

Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources



Commission Meeting

August 30, 2024 | 8:30 AM (ET)

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

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

AGENDA

Opening

- Call to Order and Welcome
- Invocation
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Chair's Remarks
- Commissioner's Remarks

Informational Item:

- Quarterly Financial Reports
Attachment I-1

Action items:

- Minutes from June 21, 2024 quarterly meeting
Attachment A-1
- Voting on qualifying nonprofit organizations' applications for 2025 Special Commission Permits for deer, turkey, elk & waterfowl for fundraising to support projects in Kentucky
- Increase selected deer hunting opportunities in CWD Surveillance Zone counties, and statewide for youths and mentored hunters
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:172](#) – Deer hunting seasons, zones, and requirements
 - Expand early youth gun deer season to nine consecutive days beginning the second Saturday in October in all four deer hunting zones

- Expand early muzzleloader deer season to seven consecutive days beginning the third Monday in October in CWD Surveillance Zones counties with antlerless harvest during first five days of this season

Attachment A-2

- Prohibit use of aircraft (drones, helicopters, airplanes, etc.) for taking of fish or wildlife
 - Promulgate a new regulation to prohibit taking of fish or wildlife with aircraft
 - Comport with federal law prohibiting take with aircraft (16 US Code § 742)
 - Prohibit use in any aspect of take per wildlife definition in [KRS 150.010](#)
 - Exempt the department and its agents conducting research, communications, enforcement and other authorized management activities
 - Allow for authorized landowners/their agents engaged in lawful wildlife damage control activities, and commercial fishers for use in locating or removing invasive carp
- Prohibit the use of decoys on public dove fields before October 1st
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:225](#) Dove, wood duck, teal, and other migratory game bird hunting
 - The use of decoys, both motorized and static, would be prohibited on dove fields managed by the Department during the month of September

Attachment A-3

- Streamline, clarify and update public lands waterfowl hunting requirements
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:222](#) Waterfowl hunting requirements on public lands
 - Add Harris-Dickerson, Clear Creek, and Blackford Oaks WMAs to the list of WMAs that have entry and exit requirements
 - Assign public land waterfowl hunters in Ballard County to a single unit per day
 - Allow flexibility in timing for managers administering in-person standby drawings in Ballard County
 - Remove the automatic assignment of surrendered hunting units during quota hunts at Boatwright WMA
 - Remove the requirement to use primitive weapons on Barren River WMA while hunting waterfowl
 - Change the rest days for waterfowl hunting at Sloughs WMA from Tuesday and Wednesday to Monday and Tuesday
 - Require daily check-in before waterfowl hunting at Sloughs WMA
 - Remove the penalty for violating state or federal law during waterfowl quota hunts that excludes hunters from applying for or participating in department quota hunts in the subsequent year

Attachment A-4

- Reduce the September teal season in Kentucky from nine (9) days to five (5) days.
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:225](#) Dove, wood duck, teal, and other migratory game bird hunting.

- Reduce the current teal season from nine days to five days for the 2025-2026 season. The five days of teal season would run concurrently with the September wood duck season. The season would begin on the third Saturday in September and continue for 5 consecutive days.

Attachment A-5

❖ Wildlife Vehicle Collision Study

- Seeking Commission approval to partner with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet on their upcoming wildlife vehicle collision research project funded by the KYTC.

Attachment A-6

❖ Kentucky Wild Eastern Whip-poor-will Project

- Seeking Commission approval to partner with the University of Kentucky on a research project tracking the migration of Eastern Whip-poor-will, a declining species.

Attachment A-7

❖ Research project for the identification of genetic markers for trophy size in native Largemouth Bass

- Seeking Commission approval to contract with an entity to identify genetic markers which predispose our native Largemouth Bass to grow to trophy size with the eventual goal of propagating those genetics in our hatcheries for future stocking of “Thoroughbred Bass” in Kentucky waters.

