

# Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources



## Commission Meeting

September 04, 2026 | 8:30 AM (ET)

In-person: Salato Wildlife Education Center – Schaaf Room

#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
- Roll Call

### Informational Items:

- Quarterly Financial Reports  
Attachment I-1
- Presentation on East KY Habitat Initiative

### Action Items:

- Minutes from June 12, 2026, Quarterly Commission Meeting  
Attachment A-1
- Voting on qualifying nonprofit organizations' applications for 2027 Special Commission Permits for Black Bear, Deer, Turkey, Elk & Waterfowl for fundraising to support projects in Kentucky

- Modifications of Regulations to Allow Hoop Net and Seine for the Harvest of Invasive Carp
  - Amend [301 KAR 1:146](#) – Commercial Fishing Gear
  - Add hoop net and seine with construction and method specifications as a legal commercial fishing gear for invasive carp
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment A-2
  
- Modifications of Regulations Pertaining to the Harvest of Invasive Carp
  - Amend [301 KAR 1:152](#) - Harvest and Sale of Invasive Carp
  - Recommend the following changes to the Invasive Carp and Scaled Rough Fish Harvest Program:
    - Add reporting of the timeframe of when fishing activities will occur and the commercial fishing gear to be employed to the required call-in information
    - Increase harvest ratio of invasive carp to scaled rough fish from 65/35 to 75/25
    - Recommend eliminating the waiver of commercial fishing license fees for invasive carp only harvest
    - Include hoop net and seine with construction specifications as allowable commercial fishing gear in the Invasive Carp and Scaled Rough Fish Harvest Program and provide methods requirements
    - KDFWR to update list of program participants monthly instead of weekly
  - Recommend the following changes to the Experimental Commercial Fishing Methods Program:
    - Expand the program to any Kentucky waterbody open to commercial fishing per [301 KAR 1:150](#) - Waters Open to Commercial Fishing
    - Require Experimental Commercial Fishing Methods Permit within 30 days of selection for the program or else the selection is nullified and the permit forfeited
    - Add language that upon selection there is a required minimum participation of five experimentation days in the license year or else they are ineligible for the Experimental Commercial Fishing Methods Program the following year
  - Clarify that suspended commercial fishers are ineligible to be unlicensed helpers in either program
  - Remove requirement for daily harvest summary card in either program and require additional data to be reported on monthly commercial fishing report
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment A-3

- Modifications of Regulations Pertaining to Commercial Fishing Harvest Reporting and Overharvest Protections
  - Amend [301 KAR 1:155](#) – Commercial Fishing Requirements
  - Clarify the definition of a hoop net
  - Modify regulations and documents incorporated by reference to allow for transition to online application for commercial fishing licenses and permits and reporting of commercial fishing harvest
  - Strengthen the penalties for non-reporting of commercial fish harvest
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Offense – currently: courtesy letter ➡ proposed: warning letter
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – currently: warning letter ➡ proposed: 3-month suspension
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – currently: suspended until all turned in ➡ proposed: 1-year suspension
  - Clarify language that convictions of either a federal commercial fishing violation OR convictions of the listed state commercial fishing violations are subject to a revocation of the commercial fishing license for 2 years
  - Add the following to list of convictions requiring suspension of commercial fishing licenses:
    - Violation of any size or daily limit
    - Violation of harvesting fish out of season
    - Violation of fishing in any closed waters
  - Except for invasive carp and scaled rough fish, all other fish harvested by commercial fishing license holders must stay in the vessel or attached to the vessel until offloaded once off the water
  - Clarify Lower Ohio River Trophy Catfish harvest permit program suspension language
    - Must harvest 10,000 pounds of catfish from the mainstem of the Ohio River
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity
- Addition to the Fishing in Neighborhoods Program
  - Amend [301 KAR 1:201](#) – Taking of fish by traditional fishing methods.
  - Add Burley Mathis Memorial Lake to the Fishing In Neighborhoods (FINs) Program. This is 5.7-acre lake owned by Carlisle County. It would be added to the “List of Special Lakes and Ponds” that is material incorporated by reference and thus would be managed under FINs Program regulations.
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment A-4

- Establish fishing reciprocal agreement with the state of Virginia for specific bordering water
  - Amend [301 KAR 3:160](#) – Reciprocal agreements regarding fishing.
  - Establish a reciprocal agreement with Virginia for the Russell Fork River
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity
- Establish Committee Meeting Structure, Including Committee Purpose, Oversight, and Responsibilities  
Attachment A-5
- Establish an annual, weekly, and one-day dog training permit issued by the department and evaluate and designate tract(s) as Dog Training Area(s) at West Kentucky WMA
  - Amend [301 KAR 3:010](#) - Public Use of Wildlife Management Areas
  - Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, Registration, Tag, and Permit Fees
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:049](#) - Small Game and Furbearer Hunting and Trapping on Public Areas
    - Require a Dog Training Permit (annual, weekly, one-day) for all trainers at West Kentucky WMA
    - Require a per-day fee for groups that hold a valid WMA Use Permit for a sporting dog or associated event at West Kentucky WMA
    - Exempt participants from the Dog Training Permit when participating in a department authorized event approved through the WMA Use Permit
  - Establish that unleashed dogs shall be allowed within the boundaries of a designated dog training area year-round, except for one week prior to September 1 through the first weekend of mourning dove season, youth statewide turkey season, opening weekend of statewide turkey season, and if applicable WMA deer quota hunts
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity
- Special Youth and Veteran's Waterfowl Seasons Date Change
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:221](#) - Waterfowl Seasons and Limits
  - Change the Special Youth Waterfowl Season dates from the Saturday before Thanksgiving and the second Saturday in February to the first consecutive Saturday and Sunday in February
  - Change the Special Veterans and active Military Personnel Waterfowl Season from the Sunday before Thanksgiving and the second Sunday in February to the first consecutive Saturday and Sunday in February
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

