesville Lake WMA: Allow deer hunting for entire modern firearms season
- No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Add language to specify that hunting access may be controlled by signage (Video 3:03:47)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:178](#) Deer hunting on WMAs, state parks, other public lands, and federally controlled areas as follows:
 - Add signage language to section 2 to become consistent with [301 KAR 3:010](#)
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.

- Add newly acquired properties to public lands regulation (Video 3:04:26)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:178](#) Deer hunting on WMAs, state parks, other public lands, and federally controlled areas as follows:
 - Decker WMA
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Update deer zones for selected counties where deer densities have increased in recent years (Video 3:05:13)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:172](#) Deer hunting seasons, zones, and requirements as follows:
 - Update from zone 4 to 3: Clinton, Jackson, Martin, Menifee, Pike, Rockcastle, and Russell
 - Update from zone 3 to 2: Cumberland, Elliot, Garrard, Johnson, Morgan, and Rowan
 - Update from zone 2 to 1: Adair, Boyd, Breckenridge, Butler, Carter, Daviess, Grayson, Greenup, Hancock, Lawrence, Lewis, Logan, Marion, Meade, Metcalfe, and Taylor (Director Robinson verbally requested to add Ohio County to this list.)
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Update regulatory language (Video 3:08:34)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:083](#) Holding and intrastate transportation of captive cervids as follows:
 - Remove “and number” on the permit when issuing captive cervid permits
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Modifications to deer hunting on State Parks (Video 3:09:28)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:178](#) Deer hunting on WMAs, state parks, other public lands, and federally controlled areas as follows:
 - Adjust various state parks to be open for quota deer hunts, modification of the dates when the hunts will occur, and adjust hunts administered by the Department of Parks
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Deer and turkey hunting on Green River National Wildlife Refuge (Video 3:11:29)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:178](#) Deer hunting on WMAs, state parks, other public lands, and federally controlled areas and amending [301 KAR 2:111](#) Deer and turkey hunting on special areas as follows:

- Add provision to allow deer and turkey hunting on the new national wildlife refuge as is already provided to other federal properties within the state
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Removal of Mobility impaired hunt on Camp Webb (Video 3:12:23)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:178](#) Deer hunting on WMAs, state parks, other public lands, and federally controlled areas as follows:
 - Remove the provision of requiring a mobility impaired deer hunt for the first weekend in October on Camp Webb on Grayson Lake WMA
 - Note: This is a clean up and provision to allow this type of hunt are under [301 KAR 3:130](#)- Public Use of conservation camp properties
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Removal of Tract 1 of West Kentucky WMA for the open shotgun/muzzleloader quota hunt (Video 3:13:16)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, proposed amending [301 KAR 2:178](#) Deer hunting on WMAs, state parks, other public lands, and federally controlled areas as follows:
 - Remove Tract 1 from the areas available to be hunted during the open shotgun/muzzleloader quota hunt
 - Note: This is a clean-up as the property is no longer owned by the department
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Department Owned or Managed Lands that are not Wildlife Management Areas (Video 3:14:20)
 - Gabe Jenkins, Deputy Commissioner, proposed promulgating a new regulation in [Chapter 3](#) as follows:
 - Create language dealing with hunting access to land that is owned or managed by the department, but is not a WMA (hatcheries, hunting access areas, buffers around lakes etc.)
 - Combine and simplify other regulations dealing with department land other than WMA's
 - Add provisions for property set aside for other uses (such as office space, equipment storage, boat ramps etc.)
 - Add provisions that allow closure by signage as outlined in Section 1 of [301 KAR 3:005](#)- Public Use of newly acquired or newly managed lands

- Recodify language in [301 KAR 3:130](#)- Public use of conservation camp properties in this proposed regulation and repeal 301 KAR 3:130
- Recodify language in [301 KAR 3:012](#)- Public Use of Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area in this proposed regulation and repeal 301 KAR 3:012
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.