Attachment A-8

Discussion items:

• Recommendations for the 2026 elk season

- Draw elk hunting units during the initial drawing
- Amend loyalty redraw to fit this new drawing system

Attachment D-1

• Establish a permit for rabbit hunting enclosures

- Amend [301 KAR 2:041](#) Shooting areas, dog training areas, commercial fox hound training enclosures, and bobwhite shoot to train season
- Develop a permitting process for rabbit training and hunting enclosures

Attachment D-2

• Add the Federal Duck Stamp (e-stamp) to the list of licenses/permits offered for sale online by the Department

- Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) License, tag, and permit fees
- Allow the Department to enter into a MOA with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Duck Stamp Office to allow the electronic sale of the Federal Duck Stamp (e-stamp) on the Department website

Attachment D-3

- Modify traditional fishing regulations on selected water bodies
 - Amend [301 KAR 1:201](#) – Taking of fish by traditional fishing methods.
 - Remove the catch and release regulations for sport fish on Clear Fork (Logan and Warren counties).
 - Remove the 4-fish daily limit for Channel Catfish and 15-fish daily limit on sunfish from ponds at Kentucky River WMA, Boone Tract.
 - Add a 10-inch minimum size limit for crappie on Nolin River Lake and Rough River Lake.
 - Propose to add an 18-inch to 26-inch protective slot limit and 2 fish daily limit for native walleye on the Rockcastle River.

Attachment D-4

- Modify the language regarding the definition and usage of electric trolling motors on selected water bodies
 - Amend [301 KAR 1:001](#) – Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 1.
 - Amend [301 KAR 6:001](#) – Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 6.
 - Amend [301 KAR 1:015](#) – Boat and motor restrictions.
 - Define “electric trolling motor” as an electric motor equal to or less than 3 hp, 0.75 kilowatts power output, and 150 lbs of thrust.
 - Clarify that there is a restriction to idle speed only on selected water bodies when using electric motors exceeding 10 hp or 3.7 kilowatts power output.

Attachment D-5

Informational Item:

- Announcement of recipients of 2025 Special Commission Permits for Deer, Turkey, Elk & Waterfowl for nonprofits’ fundraising for projects in Kentucky

New Business Items:

- Establish an annual and one-day shooting range permit issued by the department
 - Amend [301 KAR 3:015](#) - Shooting ranges on department-owned or managed lands
 - Require a shooting range permit for all shooters on any KDFWR managed, leased or KDFWR affiliated shooting ranges
 - Amend [301 KAR 4:100](#) and [301 KAR 3:012](#) for conformity
 - Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, tag, and permit fees
 - Establish an annual shooting range permit for \$25
 - Establish a one day shooting range permit for \$5
 - Establish a free annual shooting range permit for holders of a valid Kentucky annual hunting or fishing license

- Boating Registration Fees and Definitions
 - Amend [301 KAR 6:001](#) Chapter Definitions
 - 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
 - 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
- Recommendations for Guides and Outfitters
 - Conform with [HB586](#) changes to [KRS 150.175](#) and [KRS 150.190](#)
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:030](#)- Commercial guide license regulation and recodify in [Chapter 3](#)
 - Change regulation title to “Fishing and Hunting Guide and Outfitter Licenses”
 - Create the following definitions:
 - Fishing Outfitter License- authorizes the holder to solicit for guiding services or provide guiding services for clients in taking or attempting to take fish and which may have a guide authorized to assist clients on behalf of the license holder
 - Fishing Guide License- authorizes the holder to assist a Fishing Outfitter License holder's client in taking or attempting to take fish and is employed by or contracted (excluding tips) with a Fishing Outfitter License holder
 - Hunting Outfitter License- authorizes the holder to solicit for guiding services or provide guiding services for clients in taking or attempting to take wildlife and which may have a guide authorized to assist clients on behalf of the license holder
 - Hunting Guide License- authorizes the holder to assist a Hunting Outfitter License holder's client in taking or attempting to take wildlife and is employed by or contracted (excluding tips) with a Hunting Outfitter License holder
 - Establish Tiering of Outfitter Licenses
 - Fishing Outfitters
 - Tier 1
 - 0 guides working under the outfitter
 - Tier 2

