

Governor Patrick Morrisey



Director Brett W. McMillion

February 24, 2025


TO: Hunters, Anglers, Trappers, Landowners, Farm Groups and Others Interested in Making Recommendations for Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Regulations.

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources is soliciting comments concerning the 2025-2026 big game hunting regulations, 2026-2027 hunting and trapping regulations and 2026 fishing regulations. Regulations meetings to solicit comments are scheduled for March 10 and 11, 2025.

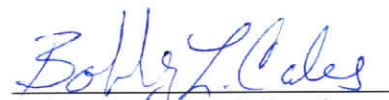
The Division of Natural Resources is recommending most season dates, bag limits and creel limits similar to the 2024-2025 seasons (recommended changes are attached).

In order for us to obtain your recommendations and accurately record your comments and recommendations, it is necessary for you to complete and return the attached form prior to April 3, 2025, to the Division of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Section, Attn: Keith Krantz, P.O. Box 67, Elkins, West Virginia, 26241.

Your continued interest in the state's natural resources programs is greatly appreciated.



Paul R. Johansen, Chief
Wildlife Resources Section



Bobby L. Cales, Colonel
Law Enforcement Section

Please feel free to comment or provide recommendations on hunting, fishing, and trapping regulations or on any phase of our wildlife and law enforcement programs. Please use space provided on the following page. **Returning the attached tables is not necessary.**

Please complete the following section. Be sure only one form is submitted per individual or organization. Questionnaires without a name, an address, or unsigned will not be counted.

PLEASE PRINT

Individual, Group, or Organization Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Number or Members _____ Telephone _____

Signed _____ Date _____ County _____

WVDNR ID# _____

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMMENTS AND THE QUESTIONNAIRE
BY APRIL 3, 2025**

Return To:

Keith Krantz
WV Division of Natural Resources
Wildlife Resources Section
P.O. Box 67
Elkins, WV 26241

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2025-2026 HUNTING AND TRAPPING REGULATIONS

1. The Division of Natural Resources proposes that the 2025 Black Bear Seasons be open as shown on the attached table.

Favor _____

Oppose _____

2. The Division of Natural Resources proposes that the 2025 Antlerless Deer Season be open as shown in the attached tables.

Favor _____

Oppose _____

3. The Division of Natural Resources proposes to remove the special muzzleloader deer season regulation on Hillcrest Wildlife Management Area (Hancock County) and Hillcrest Wildlife Management Area would be open to the Buck Firearms Season.

Favor _____

Oppose _____

4. The Division of Natural Resources proposes that all other big game hunting regulations for the 2025-2026 hunting seasons be open as shown on the attached table.

Favor _____

Oppose _____

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE
2026-2027 HUNTING AND TRAPPING REGULATIONS**

1. The Division of Natural Resources proposes that all other small game and furbearer hunting and trapping regulations for the 2026-2027 seasons be open as shown on the attached table.

Favor _____

Oppose _____

FISH MANAGEMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2026 FISHING REGULATIONS

1. The Division of Natural Resources proposes all fishing regulations remain the same as in 2025.

Favor _____

Oppose _____

PROPOSED 2025 ANTLERLESS DEER SEASON HUNTING REGULATIONS (PRIVATE LAND)