10 Minute Break (3:17:52)

Public Comments (3:30:28)

The following comments were made in person:

“Well, I did have 2 minutes and 49 seconds worth of stuff I was going to chat about today, but I don't really think today is the most appropriate time. As you said, I'm Brigitte, the founder and director of Second Chance Wildlife Center. I just want to thank you all for working with the rehabbers and getting some of these regulations ironed out a bit. You'll hear more from me another day—so stay tuned! I mostly wanted to tell you a little bit about using our USDA-licensed education ambassadors that are non-releasable in programs. But stay tuned for that. Thank you all and have a great afternoon!” – Brigitte Brouillard

“I'm Allan Scruggs from Allen County—no organization—just advocating for wakeboarders and wake sports. So, I've been on Barren River Lake since 1981, and now I'm on that lake at least four times a week, every week in the summer. It's part of our lifestyle. I spoke to our commissioner. As I look at some of the negative things that have been said, like our waves tearing up docks, I think we're probably at a bigger stage right now, education and safety. If you combine all water sports into one area, and those waves come together—a two-foot wave hitting another two-foot wave—and a rider falls, that other driver is not going to be able to see that rider. That's a huge safety issue for me. I've got three generations surfing and wakeboarding on this lake. I sponsor pro wakeboarders. Our community, for the most part, is courteous. If we see a boat stopped, we probably stop and ask if they need help. We also have tow ropes to tow people in. I think we might have gotten a bad reputation during COVID when everyone couldn't do anything else. People bought wake boats but weren't educated. I'm a certified dock builder with an engineer stamp—I don't want my docks torn up, and I don't want anyone else's docks torn up. We have a couple more guys who were going to speak about the same things. We don't have GPS on our wake boats—we have a depth finder and a temperature gauge, so we don't freeze when we start in April. Our ballast is drained immediately because we don't want to ride across the water to go eat at one of our marinas. We spend about \$300–500 every weekend in boat gas at our local marinas, a piece. We buy ice, food, drinks—we don't stop on the way. Our boats are moored at marinas. We don't want them torn up either. I think the biggest thing in our lake is that we already have designated places for no-wake zones and no skiing. If you want to get out

of the chop of the water, that would be the place to go hang out. If you've ever been to an event—Fourth of July or a band playing live music on the lake, and it quits, I think you'll get more damage from everyone leaving at once and not having a common courtesy. I've got nine seconds left to tell you, I think education and safety—a driver's license to run a wake boat with a surfer—would be where I would start. I really appreciate it.” – Alan Scruggs

“James Chaney, Warren County, just representing myself. I won't go over a lot of the things that Allen said, a lot of my points will be the same as his. The one thing would be investigated further is erosion. I was at our local marina where we all keep our boats on Thursday. It was real windy. While I was down there we probably a constant 20-30 wind gust. I can verify that just looking over the lake the water was white-capping all day long. You could look over at the shoreline all day—not a single boat on the water—but the shoreline was taking a beating and that's just from Mother Nature. So, I would like to point out that the erosion is not just from boats—Mother Nature also. And the biggest thing, is just courtesy. I witness every weekend out on the lake, other boaters doing senseless things and just not being respectful. Boater safety is a big key issue. Thank you.” – James Chaney

“I'm with Nolan River Wildlife in Hardin County. I wanted to start off by saying somebody told me one time, taking your husband shopping is like taking the game warden hunting—it's just a bunch of “no's.” We were really feeling frustrated for a long time—we felt bound and not able to do a lot of the things that we needed to do for wildlife. But that's really changed. I want to start by saying thank you guys so much. I wanted to personally thank Ben Robinson, Dr. Casey, Commissioner Storm, Terri Brunjes, Greg Cecil, and Laura Palmer for taking the time to hear us out and for making it clear it's not “us versus them”. It's about us coming together and working together. The reason why I think it's important that we do work together is we give you guys an option of instead of people perception of you guys just handing out tickets and getting in trouble. You all do so much more, but people don't see that. We have an opportunity. We've got hundreds and thousands of followers on social media now because we have the gimmick of cute animals and we could really help you guys by saying, “Thanks to Officer So-and-So, we got this eagle a second chance.” We do give you all \$25 a year for our permit, which I know probably isn't fantastic—but what we can't do that, but we can really work to perception get better which would help your funding get better. Because I know that Game Wardens, I know that some of you all are losing your Game Wardens to police officers because although Game Wardens have a lot bigger responsibility, they don't have nearly the funding that the police officers do, and I think that's true with probably most of the businesses in the wildlife department. So that's something that I would like to say to give you all some leverage or some excitement about working with us. I do want to continue the discussion, because the progress that has been made so far is incredible, but there's still a lot of work to do. For example, Russell Coleman, the Attorney General, called the other day and wanted to start a program with some