- 1 or more guides under the outfitter
 - Hunting Outfitters
 - Tier 1
 - 0 guides working under the outfitter
 - Tier 2
 - 1 guide working under the outfitter
 - Tier 3
 - 2 to 4 guides working under the outfitter
 - Tier 4
 - 5 or more guides working under the outfitter
- Modify the application document and create 4 separate applications for each outfitter and guide license type
- Modify the commercial guiding reporting requirements:
 - Require the guide and/or outfitter who is engaged in guiding clients to submit the guiding activity report
 - Modify the guiding activity report to require the outfitter name and outfitter license number
 - Rename the guiding report to “Guiding Activity Report”
- Modify the license suspension and revocation parameters to include:
 - Fishing Outfitter and Hunting Outfitter Suspensions
 - Suspended for not reporting guiding activity conducted by the outfitter as required
 - May be suspended when 1 or more guide(s) is suspended for lack of reporting guiding activity as required
 - Suspended for failure for payment in an increase in licensure tier level
 - Fishing Outfitter and Hunting Outfitter Revocation
 - Revoked if convicted of a Chapter 150 violation or a Title 50 CFR violation
 - May be revoked when 1 or more guide(s) are convicted of a Chapter 150 violation or a Title 50 CFR violation
 - Revoked if knowingly aiding a client in illegal take
 - Revoked for falsifying the license application
 - Revoke for falsifying the Guiding Activity Report
 - Fishing Guide and Hunting Guide Suspension
 - Suspended for not reporting guiding activity as required
 - Fishing Guide and Hunting Guide Revocation
 - Revoked for conviction of a chapter 150 violation or a Title 50 CFR violation
 - Revoked for knowingly aiding a client in illegal take
 - Revoked for falsifying the license application
 - Revoked for falsifying the Guiding Activity Report
- Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) – License, tag and permit fees

- Establish the following licenses and fees:
 - Fishing Outfitter Tier 1
 - \$500 Resident
 - \$1,000 Non-Resident
 - Fishing Outfitter Tier 2
 - \$750 Resident
 - \$1,500 Non-Resident
 - Fishing Guide
 - \$100 Resident
 - \$400 Non-Resident
 - Hunting Outfitter Tier 1
 - \$500 Resident
 - \$1,000 Non-Resident
 - Hunting Outfitter Tier 2
 - \$1,000 Resident
 - \$2,000 Non-Resident
 - Hunting Outfitter Tier 3
 - \$1,500 Resident
 - \$2,500 Non-Resident
 - Hunting Outfitter Tier 4
 - \$2,000 Resident
 - \$3,000 Non-Resident
 - Hunting Guide
 - \$100 Resident
 - \$400 Non-Resident
- Recommendations for Biennial Adjustments in License and Permit Fees
 - Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) – License, tag and permit fees
 - Establish a biennial fee adjustment in 301 KAR 5:022.
 - Exclude fee adjustment for all fees in Section 8 (application fees)
 - Include [boat registration fees](#), contingent on passage of the boating registration and definitions agenda item
 - 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.
 - Initial implementation to coincide with the start of the 2026 license year
 - Establish a reduced price for first-time resident license buyers to obtain a sportsman’s license (same price as a youth sportsman’s license)
 - Establish a bobcat permit fee of \$10
 - Remove the dog kennel and horse stall rental fees
- Black Bass

Closed Session - Discussion Items

- [Land Project F-018](#)
- [Land Project F-019](#)
- [Land Project F-020](#)
- [Land Project F-021](#)
- [Land Project W-022](#)
- [Personal Service Contract](#)

Action Items

- [Land Project F-018](#)
- [Land Project F-019](#)
- [Land Project F-020](#)
- [Land Project F-021](#)
- [Land Project W-022](#)
- [Personal Service Contract](#)

Public Comments¹

Set date for the 4th Quarterly Commission Meeting

Adjourn

Next Quarterly Commission Meeting Date: TBD

¹Public 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 5pm (Eastern) two days preceding the meeting date will be distributed to all Commission members on the day prior to the meeting and 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/counter 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 official position (if applicable), and agenda items being addressed. 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 timeframe.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
INFORMATIONAL ITEM
DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Quarterly Financial Statements

Please refer to draft financial statements document

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

ACTION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Minutes from the June 21, 2024 Quarterly Commission Meeting

Please refer to draft minutes document

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

ACTION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 2:172](#) – Deer hunting seasons, zones, and requirements

[Expand early youth season from two days to nine days](#). The proposed amendment is designed to provide more firearms hunting opportunity for youths during the month of October. This expanded season would overlap with the October muzzleloader season. The expanded season would require five additional “hunter orange” days to small game and archery hunters, but there is no conflict with other hunting seasons. This would be a statewide change impacting all four deer zones in Kentucky.

[Expand early muzzleloader season from two days to seven days in CWD Surveillance Zone counties only](#). The proposed amendment would allow for additional hunting opportunity during muzzleloader season. The five additional hunting days (i.e., Monday to Friday) would apply to counties in CWD Surveillance Zone counties to help maintain populations at or decrease them to desirable levels. During this additional five-day period, only antlerless deer would be eligible for harvest with a muzzleloader in CWD Surveillance Zone counties.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 2:225](#) - Dove, wood duck, teal, and other migratory game bird hunting

- The use of decoys, both motorized and static, would be prohibited on dove fields managed by the Department during the month of September.