Counties or Parts Thereof Closed to Antlerless (Class N/NN) Hunting	Counties or Parts Thereof Open to Limited Licenses for Resident and Non-resident (Must Apply) (Season Bag Limit: 1) Oct. 23-26; Nov. 24-Dec. 7; Dec. 11-14; Dec. 28-31	Counties or Parts Thereof Open to Unlimited Resident Class N and Nonresident Class NN (Season Bag Limit: 1) Oct. 23-26; Nov. 24-Dec. 7; Dec. 11-14; Dec. 28-31	Counties or Parts Thereof Open to Unlimited Resident Class N and Nonresident Class NN (Season Bag Limit: 3) Oct. 23-26; Nov. 24-Dec. 7; Dec. 11-14; Dec. 28-31	Counties or Parts Thereof Open to Unlimited Resident Class N and Nonresident Class NN. (*see special regulation requirement below) (Season Bag Limit: 3) Oct. 23-26; Nov. 24-Dec. 7; Dec. 11-14; Dec. 28-31
Fayette (<i>west portion</i>) Raleigh (<i>west portion</i>) Wayne (<i>south portion</i>) Logan McDowell Mingo Wyoming	Boone (300) Greenbrier (<i>north portion - 200</i>) Kanawha (<i>north portion 400</i>) Kanawha (<i>south portion 250</i>) Webster (350)	Braxton Cabell Clay Fayette (<i>east portion</i>) Lincoln Marshall Mercer Mineral (<i>west portion</i>) Nicholas Pleasants Pocahontas Raleigh (<i>east portion</i>) Summers Tucker Wayne (<i>north portion</i>) Wetzel Wirt	Barbour Brook Calhoun Doddridge Gilmer Grant Hancock Harrison Jackson Lewis Marion Mason Monongalia Ohio Pendleton Preston Putnam Randolph Ritchie Roane Taylor Tyler Upshur	Berkeley Greenbrier (<i>south portion</i>) Hampshire Hardy Jefferson Mineral (<i>east portion</i>) Monroe Morgan Wood

*In these counties, or parts thereof, deer hunters are required to take an antlerless deer from the county, which may be taken during any deer season open to antlerless deer hunting, prior to harvesting a second antlered deer, from the county, during the combined deer seasons, including the 2026 Mountaineer Heritage Season.

PROPOSED 2025 ANTLERLESS DEER HUNTING REGULATIONS (PUBLIC LANDS)

Season Dates: Oct. 23-26, Nov. 24 -Dec. 7, Dec. 11-14, and Dec 28-31, 2025

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS OPEN TO LIMITED LICENSES FOR RESIDENT AND NONRESIDENT CLASS N/NN ANTLERLESS SEASON – BAG LIMIT OF 1

Camp Creek SF (50) (Mercer Co.)	Greenbrier SF (50) (Greenbrier Co.)	Daniels Ridge WMA (50) (Monroe Co)
Public Land (350) Randolph Co.	National Forest (500) Pocahontas Co.	National Forest (50) Nicholas Co.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS OPEN TO UNLIMITED LICENSES FOR RESIDENT AND NONRESIDENT CLASS N/NN ANTLERLESS SEASON – BAG LIMIT OF 1

Amherst/Plymouth WMA (Putnam Co.)	Pruntytown WMA (Taylor Co.)	Coopers Rock SF (Monongalia/Preston Cos.)	Snake Hill WMA (Monongalia/Preston Cos.)
National Forest (Preston/ Tucker Grant/Hampshire/ Pendleton/Hardy Cos.)	Bluestone WMA (Summers/Mercer/Monroe Cos.)	Pleasant Creek WMA (Barbour/Taylor Cos.)	Wallback WMA (Roane/Clay/Kanawha Cos.)
Stonewall Jackson Lake WMA (Lewis Co.)	Moncove Lake WMA (Monroe Co.)	McClintic WMA (Mason Co.)	Beech Fork Lake WMA (Cabell/Wayne Cos.)

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS OPEN TO UNLIMITED LICNSES FOR RESIDENT AND NONRESIDENT CLASS N/NN ANTLERLESS SEASON – BAG LIMIT OF 3

Burnsville Lake WMA (Braxton Co.)

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS CLOSED TO ANTLERLESS SEASON

National Forest (Greenbrier/Monroe Cos.)

All other WMAs and public lands not listed in this table will have the same seasons and bag limits as private land in the respective county or portion of the county where the WMAs or other public lands are located.

Proposed 2025 Black Bear Seasons

Statewide bag limit two, provided at least one bear comes from Boone, Fayette, Kanawha, Logan, McDowell, Mingo, Raleigh or Wyoming counties. Youth, Class Q/QQ, and Class XS Bear Season September 13 – 14, 2025 in all or parts of 26 counties open to bear hunting with dogs. May hunt with or without dogs.

Youth, Class Q/QQ, and Class XS Bear Season October 18 – 19, 2025 in 51 counties open to firearms deer hunting, no dogs allowed.