of the inner-city kids being exposed to wildlife because that's not something they get to see, and we had to say no, we can't, because of the regulations. So, I think it's really important that we are allowed to use common sense. We don't want animals to be touched because that puts them at risk. I'm not so worried about animals that are not going to bother anybody if they're ambassadors, but it puts the animal at risk, so we don't want to do that either. We really want to give more people opportunities to be educated and see these animals. So, thank you so much for your time, and that's it." – Mary Key

"I'm not used to reading off notes, but I wrote some notes today for you all. Good morning, commissioners. I'm Tonya Poindexter at Wilderness Trail Wildlife, Kentucky. I've been a rehabilitator and owner since 2018. I want to begin by expressing my deep gratitude to each of you for opening the lines of communication with wildlife rehabilitators like myself. By fostering a collaborative relationship, we have the opportunity to make Kentucky a model state—one that leads the way in native wildlife conservation overall. Your willingness to listen, consider new perspectives, and adapt regulations for the betterment of our wildlife is truly commendable. One of the most impactful changes you are hopefully about to make is recognizing that some wildlife species require longer than the standard 180-day rehabilitation period. Species such as beavers, which need extensive time to develop skills; orphaned squirrels that must overwinter in our care; and turtles that require prolonged healing from shell injuries simply cannot conform to a rigid timeline. By acknowledging these species-specific needs, you are not only improving outcomes but also setting a precedent for science-based wildlife management. Another significant step forward is permitting licensed rehabilitators to have sub-permittees. This change will greatly enhance our ability to provide consistent, quality care to animals in need. Prior to this change, I had a couple of schoolteacher friends that I trained to help me. They didn't want to do this full-time or go through what I had to do to become a rehabilitator, but they just wanted to help me when I needed a break, like going to the birth of my granddaughter or to a doctor's office. I never allowed them to do intakes during my absence, but I did require them to be vaccinated for rabies, as I will do it for anyone that helps me or works as a rehabber with me. Many of us juggle demanding rehabilitation responsibilities with personal and professional obligations. Allowing individuals to assist us will help alleviate some of that strain. It will also help ensure that wildlife receives the best possible care. Now, I want to express my appreciation for the actions regarding rabies vector species, particularly in my county of Laurel County. As you know, our county was designated as a high-risk zone in 2018, and I'm truly grateful for the decision to hopefully remove not only Laurel County but other counties from this designation. Over the past 23 years, I've conducted in-depth research on rabies in Kentucky and our neighboring states. Can I request just a minute of extra time because this is important? I maintain a strong working relationship with my local game warden Dylan Martin, Rick Evans (our environmentalist at the Laurel County Health Department); my neighbor and Kentucky Fish and Wildlife regional biologist, Merl Hacker, and my veterinarians, Houston Wishmother and Joey

Massie of Noah's Ark Animal Hospital. Together, we have developed a plan that could significantly reduce rabies cases among our wildlife. This proposal centers around the use of the IMRAB 3 vaccine. This is the same rabies vaccine used in our oral bait drops that's put out across America for over 30 years. It has been proven effective for up to three years in wildlife. I have also got the protocol for rabies vaccine for bats from Bat World Sanctuary out of Texas—one of the biggest international bat sanctuaries. So, I know how that can be given and my vets do to. Given that many wild animals have a natural lifespan of six months, one vaccine could potentially protect them for their entire lives. The challenge with oral bait drops is that they rely on chance—wildlife must find and consume the bait for it to be effective. The proposed solution removes that uncertainty by ensuring that all rabies vector species in our care are vaccinated by our veterinarians before release. This targeted approach guarantees that rehabilitated animals do not carry or spread rabies, disrupting the transmission cycle. For example, consider a bat carrying rabies in the wild that bites an unvaccinated bat. That bat will go back to its colony, and the virus spreads. However, if a bat had been in our vaccinated and released care, it should not contract the virus. Breaking the chain of transmission, and its colony may not be exposed. If all Kentucky rehabilitators adopted this method, we could significantly reduce rabies cases and position our state as a national leader in wildlife disease prevention. By working together and embracing innovative, science-backed solutions, we can create lasting, positive changes for Kentucky's wildlife and public health. I appreciate your time, your dedication, and your openness to collaboration. I would also like to participate in any discussions pertaining to wildlife health and/or rehabilitation. I look forward to making Kentucky a model state in wildlife conservation and management. Thank you.” – Tonya Pointdexter