Justification: Decoys have become a problem on public dove fields in recent seasons. The use of motorized decoys has resulted in many quickly diving and low-flying doves, and has created a less safe environment for hunters using public dove fields. Additionally, numerous hunters have arrived in public dove fields early and used arrays of decoys to “block off” areas around them to keep other hunters away from their spots. This has created conflicts and discontent among other hunters. After October 1, hunter densities in public dove fields greatly decrease, so no concerns over safety or other hunters are expected in the late season.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

ACTION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 2:222](#) - Waterfowl hunting requirements on public lands

- Add Harris-Dickerson, Clear Creek, and Blackford Oaks WMAs to the list of WMAs that have entry and exit requirements.

Restrict access for waterfowl hunting to Harris-Dickerson, Clear Creek, and Blackford Oaks WMAs to not allow entry before 4:00 a.m. (local time) and require hunters to cease hunting by 2:00 p.m. (local time).

Justification: These WMAs are either new or have seen increased waterfowl hunting pressure in recent years. This matches these areas to other waterfowl-hunting WMAs. Not allowing entry before 4:00 a.m. keeps hunters from going in and staking out spots in the middle of the night and disturbing birds. Stopping hunting at 2 p.m. allows for some period of the day where ducks may feed without being disturbed.

- Assign public land waterfowl hunters in Ballard County to a single unit per day.

Restrict public land hunters, both waterfowl permit holders and guest hunters at Ballard and Boatwright WMAs, to only allow an individual to be assigned to a single hunting unit in a day.

Justification: There has been a problem with hunters splitting parties between Ballard and Boatwright check stations. A party will be drawn for a spot at Boatwright and then subsequently be drawn for a spot at Ballard. Then, the group decides which spot is preferred and abandons the other spot. The abandoned spot then goes unused, while people are turned away at the check station for lack of spots. This change would eliminate that problem.

- Allow flexibility in timing for managers administering in-person standby drawings in Ballard County.

Remove specific time requirements for in-person drawings at Ballard and Boatwright WMAs.

Justification: Current regulations dictate that stand-by drawings must occur at a specific time on the day of the hunt. The addition of Thanksgiving hunts to Boatwright and youth and veterans hunts to both WMAs has highlighted some staffing difficulties with increased number of check station mornings. The regulations now specify that standby drawing must occur at a specific time on the morning of the hunt. With limited staff, we are requesting flexibility to have a Wednesday afternoon drawing (or something similar) for stand-by spots.

- [Remove the automatic assignment of surrendered hunting units during quota hunts at Boatwright WMA.](#)

Stop assigning surrendered hunting units in the Boatwright WMA online drawing to the next drawn hunter.

Justification: Currently, when a hunter surrenders a unit for which they were drawn in the weekly online drawing, the computer assigns that surrendered unit to the next hunter in the order of the drawing. This has created several problems. Hunters assigned to a unit via the online drawing may not hunt in another unit at Boatwright WMA. When a hunter surrenders a unit immediately before the deadline, the newly drawn hunter has no chance to surrender that spot and may be forced into a spot that doesn't work for them. In other cases, people don't realize they were put into a surrendered spot and are subject to receiving a citation from a game warden because of this. In reviewing the data from the last 2 hunting seasons, hunters who received surrendered spots showed up and checked in < 10% of the time. With the in-person check station, surrendered spots will be utilized.

- [Remove the requirement to use primitive weapons on Barren River WMA while hunting waterfowl.](#)

Remove the antiquated language that restricts waterfowl hunting on portions of Barren River Lake WMA to muzzleloading shotguns.

Justification: This is an old regulation that was intended to exclude waterfowl hunting from the primitive weapons requirements of the Peninsula Unit of the WMA. While accomplishing this, the regulation inadvertently required primitive weapons (non-breech loading shotguns) on the rest of the WMA. The request is to remove all primitive weapon requirements for waterfowl hunting on the WMA.

- [Change the rest days for waterfowl hunting at Sloughs WMA from Tuesday and Wednesday to Monday and Tuesday.](#)

Change the days a waterfowl hunter shall not hunt ducks in the Crenshaw and Duncan tracts of the Sauerheber Unit and the Jenny Hole Unit from Tuesday and Wednesday to Monday and Tuesday.