## Discussion Items:

- Modifications of Regulations Controlling Land and Water Use at Department Lakes
  - Amend [301 KAR 1:016](#) – Use of Lands and Waters on Lakes Owned or Controlled by the Department
  - Modify regulations and documents incorporated by reference to allow for transition to online application and payment for Boat Dock and Shoreline Use Permitting
  - Establish a combined Boat Dock and Shoreline Use Permit process with five-year permits, revised fees, and a permit placard system.
  - Both will have 5-yr term beginning on January 1, 2028
  - Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) – License, tag, registration and permit fee – to create the following fee structure:
    - Boat Dock Permit only - \$150
    - Shoreline Use Permit only - \$350
    - Both Boat Dock and Shoreline Use Permits - \$500
    - Boat Dock/Shoreline Use Permit Replacement Placard - \$50 (No site visit required)
    - Boat Dock/Shoreline Use Permit Transfer - \$25 (No site visit required)
    - Post-Construction Site Visit - first is free, any additional site visits required are \$100
    - Unapproved Construction fee - \$500
    - Permit Renewal Delinquency fee - \$50
    - Unauthorized Destruction of Vegetation fee – Variable based upon the vegetation destroyed
  - Revise dock eligibility, application, and property transfer requirements, including boundary verification and permit issuance standards.
  - Grandfather lawful docks and shoreline structures through December 31, 2047 that existed as of April 2, 2010, after which structures must comply with current standards to be permitted.
  - Update construction, anchoring, and design standards for boat docks, walkways, and shoreline access structures.
  - Remove permit requirements for ground-level pathways and updates building code, engineering, and inspection requirements for access structures.
  - Clarify allowable activities on department property surrounding listed lakes and updates waiver criteria for docks and walkways.

- Add provision for the department to enter into agreements with entities to provide a public benefit and allow deviations from these regulatory requirements.
- Strengthen compliance and enforcement provisions for unauthorized construction and destruction of vegetation, permit violations, inspections, penalties, permit revocation and suspension, and appeals.
- Revise administrative procedures, fee references, and regulatory language for consistency and clarity.
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

#### Attachment D-1

- Creation of a Habitat Permit

- Amend [301 KAR 3:010](#) - Public Use of Wildlife Management Areas- to require a habitat permit for all users of a WMA. Exempt any Kentucky resident from the permit so long as the individual is either license exempt, holds a valid annual hunting, fishing, trapping, or KY Wild Membership
- Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, Tag, Registration and Permit Fees- to create a fee of \$30 for a Habitat Permit for residents and non-residents
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

- Caliber Restrictions for Night Hunting of Beavers

- Amend [301 KAR 2:251](#) - Hunting and Trapping Seasons and Limits for Furbearers
- Discussion on caliber restrictions for night hunting of beavers
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

#### Informational Items:

- Announcement of recipients of the 2027 Special Commission Permits for Black Bear, Deer, Turkey, Elk & waterfowl for nonprofits' fundraising for projects in Kentucky and elk unit draw

#### New Business Items:

- Modifications to the Wildlife Control Operators Permit

- Amend [301 KAR 3:120](#) Commercial Wildlife Control
- Amend the permit revocation/denial parameters from any Chapter 150 violation to any violation related to provisions pertaining to Wildlife Control operators
- Allow 24hr tap visitation to include visitation via remote means
- Require Wildlife Control Operators to turn over remote visitation documentation upon request from a Game Warden
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

- Adjustment of Deer Modern Gun Quota Hunts on WMAs
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:178](#) - Deer Hunting on Public Properties- move the modern gun quota hunts from the first weekend in November to the second weekend in November
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity
- Modifications to deer hunting on public lands
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:178](#) - Deer hunting on public property
  - Prohibit the use of handheld thermal imagers for taking white-tailed deer on WMAs statewide
  - Bluegrass Army Depot: remove 15" minimum outside spread rule on antlered deer for youth hunters
  - Bluegrass Station: add to military installation list to facilitate future management and hunts
  - Fishtrap WMA: remove quota hunt and allow take under statewide regulations
  - Grayson Lake WMA: remove quota hunt and allow take under statewide regulations
  - Green River WMA: create a new archery quota hunt for the Smith Ridge Campground in Taylor County which is currently closed to hunting
  - Twin Knobs/Zilpo: remove firearms quota hunt and change location to Camp Webb
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment NB-1