“Thank you Mr. Chairman and the commission for giving me the three minutes. Uh, my CWD remarks are several. I'm disappointed that we don't see AG representative here for you gentlemen to ask questions of. In our deliberations back at home, we've wondered—where's AG at in this whole process? And we're absolutely disgusted that they're not here. We would entreat you to look at your CWD management plan with an idea toward separating wild and captive instances of CWD. We need to be able to treat those as two separate occurrences. If you have a captive CWD occurrence, obviously, you've got a handle on that—you know where it's at, and you can try to establish its degree of propagation. A wild instance... I think our plan is mainly directed at wild instances of CWD. So, I would encourage Gabe and Ben to look at dividing the plan and addressing captive versus wild CWD issues. We would entreat the commission to invoke the commissioner's power, to invoke an emergency under KAR 301.140, because we think that we're on the precipice of an emergency here. If you can't see it coming, you need to open your eyes. We have a serious economic issue up to face with this CWD plan. I think giving the commissioner the emergency power gives him a little more flexibility under KRS 150.173 and 170.730 and 735—I'm sorry. We would like to offer our congratulations. About six years ago, I offered, with Edwin Nighbert, the then-president of the LKS, a

resolution on this guides and outfitters license—and finally, here it is. We've got it done, and I appreciate your help and your service. Thank you very much for that. Last thing I'm going to talk about is another little quirk of mine. We did away with committee meetings a long time ago, and I'd like to see this commission debate about bringing them back. We could have taken a lot of time out of your discussion area today and given you more time to do whatever else you need to do in your executive session by discussing these things and getting the commission fully informed prior to this meeting. And the last thing is that Utah just doubled their non-resident license fees two days ago. That is a big step for them. They looked at the loss of 25–30% of applicants versus the gain, and they think they're going to make money at it. Thank you very much.” – Larry Richards

“My name is Stacy House. I'm not advocating for any particular organization—just myself and some friends on the water. As the two previous folks have spoken on this issue, we take care of the water, we take care of our resources, we cherish those things. And I think the biggest thing for me is the safety as well. If you consolidate a lot of wake sport individuals to one or several small areas, you're going to have someone seriously injured—and we don't want to see that. You know, we take pride in taking care of our resources. And we don't have GPSs on our boats—that's not true. We do have depth finders, but we do not have GPSs. And we take care of each other. We always wear our life vests. We're strong proponents of, “if you're in the water, you have a life vest on.” And we teach people that. We advocate for safety on the water. I would tend to say that the individuals that I spend a lot of my time with on the water are very, very safe individuals. And I think it would be very discouraging to have a group of individuals like this kind of sectioned out and over-regulated. So, I appreciate your time. Thank you, Mr. Raymer, for taking my call. That's important—to have that line of communication. And I just want to recognize that we do appreciate your time and the opportunity to speak on the matter. Thank you.” – Stacy House

Lisa Jackson, Public Information Office Supervisor, read the following statement regarding public comments:

“Public comments regarding New Business Items or Discussion Items on the agenda may be submitted by email to FW.PublicAffairs@ky.gov. Emailed comments received by 5:00 PM (eastern) two days preceding the meeting date will be distributed to all Commission members the day prior to the meeting and will be read by KDFWR staff during the Commission meeting for up to 3 minutes total per commenter, time permitting and at the discretion of the Commission chair. Emailed comments allow Commission members adequate time for consideration and correspondence if necessary, and they allow the Commission to conduct business more efficiently during meetings. Note: A commenter's contact information is not required for emailed comments, but will be necessary if a response is requested, and other than name and affiliation it will not be publicly disclosed if provided. Anonymous comments will be distributed to the Commission members but may not be read during the meeting. The Commission

