



Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission proposed regulation changes at its quarterly meeting on March 21

Licenses and fees, electric trolling motor use slated for changes

NOTE: The following is a summary of actions taken by the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission at its quarterly meeting on March 21, 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. (April 17, 2025) — The Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission voted to recommend amendments to several hunting, fishing and wildlife regulations and conducted other business in a March 21, 2025, regular meeting.

The commission received a quarterly financial report as well as an update on the agency's ongoing surveillance of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), an always-fatal disease that can affect deer and elk. Following the 2024-2025 hunting season, no new CWD cases have been found to date in Kentucky's wild deer and elk from among the more than 9,000 samples tested statewide. To date, CWD has been confirmed in one wild deer in Ballard County (2023) and one fenced deer operation in Breckinridge County (2024).

In addition to approving the Dec. 6, 2024, meeting minutes, the commission members considered the following action items presented at the meeting (thus authorizing staff to promulgate regulatory changes for subsequent legislative approval).

Action items approved by the commission included the following (each will require legislative approval before being enacted):

- Amend [301 KAR 6:001](#) to define and specify the usage of electric trolling motors in selected water bodies, and to move [301 KAR 1:015](#) to Chapter 6 and recodify as a new regulation. Regulation 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, and 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.

- Amend [301 KAR 6:001](#) to clarify and set definitions for watercraft types to better determine fee classifications, and to repeal [301 KAR 6:005](#) and replace into [301 KAR 5:022](#) to clean up and remove antiquated language in Section 1 that would clarify that all vessels will be registered based upon vessel length, and to remove the trolling motor-only and inboard motor-only registration fees.
- Amend [301 KAR 2:030](#) to change the regulation title to “Fishing and Hunting Guide and Outfitter Licenses,” and create license types for Fishing Outfitter, Hunting Outfitter, Fishing Guide and Hunting Guide for resident or non-resident businesses, as well as license tiering and reporting requirements. Recommended fees for these new license types are provided for in [301 KAR 5:022](#):

| Fishing Outfitter | | | Hunting Outfitter | | |
|-------------------|----------|--------------|-------------------|----------|--------------|
| | Resident | Non-Resident | | Resident | Non-Resident |
| 01 Tier | \$250 | \$1000 | 01 Tier | \$500 | \$1000 |
| 02 Tier | \$750 | \$1500 | 02 Tier | \$1000 | \$2000 |
| 03 Tier | NA | NA | 03 Tier | \$1500 | \$2500 |
| 04 Tier | NA | NA | 04 Tier | \$2000 | \$3000 |
| Fishing Guide | \$100 | \$400 | Hunting Guide | \$100 | \$400 |

- Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) to establish incremental, biennial license and permit fee adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index, intended to begin with the 2026 license year, and to add or amend additional licenses and nominal fees, including amending language to create conformity across a number of related regulations (full list is available on the [March 21 meeting agenda](#)).

- Amend [301 KAR 3:015](#) and [301 KAR 5:022](#) to establish free annual shooting range permits for annual license holders, as well as paid annual and one-day shooting range permits for non-license holders, on any department managed, leased or affiliated shooting ranges. Also amend [301 KAR 3:010](#) to require groups or clubs that hold events on department shooting ranges to maintain a sign-in sheet for event participants and to regularly submit that information to the department. Finally, amend [301 KAR 4:100](#) and [301 KAR 3:012](#) for conformity.
- As the final action item, the commission approved a land project in open session after discussing it in closed session. 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.

If approved by the legislature, proposed administrative regulation changes are generally anticipated to take effect within six to nine months of their filing.

An action item request from 7th District representative Chuck Meade to stock 5,000 first generation hybrid bass (F1), a mix between a Florida Bass and a Largemouth Bass, in Paintsville Lake in eastern Kentucky, to be funded by the department, was tabled to be brought back as an action item at the next quarterly meeting.

The commission advanced a discussion item to an action item to create a new regulation in Chapter 3 to establish provisions for fishing and waterfowl hunting reciprocal agreements on waters shared with neighboring states. Establish provisions for fishing reciprocal agreements with Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia and Tennessee. Establish provisions for waterfowl hunting reciprocal agreements with Indiana, Ohio and West Virginia.

The commission also heard new business and discussion items that will be considered further at its next quarterly meeting, including several recommendations to update provisions regarding wildlife causing damage and wildlife rehabilitation, and a proposed transfer of the Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area (OCORA) deed to Meade County Fiscal Court.

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 was adopted by the commission in 2020 to allow adequate time for public awareness and comment on proposed regulatory changes, instead of changes being acted on in a single meeting of the

commission. 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 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, June 6, 2025, in Frankfort. An agenda will be posted at fw.ky.gov when available.

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