- Modifications to deer hunting seasons
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:172](#) - Deer hunting seasons, zones, and requirements
  - Start archery season on September 1 annually
  - Allow concurrent use of crossbows during the entire archery deer season for residents only
    - Non-residents may only use crossbows during current crossbow season dates that opens 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in September
  - Allow single projectile shotgun (i.e., slug) use during both muzzleloader seasons
  - Change deer hunting zone designation from a 4 to a 3: Breathitt, Clay, Floyd, Knott, Knox, Lee, Leslie, Magoffin, Owsley, Perry, Whitley
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment NB-2

- Modify additional deer permit
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:172](#)- Deer hunting seasons, zones, and requirements.
  - Change additional deer permit allowance from 2 deer per permit to unlimited antlerless deer per permit
  - Only valid in Zone 1 counties
  - Same price as current additional deer permit
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment NB-3

- Creation of a Certified Taxidermist Program
  - Amend [301 KAR 4:090](#) - Taxidermy and the buying and selling of inedible wildlife parts
  - Allow taxidermists to pursue a CWD certification that would allow them to receive high-risk parts (head, neck, cape, "mountable material") from CWD surveillance zone counties
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment NB-4

- Creation of a commercial game processor permit
  - Create a new regulation in [Chapter 4](#) - commercial game processing
  - Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, tag, registration, and permit fees to establish the fee
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment NB-5

- Elk Season Modifications
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:132](#) - Elk hunting seasons, permits, zones and requirements
  - Reduce permit numbers for either-sex archery and crossbow, bull firearms, and cow firearms by approximately 60%, for 210 elk permits, total
  - Reduce the minimum caliber restriction for elk from .270 to 6.5mm
  - Remove the permit purchase deadline for loyalty recipients
  - For general and loyalty drawn hunters, remove the three-year sit-out period and preserve their current years of loyalty if they do not purchase a permit
  - Make it mandatory for hunters to submit the outside, lower incisor of any harvested elk or report to the department that their harvested elk was a yearling or calf based on its dentition at the time of harvest
  - If a hunter fails to submit a tooth of an adult elk, report the age of a yearling or calf elk, they will be locked out from applying to any quota hunt or non-hunt options the following year (this is currently the penalty for not submitting their elk hunter survey)

- Open Elk Hunting Unit 1 to allow the take of one bull and restrict this unit to one, single drawn hunter while prohibiting commission or special fundraising permits from hunting this unit
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment NB-6

- Public Area Trapping Registration Form Updates
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:049](#)- Small game and furbearer hunting and trapping on public areas
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment NB-7

- Align night hunting and baiting restrictions with federal and state area requirements
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:049](#) - Small game and furbearer hunting and trapping on public areas.
  - Amend Sec 9 (5) (c) to replace "shall comply with federal requirements established by the National Park Service" to "a person shall hunt coyotes, bobcats, and beavers during daylight hours only" to match language describing other federal areas.
  - List federal and state areas that do not allow baiting
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

- Establish Furbearer Hunting Permit
  - Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, tag, registration, and permit fees – modify the Bobcat Permit name and change it to the Furbearer Hunting Permit; no change in cost
  - Amend [301 KAR 2:251](#) – Hunting and trapping seasons and limits for furbearer - require the Furbearer Hunting Permit to hunt any furbearer
  - Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

Attachment NB-8

## **Public Comments<sup>1</sup>**

### **Set a Date for the Next Quarterly Commission Meeting**

#### **Closed Session Discussion Item:**

- 26-F-003

#### **Action Item:**

- 26-F-003

## Adjourn

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<sup>1</sup>Public comments regarding New Business Items or Discussion Items on the agenda may be submitted by email to [FWPublicComments@ky.gov](mailto:FWPublicComments@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. Emailed public comments, or a summary thereof, may be read by KDFWR staff during the Commission meeting (individual comments 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: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Quarterly Financial Statements

Please refer to draft financial statements document

## **Attachment A-1**

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

### **ACTION ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Minutes from June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026, Quarterly Commission Meeting

Please refer to draft minutes document

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

**ACTION ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Modifications of Regulations to Allow Hoop Net and Seine for the Harvest of Invasive Carp

- Amend [301 KAR 1:146](#) – Commercial Fishing Gear
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

This administrative regulation establishes the legal methods that may be used by commercial fishers to harvest rough fish.

The Fisheries Division recommends the following changes:

- [Add hoop net and seine with construction and method specifications as a legal commercial fishing gear for invasive carp](#)

This modification of the regulation has the potential to increase the harvest efficiency of commercial fishers targeting invasive carp. Fisheries Division staff have been monitoring the use of seines by commercial fishers through the Experimental Commercial Fishing Methods Program and now believe this gear can be allowed for general use by commercial fishers who are fishing under less stringent oversight through the Invasive Carp and Scaled Rough Fish Harvest Program.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

**ACTION ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Modifications of Regulations Pertaining to the Harvest of Invasive Carp

- Amend [301 KAR 1:152](#) – Harvest and sale of invasive carp
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

This administrative regulation establishes the requirements for the harvest and sale of invasive carp beyond the requirements of 301 KAR 1:155.