chair reserves the right to not read publicly any comments that are libelous, profane, derogatory of others, not pertaining to business items on the meeting agenda, or redundant with other comments. Questions will receive an email response. Commenters should include "Commission meeting" in their email subject line and include in their email message their first and last name(s), Kentucky county(s) of residence (or state of residence if a nonresident), and organizational affiliation and position if they are an officer or official representative for a particular organization. In-person attendees of meetings may also request to speak up to 3 minutes total per commenter on New Business Item(s) or Discussion Item(s) on the agenda, but will be required to sign-in on the public comment request form on the table at the meeting room entrance by 9:00AM (eastern) on the day of the meeting, and provide name, county and state of residence, organization represented and position (if applicable), and applicable agenda items. Commenters who speak in person will not have their emailed comments read publicly at the meeting and are asked to avoid voicing comments that are redundant with others speaking prior to them during the allotted public comments time."

Lisa Jackson, Public Information Office Supervisor, read the following emailed comment:

"United Trappers of Kentucky approached KDFWR wildlife professionals with this suggestion to help Kentucky landowners with their increasing, every year, problems with water furbearers. Upon our meeting and discussion, this simple solution was agreed upon from both a sound management perspective and the simple ease of applying it into law.

There are no shortages of water animals and most are increasingly causing some form of damage now. March is an exceptional month for beavers particularly, as well as muskrats, and any other animals that should be taken still have a fur value for the trapper to benefit from for doing the landowners a service.

Many states have the trapping season for water trapping only extended through March, and even April. Sixteen of nineteen states in the Midwest and Southeast allow water trapping through March to permit better wildlife management. When discussed, no states indicated any conflicts with any other user groups. This past winter January and February were terrible weather for trapping in Kentucky, due to flooding and freezing, resulting in a reduced catch for most trappers. With this simple extension, the trappers that are willing will be able to make up for any future poor winter weather by utilizing March for water trapping.

March is an excellent month weather wise for an extension of these problem animals. Beaver are traveling extensively setting up new home areas and March, by far, is the month trappers receive nuisance requests for new animals that

have moved in. Muskrats are active and establishing new dens. There is certainly no shortage of any otters that may possibly be taken. They are causing many problems with fisheries and on boat docks. Very, very few mink or raccoon would be taken.

This similar water trapping extension has been basically in effect the past several years in wildlife districts 1-4 in Kentucky by Commissioner Storm approval excepting the allowance of the sale of any otter that may be taken. This simple season extension would relieve him of that past duty and make it legal statewide. I assure you districts 5-9 in Kentucky all have the same water animal problems as Western Kentucky. I personally have received four landowner requests in March this year from the ninth district. This season extension would alleviate having to get specific game warden or biologist permission or approval on an individual basis. Again, this general, simple water trapping only extension would also allow the sale of any animal taken in the water sets to help the trappers.

I hope the commission members will grant this simple request to help landowners and the few remaining trappers left in our state that are willing to extend their season to help in problem wildlife management. Thank you.” Steven Pickard, President – United Trappers of Kentucky

“Dear commissioner(s), My name is Angela Cox. I am a resident of Franklin County and licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator, Critter Ridge Sanctuary. I am a married 49 year old female that has rehabbed and loved wildlife since 2 years of age.

Since becoming licensed in 2019, the regulations have changed considerably. In light of recent events within the rehab community, I now understand why some of these regulations were changed. Some of said changes are for the betterment. However, the majority of the changes are NOT in the best interests of OUR, the citizens of Kentucky, wildlife. You have inadvertently caused loss of very good, ethical rehabbers in this state all the while inadvertently forcing wildlife into the public's hands.

We as rehabbers are SCARED to rehab and do so with the best interest of the animals, due to fear of violating regulations. Our wildlife are the ones suffering the punishment and they are the innocent ones in this equation.

The reality of the matter is very simple, regardless of what laws are passed and/or enforced, humans always have and will continue to help animals in need. We (Rehabbers) do this because we love these animals, we want to make a difference, we give up our normal lives, I mean this literally, to save them and to give back to our beautiful land and ecosystem. We are not looking for notoriety nor fame, we simply want to provide ethical treatment for these animals and not be forced to compromise our morals. This is a position that many of us face. Despite what the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife may feel, we

rehabbers are not your enemy. We DO support you, we would simply like to save our animals without fear of every action we take.