Justification: This change would bring the Sloughs WMA rest days in line with Ballard County WMAs, which are the only other areas where we provide rest days. This is a simplification of regulations, making the WMAs similar. Hunting opportunity would now be assigned on Wednesday to Friday (3-day) and Saturday and Sunday (2-day) blocks. The timing was changed a few years ago to allow hunters to take advantage of at least one Monday holiday during the duck season; however, hunters have rarely hunted the WMA on Mondays.

- [Require daily check-in before waterfowl hunting at Sloughs WMA.](#)

Require waterfowl hunters hunting in the Crenshaw and Duncan tracts of the Sauerheber Unit and the Jenny Hole Unit to remit a completed check-in card at the WMA office the morning of their hunt.

Justification: The Crenshaw and Duncan tracts of the Sauerheber Unit and the Jenny Hole Unit at Sloughs WMA require that hunters submit a post-hunt check-out card. This is rarely occurring. The WMA staff has no way of knowing if someone who doesn't check out did not hunt or if they just failed to check out. Data on use and harvest is acquired from accurate post-hunt surveys. Adding the requirement to check in means the staff will know who has not completed their post-hunt survey. In addition to the data value, knowing who is or was hunting is critical to ensure hunter safety.

- Remove the penalty for violating state or federal law during waterfowl quota hunts that excludes hunters from applying for or participating in department quota hunts in the subsequent year.

Remove the portion of section 4 that excludes anyone who receives a citation during a waterfowl quota hunt from participating in or applying for any department quota hunts the following year.

Justification: This is a request originating from Law Enforcement staff in the 1st District. A hunter who receives a citation currently is excluded from applying for or participating in any department quota hunt. This includes the elk hunt drawing, deer quota hunts, dove quota hunts, and more. Because a person can't apply, they lose any accumulated preference points. Many citations issued on quota hunts are minor violations, but the penalty is the same for everyone. Removing this would give the officer discretion based on the circumstances of a case.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

ACTION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 2:225](#) Dove, wood duck, teal, and other migratory game bird hunting

- Reduce the current teal season from nine days to five days for the 2025-2026 season. The five days of teal season would run concurrently with the September wood duck season. The season would begin on the third Saturday in September and continue for 5 consecutive days.

Justification: Under waterfowl harvest agreements between the Mississippi Flyway and the US. Fish and Wildlife Service, states are allowed extra harvest of teal during September seasons when populations of teal are high. The 2024 waterfowl breeding survey indicated declines in blue-winged teal populations. The estimate of 4.6 million teal is below the threshold which triggers a reduction in the allowable harvest of teal in September. During the moderate season prescribed, states are reduced from a maximum of 18 days of teal season to maximum of 9 days. No splits are allowed during September seasons.

Kentucky is one of three states (also TN and FL) which the USFWS has allowed to harvest wood ducks during September. Because Kentucky is allowed to harvest wood ducks, we have a different agreement regarding September teal seasons than do other states. Kentucky is allowed 9 days of teal hunting during high teal populations and 5 days of teal hunting during moderate seasons. For states with September wood duck seasons, teal season must be concurrent with wood duck hunting.

The Wildlife Division recommends maintaining the wood duck season and concurrent teal season which begins the third Saturday in September and continues for five consecutive days for the 2025-2026 season. The four (4) "teal only" days beginning on Thursday following the wood duck and teal seasons would be removed for the 2025-2026 season.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

ACTION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Wildlife Vehicle Collision Study

- ❖ The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) recently received a federal grant to identify ways to reduce wildlife vehicle collisions in Kentucky, particularly those involving deer. KYTC and their contractor will conduct aerial surveys along the Interstate 64 corridor to inform movement and behavioral patterns of deer in an area with high vehicle collision rates. KYTC has requested KDFWR support to trap and GPS-collar a small number of deer in the study area to validate their aerial estimates and provide real-time movement data from deer within the study area. KYTC would cover all costs associated with GPS collars and supplies.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

ACTION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Kentucky Wild Eastern Whip-poor-will Project