The Fisheries Division recommends the following changes to the Invasive Carp and Scaled Rough Fish Harvest Program:

- Add reporting of the timeframe of when fishing activities will occur and the commercial fishing gear to be employed to the required call-in information
- Increase harvest ratio of invasive carp to scaled rough fish from 65/35 to 75/25
- Eliminate the waiver of commercial fishing license fees for invasive carp only harvest
- Include hoop net and seine with construction specifications as allowable commercial fishing gear in the Invasive Carp and Scaled Rough Fish Harvest Program and provide methods requirements
- KDFWR to update list of program participants monthly instead of weekly

The Fisheries Division recommends the following changes to the Experimental Commercial Fishing Methods Program:

- Expand the program to any Kentucky waterbody open to commercial fishing per 301 KAR 1:150
- Require Experimental Commercial Fishing Methods Permit within 30 days of selection for the program or else the selection is nullified and the permit forfeited
- Add language that, upon selection, there is a required minimum participation requirement of five experimentation days in the license year or else they are ineligible for the Experimental Commercial Fishing Methods Program the following year

The Fisheries Division recommends the following clarification that applies to both programs:

- Any person whose commercial fishing license has been suspended or revoked in Kentucky or in another state shall not be eligible to be an unlicensed helper in

- either program or assist in harvesting or transporting fish.
- Remove requirement for daily harvest summary card in either program and require additional data to be reported on monthly commercial fishing report

This modification of the Invasive Carp and Scaled Rough Fish Harvest Program regulations will improve oversight, accountability, and harvest efficiency. The additional fisher call-in information will reduce the enforcement burden when responding to complaints. Increasing the harvest ratio will keep the focus on the harvest of invasive carp. Our commercial fishing license fees are relatively inexpensive (R - \$158.55; NR – \$634.20) so eliminating the waiver of the commercial fishing license fees for invasive carp only harvest will not be too burdensome, and it will ensure that all commercial fishers have an investment in this privilege and are equally motivated to comply with regulations. Including hoop nets and seines as allowable gear will increase the harvest of invasive carp and provide fishers with new methods for harvest.

Expanding the Experimental Fishing Methods Program to any waterbody open to commercial fishing will allow for more flexibility to respond to invasive carp population movement. Permit purchase and experimentation requirements will ensure that we don't have commercial fishers that won't follow through filling limited spots in the program.

Administrative efficiencies will be gained from eliminating the daily harvest summary card requirement and shifting reporting of program participants from weekly to monthly.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

**ACTION ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item: Modifications of Regulations Pertaining to Commercial Fishing Harvest Reporting and Overharvest Protections**

- Amend [301 KAR 1:155](#) – Commercial Fishing Requirements
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

This administrative regulation establishes commercial fishing requirements, protects certain species from overharvest, and regulates the buying and selling of roe-bearing species of rough fish.

The Fisheries Division recommends the following changes to commercial fishing requirements:

- [Clarify the definition of a hoop net](#)
- [Modify regulations and documents incorporated by reference to allow for transition to online application for commercial fishing licenses and permits and reporting of commercial fishing harvest](#)
- [Strengthen the penalties for non-reporting of commercial fish harvest](#)
  - [1st Offense – currently: courtesy letter ➡ proposed: warning letter](#)
  - [2nd Offense – currently: warning letter ➡ proposed: 3-month suspension](#)
  - [3rd Offense – currently: suspended until all turned in ➡ proposed: 1-year suspension](#)
- [Clarify language that convictions of either a federal commercial fishing violation OR convictions of the listed state commercial fishing violations are subject to a revocation of the commercial fishing license for 2 years](#)
- [Add the following to list of convictions requiring suspension of commercial fishing licenses:](#)
  - [Violation of any size or daily limit](#)
  - [Violation of harvesting fish out of season](#)
  - [Violation of fishing in any closed waters](#)
- [Except for invasive carp and scaled rough fish, all other fish harvested by commercial fishing license holders must stay in the vessel or attached to the vessel until offloaded once off the water](#)
- [Clarify Lower Ohio River Trophy Catfish harvest permit program suspension language](#)
  - [Must harvest 10,000 pounds of catfish from the mainstem of the Ohio River](#)

The transition to online application for commercial fishing licenses and permits and reporting of commercial fishing harvest online will improve administrative efficiencies for both KDFWR staff and commercial fishers. Strengthening penalties for non-reporting will hopefully decrease the persistent offenders. Adding the additional regulation violations that are subject to commercial fishing license suspension will close loopholes identified in recent law enforcement actions. Requiring commercial fishers to keep fish harvested (except invasive carp) in the vessel or attached to the vessel until off the water eliminates activities that facilitated illegal harvest.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

**ACTION ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Establish Committee Meeting structure, including committee purpose, oversight, and responsibilities

- Draft Language for consideration:

The Commission shall establish three (3) standing Committees to aid in its mission pursuant to KRS 150.023. Committees conduct official business on the part of the Commission. As such, all Committee meetings shall be open meetings and shall comply with the same notice requirements as regular commission meetings. See KRS 150.023 and KRS 61.820.