Please consider the regulation changes that would prevent us from doing so. Please don't make us and the animals suffer from poor decisions that another deranged rehabber has made. We actually do support you in your decision. Thank you for taking the time to hear my concern." Angela Cox, Critter Ridge Sanctuary

"I am writing to support modification to the wildlife rehabilitation regulations that were changed in 2023. I am a homebased rehabber and rely heavily upon family and friends to help with the animals in my care. When the regs were changed in 2023 it basically took away all of my volunteers. I'm not for sure how the "sub-permit" would work but feel that as a permit holder I should be able to train my volunteers according to my operation. I have been rehabbing for 19 years and so had the folks that helped me over the years. We had no problems so not for sure what a sub permit would be allowed that a trained volunteer cannot, or at least let previous volunteers be grandfathered in.

I am currently only taking in a small number of healthy orphaned babies since I have no help. I have turned away so many animals the past 2 years and it has just about killed me, Knowing that I could save them but not having the help I needed to be able to. Rescuers vowing to take care of them themselves. I could only remind them it was against the law but compassionate humans cannot stand by and watch an innocent animal die. This is what those Regulation changes have done.

I'm sorry that I will be unable to attend the commissioners meeting on Friday. I currently have baby squirrels in my care and no one to feed or care for them while I attend. This is just one example of the Regulation changes made in 2023 that has negatively effected rehabilitation. Prior to the change, weather permitting I could have brought them with me to feed every 3 hours in the car or had a family member or friend care for them while I was away.

I do not understand why the current changes were made, I have yet to get an answer to that question or why none of the rehabbers were consulted to see the impact it would cause. All of the emphasis on rabies vectors are unreal, yes, I know it is a real disease and would probably understand the changes if a rehabber had died from being in contact with an animal but to the best of my knowledge that is not the case. I have always had everyone take necessary precautions. The current regs is placing more wildlife in the hands of citizens, who most will not take precautions to protect themselves. Therefore, creating a much bigger problem than allowing rehabbers to train their volunteers as we have done for years, 19 years for me.

I honestly think the regs should be rolled back as they were prior to 2023, if a rehabber is doing something they shouldn't then deal with that rehabber. If some actual changes need to be made then sit down with ALL rehabbers for their input, we all have different situations that can be effected by the changes. Work with us not against us. At this point I feel like the department is wanting to do away with wildlife rehabbers.

I have a great many concerns which I have addressed to this department over the last couple of years. I used to think we had the best Dept. of Fish & Wildlife in the Nations, however, over the past few years it seems to have gone downhill. The Reg change made in 2023 showed to me the department wasn't thinking about the wildlife, it's a sad day when the department that is in trusted to protect our wildlife resources, seem to no longer care. I think changes need to be made and It's not too late to start now. Allow us to protect our states wildlife the way we have done for many years, go back to how we did things before 2023." Eva Pollard, Country Critters Wildlife Rescue, Inc.

"My concerns are with the proposal to move Rowan Co. from a zone 3 to 2 and Menifee Co. from a zone 4 to 3. From experience, trust me, that's a horrible proposal.

If anything, Rowan should be a zone 4 and Menifee quite frankly, should be closed a couple years. Deer numbers are very low in Rowan and extremely low in Menifee!! I believe a huge contributor to that is, both counties are the majority of the 183,000 acres of the Cumberland District of DBNF!! No habitat diversity at all, a proverbial " deer desert "...and all wildlife in general!! Mountainous, big woods, non-ag areas, are notorious for low deer densities, regardless if they are comprised of mostly NF or not. Which would be all of Eastern Ky.

You absolutely cannot manage deer in the Eastern part of the state like the rest. Food availability is way less, therefore fawn recruitment is also.