- ❖ Eastern Whip-poor-wills (EWPW) are a declining Species of Greatest Conservation Need, listed in Kentucky's State Wildlife Action Plan and there is very limited information on them. EWPWs winter in Central America, but little is known about their migratory timing or the linkage between breeding sites, stop overs and winter sites. We propose to begin a research project on EWPWs in Kentucky in 2025 to learn more about their migratory ecology. The latest tracking technology will be used to map the migration of EWPWs that nest in Kentucky to their winter grounds. The resulting maps will be used for conservation planning and for education through Kentucky Wild. Field work will be conducted by University of Kentucky students and this project will be funded by Kentucky Wild.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

ACTION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Research project for the identification of genetic markers for trophy size in native Largemouth Bass

- ❖ Seeking Commission approval to contract with an entity to identify genetic markers which predispose our native Largemouth Bass to grow to trophy size with the eventual goal of propagating those genetics in our hatcheries for future stocking of “Thoroughbred Bass” in Kentucky waters.

Need: Largemouth Bass are the most popular sport fish targeted by anglers in Kentucky and across the nation. While Kentucky already has many noteworthy Largemouth Bass fisheries, the Fisheries Division seeks to raise the bar by identifying the genetic markers which are associated with trophy-size fish and then use a selective breeding approach to create what we would call “Thoroughbred Bass”, a genetic line of Largemouth Bass native to Kentucky with enhanced likelihood of attaining large size. KDFWR desires to be at the forefront in identifying trophy markers in Largemouth Bass using our locally adapted, native fish. The selective breeding concept has several major advantages over other stocking approaches to enhancing Largemouth Bass populations. Most importantly, it does not involve stocking non-native genetics that may not be well-adapted for Kentucky’s climate. Also, selective breeding offers progressively increasing chances of manifestation of the desired characteristics with each subsequent generation.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 2:132](#) - Elk hunting seasons, permits, zones and requirements

Introduction: This administrative regulation establishes seasons, dates, zones and requirements for elk hunting in Kentucky. These amendments seek to provide increased opportunity for elk hunters and alleviate many of the issues found in the current elk hunting system. Based on feedback derived from the mandatory post-season hunter survey, the Elk Program recommends several modifications to the draw system, season structure and other ancillary portions of the elk hunting regulation as described below:

- [Draw elk hunting units during the general drawing](#)
- [Amend loyalty redraw to fit this new drawing system](#)

[Draw elk hunting units during the general drawing:](#)

The unit draw has been a major point of contention over the last four elk seasons. Nearly two months of time in the summer are lost between the elk permit draw and the elk hunting unit draw. Hunters will still have the usual “pick 3” (4 for youth), and for each permit type, hunters will pick a unit or select the “any unit” option. The complexity of this new system would necessitate online application only according to our IT division. A regulated area draw would take place as normal after the loyalty redraw.

[Amend the loyalty redraw to fit this new draw system:](#)

The new loyalty redraw system would be amended to fit this new draw system. With these changes, redrawn permits would also include a unit.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 2:041](#) Shooting areas, dog training areas, commercial fox hound training enclosures, and bobwhite shoot to train season

- [Develop a permitting process for rabbit training and hunting enclosures](#)

Justification: There has never been a clearly defined pathway for rabbit enclosures to operate in the Commonwealth. These enclosures have existed for many years in the state, and due to changing wildlife application permits, many have been found to be operating outside the current permitting processes. Wildlife Division staff seek to reach out to stakeholders over the next few months and develop a permitting process that would bring current rabbit pens into a legal permitting process while maintaining critical animal health standards and limiting the potential for future wildlife and zoonotic disease outbreaks in these pens.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) License, tag, and permit fees

- Allow the Department to enter into a MOA with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Duck Stamp Office to allow the electronic sale of the Federal Duck Stamp (e-stamp) on the Department website

Justification: Since the 1930s, federal law has required waterfowl hunters 16 years and older to purchase a Federal “Duck Stamp” prior to hunting waterfowl. This physical stamp was and continues to be, available to purchase at US Post Offices beginning in late June each year. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) began allowing states to offer electronic versions of the duck stamp more than a decade ago. This electronic version offers hunters a tremendous convenience as finding a stamp was not always easy. Today, 30 states offer this electronic Federal Duck Stamp. Unfortunately, the e-stamp was only valid for 45 days or until your physical stamp arrived in the mail. This created confusion for hunters and the potential for well-meaning hunters to be cited. A recent amendment to federal law allows the Service and states to offer e-stamps which are valid for the entire waterfowl season. We propose adding Federal Duck Stamps (e-stamp) to the available permits/licenses offered by the Department in our online license sales. This addition will allow our constituents the convenience of not having to go either to the Post Office or another state agency to get their stamp.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 1:201](#)– Taking of fish by traditional fishing methods.