The 3 standing Committees shall be the (1) Lands and Wildlife Committee, (2) Licensing, Operations and Public Outreach Committee and (3) Enforcement, Boating and Fisheries Committee.

Business items eligible for committee review shall originate from the Commission agenda and the Committee shall only address matters listed on the publicly noticed agenda. Assignment of a business item to a committee shall be made by majority vote of the Commission. Business items referred to by a committee for additional input shall be designated as such only at the time they appear on the Commission agenda.

Each Committee shall consist of no more than three (3) Commission members and shall not include a quorum of the Commission. No Commission member shall serve on more than one (1) Committee at any given time; provided, however, that if the number of eligible sitting Commission members is fewer than nine (9), a Commission member may serve on no more than two (2) Committees concurrently. Committee members shall be nominated by Commission members other than the Commission Chair and shall be appointed upon approval by a majority vote of a quorum of the Commission. Committee appointments shall occur annually at the second quarterly meeting of the Commission. Each appointment shall be for a term of one (1) year.

The Chair of each Committee shall be elected by a majority vote of the

Commission. In the event of a tie vote, the Commission Chair shall cast the deciding vote. No Commission member shall serve as Chair of more than one (1) Committee at any given time. The Commission Chair shall not serve as a Committee Chair.

Committees shall be composed solely of Commission members; however, a Committee may invite agency staff or members of the public to provide information or advisory input regarding matters properly before the Committee.

The names of Committees and the Commission members assigned thereto shall be published on the agency's official website. Committee meeting agendas and minutes shall likewise be made publicly available on the agency's website.

Anyone wishing to address a Committee of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission may provide public comments for the Committee meeting in the same manner as detailed for Commission meetings.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item: Modifications of Regulations Controlling Land and Water Use at Department Lakes**

- Amend [301 KAR 1:016](#) – Use of Lands and Waters on Lakes Owned or Controlled by the Department
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

This administrative regulation governs all private structures on property owned or controlled by the department, the private use of public lake water, and permitted and prohibited activities on department-owned or controlled land surrounding department-owned waters.

The Boat Dock and Shoreline Use Working Group was formed after a proposal to amend the regulation was first presented to the Commission at the March 21, 2025 quarterly meeting. Its charge has been to consider how we could improve these regulations that govern private use of public lands and waters and address challenges in administering them. The Working Group consisted of Commission Members Cummins and Raymer, attorney Steven Fields, Law Enforcement and Fisheries Division personnel and it also received periodic input or assistance from every other Division and the Commissioner's Office. The Working Group met 15 times over the 18 months with each meeting averaging over 2 hours. It also hosted 4 public listening sessions to gather public input. The Working Group recommends the following changes to the regulations:

- Modify regulations and documents incorporated by reference to allow for transition to online application and payment for Boat Dock and Shoreline Use permitting and fees. Applicants will have to certify that they had not conducted any unauthorized construction.
- Combined Permit Process: Replace separate permit processes with a combined process with Boat Dock and Shoreline Use Permit options valid for five years, beginning January 1, 2028. Utilize a placard and renewal sticker system.
- Amend 301 KAR 5:022 License, tag, registration, and permit fees - Create a fee structure:
  - Boat Dock Permit - \$150 (currently \$100 for 10 yrs)
  - Shoreline Use Permit - \$350 (most recently was 15-yr term and tiered between \$100 and \$300 depending on level of impact)

- Boat Dock/Shoreline Use Permit Replacement Placard - \$50 (No site visit required)
- Boat Dock/Shoreline Use Permit Transfer - \$25 (No site visit required)
- Post-Construction Site Visits – first is free, any additional site visits required due to not following procedure or improper construction are \$100
- Unapproved Construction Fee - \$500
- Permit Renewal Delinquency Fee - \$50
- Unauthorized Destruction of Vegetation fee – Variable based upon the vegetation destroyed
- Dock Eligibility: Clarify that adjacent landowners must share at least 50 linear feet of boundary with department property (or the shoreline where ownership extends to the water) to qualify for a dock. The amendment would also allow two adjoining landowners who do not individually meet the 50-foot requirement to agree to share one dock if together they have at least a 50-foot boundary with department property.
- Proof of Eligibility: Require a stamped land survey to verify the required 50-foot shared property boundary for all new dock applications.
- Grandfathered Structures: Existing lawful docks and shoreline structures as of April 2, 2010 would remain grandfathered and may be maintained or rebuilt until December 31, 2047. After that date, permits would only be issued for structures that comply with current standards.
- Construction Approval: Expand the requirement for prior departmental approval to include any modifications affecting the dimensions or location of a dock or shoreline structure and create an "Approval to Construct" form. Prohibit placement that interferes with existing docks or navigation.
- Permit Transfers: Rather than allowing permits to remain with the property, the amendment would require new adjacent property owners to obtain permits in their own name and pay above fee.
- Dock Walkway Anchoring: Revise construction standards by increasing the maximum size of the concrete anchor pad to 16 square feet, requiring only one anchor at each shore-side corner of a walkway, and eliminating specifications on anchor depth.
- Replacement Dock Walkways: Require replacement walkways to utilize existing anchoring systems where possible or remove obsolete anchoring structures.
- Dock Anchoring: Clarify acceptable anchoring methods by allowing vertical poles, posts, cables, chains, and vertical spud poles while prohibiting horizontal anchoring systems.
- Handrails: Expressly allow handrails on docks and walkways provided they are vertically oriented and do not extend over the water.
- Personal Property: Prohibit unattended personal property on department land or waters except for authorized watercraft attached to permitted docks.