In my opinion, we need more deer zones! We are painting with a 4" brush, when it should be 1". And God forbid, if we have another EHD outbreak like we did in 2017 in Eastern Ky." – Greg Cole

New Business Items:

- Modify Chapter 6 Water Patrol regulations to comply and comport with United States Coast Guard amendments and NASBLA recommendations (Video 4:02:37)
 - Colonel Jeremy McQueary, Director of Law Enforcement, proposed amending [301 KAR 6:001](#) - 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
 - Slow no wake
- Amending [301 KAR 6:020](#) - Boating Safety Equipment to add a section regarding engine cut-off switch requirements
- Amending [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)
- Modifications of Regulations Controlling Land and Water Use at Department Lakes (Video 4:04:11)
 - Dave Dreves, Director of Fisheries, proposed amending [301 KAR 1:016](#) – Use of lands and waters on lakes owned or controlled by the department as follows:
 - Merge the Shoreline Use Permit with the Boat Dock Permit
 - Align the permit expiration dates
 - Clarify other requirements
- Adjust bag limits for river otter and bobcat (Video 4:11:39)
 - Commission member Raymer discussed potential adjustments to the bag limits for river otters and bobcats. Commission Raymers requested consideration for allowing the use of thermals to hunt bobcats and beavers at night.
 - (Video 4:17:15) Additionally, Commission member Raymer proposed a revised bag limit for bobcats, permitting a take of up to three by hunting and five by trapping, for a combined total of eight.

Items to be added to the next Commission meeting agenda by Commission Members:

- (Video 4:11:17) Commission Member Meade requested that an item be added under New Business for the next Commission meeting to discuss the potential formation of a limited number of committee meetings. The purpose of this proposal is to ensure Commission members are better informed ahead of regular meetings.
- (Video 4:11:49) Commission member Raymer asked for the ability to adjust the turkey bag limits across the state as needed.
- (Video 4:13:05) Commission member Rhodes has asked the department to consider raising the license age from 16 to 18.

Closed Session

- (Video 4:19:00) Steven Fields, Staff Attorney, read the following statement for public notice about the Commission entering into closed session:

“All meetings of a quorum of the members of any public agency at which any public business is discussed or at which any action is taken by the agency, shall be public meetings, open to the public at all times except for specific exceptions listed in KRS 61.810 or otherwise provided for by law.

The Commission has business today that will require entering into a closed session. KRS 61.815 requires notice of the general nature of the business to be discussed in the closed session, the reason for the closed session, and the provision of KRS 61.810 that authorizes it be publicly announced prior to entering closed session for most open meetings exceptions.

In the proposed closed session, the Commission will discuss a potential land acquisition via purchase. The discussions shall occur in the closed session to protect the state’s interests in the acquisition of land. By identifying KDFWR’s interest in the particular parcels, the general public would be alerted to the various owners’ willingness to sell the properties and our intent to purchase. As such, the publicity increases the likelihood other parties may make offers on the properties. Such competing offers could increase the value of the subject properties. Alternatively, a private party could purchase a property from the current owner more quickly than the Commonwealth and require the Commonwealth to pay a premium to acquire it.

This portion of the closed session is authorized by KRS 61.810 under Section 1(b) for the potential land acquisitions.

In today’s closed session, the Commission shall also conduct the annual review of the Fish and Wildlife Resources Commissioner’s performance. KRS 61.810(1)(f) authorizes closed sessions for discussions which might lead to the appointment, discipline, or dismissal of an individual employee. As confirmed by opinion of the Attorney General’s Office in 21-OMD-091, the annual review is required to be in closed session pursuant to KRS 150.061(1)(a). This portion of the closed session is authorized by 61.810(1)(k) and 61.810(1)(f).

Upon an approved motion, the Commission will enter into closed session. The Commission shall not discuss any other matters and no action shall be taken occur during the closed session.

During the closed session, counsel and necessary members of staff will be present to advise the Commission.”

- Commission member Rhodes made a **motion to enter into closed session**, seconded by Dr. Robin Floyd. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Action Items (Video 5:13:36)

- Commission member Rhodes made a **motion to approve Land Project 25-FILO-001**, seconded by Dr. Robin Floyd. Votes were as follows: Yes, Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Set a date for the next Quarterly Commission Meeting (Video 5:14:29)

- The next Quarterly Commission meeting will be held on June 6, 2025.

Adjourn (Video 5:15:47)

- Chuck Meade **made a motion to adjourn**, seconded by Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***