This administrative regulation establishes fish size limits, daily limits, and possession limits for fishing.

The Fisheries Division proposes the following amendments to the regulation:

- Remove the catch and release regulations for sport fish on Clear Fork (Logan and Warren Counties).

Clear Fork is a tributary of the Gasper River in Logan and Warren counties. In the summer of 2019, there was a significant fish kill that severely impacted the fish population. In response, the Fisheries Division proposed catch and release only regulations for sport fish and the amendment was passed by the Commission in December 2020. Fisheries stocked Smallmouth Bass and Rock Bass in 2021. The fish population appears to have rebounded well and the catch and release regulations are no longer needed. With this amendment, all fish would be under statewide regulations with the exception of Smallmouth Bass because there is already a 15” minimum size limit in place for Barren River and all tributaries.

- Remove the 4-fish daily limit for Channel Catfish and 15-fish daily limit on sunfish from ponds at Kentucky River WMA, Boone Tract.

Fisheries biologists have determined the special regulations for Channel Catfish and sunfish at ponds on Kentucky River WMA, Boone Tract are no longer necessary. Fisheries Division proposes to revert to statewide regulations, which is no size limit or daily limit for these species.

- Add a 10-inch minimum size limit for Black Crappie and White Crappie at Nolin River Lake and Rough River Lake.

Fisheries Division is proposing to increase the minimum size limit for crappie at Nolin River Lake and Rough River Lake from the current 9 inches to 10 inches. Our biologists have used population modeling to determine that with the current growth and mortality that the crappie populations at these two reservoirs could benefit from the increased size limit. This should result in a larger average size fish for anglers.

- Add an 18-inch to 26-inch protective slot limit and 2 fish daily limit for native walleye on the Rockcastle River.

Fisheries Division is proposing to protect native strain walleye in the Rockcastle River by instituting a protective slot limit from 18 to 26 inches and 2 fish daily limit. This would mean that all walleye between 18 and 26 inches would need to be released and anglers could only harvest 2 walleye per day. Our native strain of walleye is present in just a few locations around the state and we have an active program to restore these populations through supplemental stocking. The Commission has previously instituted these same regulations on Barren River, upper Cumberland River, Kentucky River and Levisa Fork. These regulations limit harvest of the prime spawning size fish so the hope is the walleye populations can remain self-sustaining, while still allowing some harvest.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
DISCUSSION ITEM
DATE: August 30, 2024

Item: Amend [301 KAR 1:001](#)– Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 1.
Amend [301 KAR 6:001](#)– Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 6.
Amend [301 KAR 1:015](#)– Boat and motor restrictions.

Regulations [301 KAR 1:001](#) and [301 KAR 6:001](#) are the definitions regulations for Chapters 1 and 6, respectively. Regulation [301 KAR 1:015](#) establishes size limits of boats and motors on small lakes for safety reasons and to minimize interference with other users.

The Fisheries Division proposes the following amendment to the definition of “electric trolling motor”:

- Electric trolling motor shall be defined as electric motors equal to or less than 3 hp, 0.75 kilowatts power output, and 150 lbs of thrust.

With the advent of electric outboard motors, it has become necessary to define an “electric trolling motor” to continue to limit how fast a boat may be propelled on selected water bodies that had previously been designated as electric trolling motor only and no internal combustion motors. Currently the most powerful traditional electric trolling motors on the market are labeled as having 120 lbs of thrust. There is no direct equivalency between thrust and horsepower or kilowatts of power output. However, since the electric outboard motors are labeled in horsepower equivalency or kilowatts of power output, we also propose 3 horsepower and 0.75 kilowatts power output as a reasonable equivalent maximum electric outboard motor rating allowable on these selected water bodies.

The Fisheries Division proposes the following amendment to [301 KAR 1:015](#):

- Clarify that there is a restriction to idle speed only on selected water bodies when using electric motors exceeding 10 hp or 3.7 kilowatts power output.

There are also a number of water bodies in regulation where a person operating a boat motor greater than 10 hp shall not exceed idle speed. Again, to continue to regulate electric outboards equivalent to internal combustion motors, Fisheries proposes adding the equivalent electric motor language of 3.7 kilowatts power output as a maximum. Any boats with a more powerful electric motor must be operated at idle speed.