- Ground-Level Pathways: Eliminate permit and fee requirements for simple ground-level pathways.
- Building Standards: Require applicable access structures to comply with the current Kentucky Building Code or applicable local building code.
- Stairways and Landings: Remove restrictions on the number of steps and instead require landings only as necessary to satisfy building code requirements or accommodate terrain.
- Engineering Requirements: Require engineered plans and structural inspections for stairways with any portion that is more than 12 feet in vertical height from the ground below, while requiring final inspection by a building official or engineer for smaller elevated structures.
- Permit Renewal: Require an engineering inspection completed within the previous five years, when applicable, before renewing permits.
- Allow the use of residential lawn mowers and string trimmers on department property surrounding listed lakes.
- Add provision for the department to enter into agreements with entities to provide a public benefit and allow deviations from these regulatory requirements.
- Boat Dock and Shoreline Use Permits shall only be issued to adjacent landowners and shall not be issued to any leaseholders.
- Clarify that requests for boat dock or walkway waivers will be evaluated based on whether the proposed increase would interfere with navigation or the reasonable use of neighboring docks.
- Unauthorized or Noncompliant Construction: Expand enforcement authority by providing for denial or revocation of permits when docks or shoreline structures are rebuilt or constructed without prior departmental approval, while allowing an opportunity to achieve compliance following inspection and payment of applicable fees.
- Compliance Timeline: Establish additional inspection fees for continued noncompliance and initiate removal procedures after 90 days if violations are not corrected. Site visits 60 days and 90 days after finding noncompliance. Fee of \$100 for each visit.
- Unauthorized Destruction of Vegetation: Provide for assessment of fees for unapproved destruction of vegetation on department property with a Notice of Violation. Fees will be variable and based on the valuation of the vegetation as established in "Digital Guide for Plant Appraisal, 10th Edition, Revised". Fees must be paid within 30 days or a late fee of \$50 will be assessed. If all fees are not paid within 90 days of the Notice of Violation, then all permits will be revoked and any structures are subject to removal at owner's expense.
- Update denial, revocation, and failure-to-apply provisions to ensure consistent enforcement throughout the regulation. Suspension of permits under the same condition and duration as for revocation shall be issued for individuals that did not hold permits. Permits shall be denied until all fees are paid.

- Administrative Hearings: Replace references to Commission action with the Commissioner to conform to KRS Chapter 13B administrative hearing procedures and establish a 30-day deadline to request a hearing following permit denial or revocation.
- Department Authority: Clarify that the department has authority to remove noncompliant structures at owner's expense.
- Renewal Penalties: Establish delinquency fee of \$50 for failure to renew permit(s) by January 31.
- Administrative Updates: Clarify that the regulation allowing "Other Activities on Department Property" applies specifically to department-owned lands surrounding listed lakes, correct fee regulation references, remove or correct other obsolete references
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity.

## Attachment NB-1

### Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

#### NEW BUSINESS ITEM

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Modifications to deer hunting on public lands

- Amend [301 KAR 2:178](#) Deer hunting on public property.
- Prohibit the use of handheld thermal imagers for taking white-tailed deer on WMAs statewide.
- Bluegrass Army Depot: remove 15" minimum outside spread rule on antlered deer for youth hunters.
- Bluegrass Station: add to military installation list to facilitate future management and hunts.
- Fishtrap WMA: remove quota hunt and allow take under statewide regulations.
- Grayson Lake WMA: remove quota hunt and allow take under statewide regulations.
- Green River WMA: create a new archery quota hunt for the Smith Ridge Campground in Taylor County which is currently closed to hunting.
- Twin Knobs/ Zilpo: remove firearms quota hunt and change location to Camp Webb.
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

**Justification:**

Field reports indicate that some hunters are utilizing handheld thermal imagers to detect and stalk deer on WMAs in the dark which goes against fair chase practices. Provisions still allowed for game recovery.

BGAD: requested change from area manager to allow for more hunter opportunities on the area, particularly for youth hunters.

Green River WMA: Smith Ridge is a 327-acre recreation area of the WMA that is currently closed to deer hunting. Area staff wish to pursue a 4-day archery deer quota hunt on the area for increased harvest opportunities for hunters and to mitigate some nuisance issues. Hunt dates are to mirror state park quota hunt dates. Smith Ridge is a recreational area and therefore prohibited for firearms use. Approved by ACOE.

Participation in Grayson Lake and Fishtrap WMA hunts have declined and field staff request that these areas be opened under statewide regulations for deer take.

The Twin Knobs/ Zilpo Flats hunt participation and harvest are minimal. Staff suggest removal of this quota hunt opportunity in favor of the nearby KDFWR Camp Webb.

### Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

#### **NEW BUSINESS ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

#### **Item: Modifications to deer hunting seasons**

- Amend [301 KAR 2:172](#) Deer hunting seasons, zones, and requirements.
- Start archery season on September 1 annually
- Allow concurrent use of crossbows during the entire archery deer season for residents only
  - Non-residents may only use crossbows during the current crossbow season date that opens 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in September
- Allow single projectile shotgun (i.e., slug) use during both muzzleloader deer seasons
- Change deer hunting zone designation from a 4 to a 3: Breathitt, Clay, Floyd, Knott, Knox, Lee, Leslie, Magoffin, Owsley, Perry, Whitley
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

#### **Justification:**

Kentucky is one of only a handful of states that allow hunters to pursue velvet white-tailed bucks in early September. The current opening date (first Saturday in September) means that season can open anywhere between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of September depending on calendar shift. Most velvet bucks have shed by the 5<sup>th</sup> of September. An annual start date of September 1 would allow for a few days of velvet hunting each year.

According to the recent KDFWR deer hunter survey, sixty-one percent of Kentucky deer hunters were in favor of allowing concurrent use of archery and crossbow equipment throughout deer season.

The Kentucky deer seasons include 11 days of muzzleloader only seasons dispersed across two periods of traditionally good hunting weather. However, muzzleloader seasons are historically the least hunted seasons in Kentucky. Allowing single projectile shotgun slugs during muzzleloader season would have a number of benefits: many hunters don't own a muzzleloader but do have a shotgun capable of firing slugs; a standard 3-shot magazine shotgun would allow for additional follow up shots and potentially higher harvest; shotgun use and maintenance is much easier than muzzleloader operation and maintenance.

Eastern Kentucky deer populations have sufficiently rebounded after epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD) hit the region in 2017, therefore warranting more liberal harvest restrictions as allowed by a Zone 3 designation.

## Attachment NB-3

### Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

#### **NEW BUSINESS ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Modify additional deer permit

- Amend [301 KAR 2:172](#) Deer hunting seasons, zones, and requirements.
- Change additional deer permit allowance from 2 deer per permit to unlimited antlerless deer per permit
- Only valid in Zone 1 counties
- Same price as current additional deer permit
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

**Justification:**

Staff have received complaints regarding the additional deer permit requirement for hunters in Zone 1 counties. Many feel that the current permit (which gives 2 additional antlerless deer) is prohibiting others from participating in extra doe harvest where needed due to the permit cost. This recommendation seeks to create an unlimited antlerless permit to remove barriers associated with doe management and provide hunters with the opportunity to better manage their properties.

An average of 4,147 additional deer permits have been sold annually since 2018 when the deer permit changed from 2 to 4 deer. However, 79% (3,267) of hunters who purchase an additional deer permit only do so once in a given year.

## Attachment NB-4

### Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

#### **NEW BUSINESS ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Creation of a Certified Taxidermist Program

- Amend [301 KAR 4:090](#) – Taxidermy and the buying and selling of inedible wildlife parts
- Allow taxidermists to pursue a CWD certification that would allow them to receive high-risk parts (head, neck, cape, “mountable material”) from CWD surveillance zone counties
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

**Justification:**

Carcass transportation restrictions are enacted once a CWD surveillance Zone (SZ) is formed. These restrictions require a hunter to debone their deer and do the preliminary taxidermy work (e.g., skinning the skull, skull cap, boil, etc.) prior to leaving the SZ, which is a difficult thing for many hunters to do. This effectively reduces the area from which taxidermists may accept deer for mounting purposes, particularly when the taxidermist is located within or immediately adjacent to an SZ. Individual taxidermists have claimed annual losses of >\$20,000.

Taxidermists are required to dispose of carcass parts in an approved manner via regulation. Because those high-risk parts are ultimately disposed of in an approved manner, the wildlife division seeks to create a Certified Taxidermist Program to allow approved certified taxidermists to accept mountable material (i.e., head with antlers attached, neck, cape) from inside of an SZ. This would require an exam and annual recertification. No fees established. Exceptions apply.

## Attachment NB-5

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

### **NEW BUSINESS ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Creation of a commercial game processor permit

- Create a new regulation in [Chapter 4](#)- commercial game processing
- Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, tag, registration, and permit fees to establish the fee
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

**Justification:**

Commercial game processors are unpermitted in Kentucky. Numbers and locations of these facilities are currently unknown. The Wildlife Division recommends permitting these individuals and establishing regulations to allow for record keeping and disposal requirements given the volume of high-risk materials running through these facilities.

## Attachment NB-6

### Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

#### NEW BUSINESS ITEM

DATE: September 4, 2026

#### **Item:** Elk Season Modifications

- Amend [301 KAR 2:132](#) Elk hunting seasons, permits, zones and requirements
- Reduce permit numbers for either-sex archery and crossbow, bull firearms, and cow firearms by approximately 60%, for 210 elk permits, total
- Reduce the minimum caliber restriction for elk from .270 to 6.5mm
- Remove the permit purchase deadline for loyalty recipients
- For general and loyalty drawn hunters, remove the three-year sit-out period and preserve their current years of loyalty if they do not purchase a permit
- Make it mandatory for hunters to submit the outside, lower incisor of any harvested elk or report to the department that their harvested elk was a yearling or calf based on its dentition at the time of harvest
- If a hunter fails to submit a tooth of an adult elk, report the age of a yearling or calf elk, they will be locked out from applying to any quota hunt or non-hunt options the following year (this is currently the penalty for not submitting their elk hunter survey)
- Open Elk Hunting Unit 1 to allow the take of one bull and restrict this unit to one, single drawn hunter while prohibiting commission or special fundraising permits from hunting this unit
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

#### **Justification:**

Although our recently completed statistical population reconstruction (SPR) model indicates a strong elk herd of around 10,000 animals, hunter feedback over the last six years has indicated displeasure with the number of elk available to hunters. A major factor influencing hunter satisfaction is the availability of public land within their elk hunting unit. As such, we seek to align permit numbers more closely with the amount of public land and regulated areas available in each elk hunting unit. At present, approximately 145 hunters annually have access to hunt on a regulated area. The permit number suggested above would place just under 75% of hunters on a regulated area.

Modern bullet and cartridge design has improved and allowed for smaller caliber options to be more than sufficient to harvest elk. As such, we would prefer to lower the minimum caliber restriction to 6.5mm/.264 cal.

Loyalty recipients have a short timeline between being notified of their permit drawing and when they must purchase their permit (typically 7 business days). Given that we do

not have a mechanism to further redraw any unpurchased loyalty permits, we would suggest lifting the permit purchase deadline to allow more time for these hunters to acquire their permit.

There are a variety of reasons that a drawn hunter may not purchase their elk permit, ranging from lack of time off to health concerns. With the loyalty redraw in place, it makes sense not to penalize a general draw hunter who does not purchase their permit. Currently, a general draw hunter who does not choose to purchase their permit must sit out three years and forfeit their years of loyalty. We would like to allow hunters who do not purchase their permit to be relieved of the sit-out period and keep their years of loyalty.

Tooth samples are a core component of our population abundance estimates. In the past, we have received teeth or age data from well below 50% of our annual harvest. We propose a mandatory program for collecting elk teeth and or age data from hunter harvested elk.

We propose adding penalties for failing to submit a harvested elk tooth or reporting elk age based on dentition for yearling or calves. Proposed penalties would include a ban on applying for any quota hunts or non-hunt options the following year.

Elk were restored to Beaver Creek WMA in McCreary County in winter of 2022. Since then, we have seen a marked increase in the number of animals using the WMA. We propose allowing the take of one bull from this herd, while limiting hunting in this unit to only a single, drawn hunter.

## Attachment NB-7

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

### **NEW BUSINESS ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Public Area Trapping Registration Form Updates

- Amend [301 KAR 2:049](#) - Small game and furbearer hunting and trapping on public areas
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

**Justification:**

Public land biologists and trappers have requested a more efficient process for obtaining and processing the Trapping Registration Form required prior to trapping on Wildlife Management Areas (WMA).

- Create fillable form online or through MyProfile along with automated system for approvals and processing. Add additional information to registration form including trapper signature and comment box.
- Create voluntary post-season reporting of species and whether they actually trapped on the WMA.

## Attachment NB-8

### Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

#### **NEW BUSINESS ITEM**

DATE: September 4, 2026

**Item:** Establish Furbearer Hunting Permit

- Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, tag, registration, and permit fees – modify the Bobcat Permit name and change it to the Furbearer Hunting Permit; no change in cost
- Amend [301 KAR 2:251](#) – Hunting and trapping seasons and limits for furbearer - require the Furbearer Hunting Permit to hunt any furbearer
- Cleanup any other regulations as necessary for conformity

**Justification:**

The Wildlife Division requests expanding the Bobcat Hunting Permit into a broader Furbearer Hunting Permit to capture more information about hunted furbearers in Kentucky. While annual trapper surveys have provided information about trapped furbearers for many years, little information exists for the hunted proportion of furbearers. As hunting of furbearers is greatly increasing (and some species such as gray fox may be in decline), it is prudent to gather information related to hunter participation and harvest practices related to: participation in daytime versus nighttime hunting, target species, number of each species harvested (a challenge with a voluntary survey but may provide trends), types of equipment being used (firearms/lights/thermal imaging, etc.), prevalence of thermal imaging use, comparisons of catch effort between day and night hunting for each species, anecdotal observations of increasing or decreasing abundance, and hunter opinions and requests.