Bow Season – 55 counties: Sept. 27 – Dec. 31

Gun Seasons: Refer to Table Below

7-Day Gun With or Without Dogs Oct. 4–Oct. 10 14-Day Gun Without Dogs Nov. 24 – Dec. 7 4-Week Gun With or Without Dogs Dec. 8– Dec. 31	9-Day Gun With or Without Dogs Aug. 30 – Sep. 7 4-Week Gun With or Without Dogs Dec. 8 – Dec. 31	4-Week Gun With or Without Dogs Dec. 8 – Dec. 31	6-Week Gun Without Dogs Nov. 24 – Dec. 31	4-Day Gun Without Dogs in Counties or Parts of Counties Open for Antlerless Deer Gun Hunting Oct. 23 – Oct. 26	14-Day Gun Without Dogs Nov. 24 – Dec. 7	7-Day Gun Without Dogs Sept. 20 – 26	
Boone Fayette Kanawha Raleigh	Logan McDowell Mingo Wyoming	Barbour (E. of Rt. 92 or S. of Rt. 33 [Corridor H]) Braxton (E. of I-79) Clay (S. of Elk River) Gilmer Grant Greenbrier Hardy Mineral (W. of New Creek) Monroe (E. of Rt. 219) Nicholas Pendleton Pocahontas Preston Randolph Ritchie Tucker Upshur (E. of Rt. 20) Webster	Barbour (W. of Rt. 92) Berkeley Braxton (W. of I-79) Brooke Cabell Calhoun Clay (N. of Elk River) Doddridge Hampshire Hancock Harrison Jackson Jefferson Lewis Lincoln Marion Marshall Mason Mercer Mineral (E. of New Creek) Monongalia	Barbour (W. of Rt. 92) Berkeley Boone Braxton (W. of I-79) Brooke Cabell Calhoun Clay (N. of Elk River) Doddridge Fayette Gilmer Hampshire Hancock Harrison Jackson Jefferson Kanawha Lewis Lincoln Marion Marshall Mason Mercer	Mineral (E. of New Creek) Monongalia Monroe (W. of Rt. 219) Morgan Ohio Pleasants Putnam Raleigh Ritchie Roane Summer Taylor Tyler Upshur (W. of Rt. 20) Wayne Wetzel Wirt Wood	Gilmer Ritchie	Barbour (W. of Rt. 92) Braxton (W. of I-79) Calhoun Clay (N. of Elk River) Harrison Lewis Mercer Monongalia Monroe (W. of Rt. 219) Roane Summers Taylor Upshur (W. of Rt. 20)

**Proposed Opening and Closing Dates for the 2025-2026
Big Game Hunting Seasons**

Species	Opening & Closing Dates	Comments/Changes
Mountaineer Heritage Season Deer, Turkey, and Bear (Primitive Weapons)	Jan. 8, 2026 - Jan. 11, 2026	
Bear (Archery & Crossbow)	Sept. 27, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025	
Bear (Gun) {Selected Counties} {Selected Counties} {Selected Counties} {Selected Counties} {Selected Counties} {Selected Counties}	Aug. 30, 2025 – Sept. 7, 2025 Sept. 20, 2025 – Sept. 26, 2025 Oct. 4, 2025 - Oct. 10, 2025 Oct. 23, 2025 - Oct. 26, 2025 Nov. 24, 2025 - Dec. 7, 2025 Dec. 8, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025	See Attached Bear Tables for Selected Counties
Bear (Youth/Q/XS Season) – dogs permitted	Sept. 13, 2025 – Sept. 14, 2025	All or parts of 26 counties open to bear hunting with dogs.
Bear (Youth/Q/XS Season) – dogs prohibited	Oct. 18, 2025 - Oct. 19, 2025	
Wild Boar (Gun)	Oct. 25, 2025 - Nov. 1, 2025 Feb. 6, 2026 - Feb. 8, 2026	
Wild Boar (Archery & Crossbow)	Sept. 27, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025 Feb. 6, 2026 - Feb. 8, 2026	
Deer (Archery & Crossbow - Special Urban)	Sept. 6, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025 Jan. 12, 2026 - Jan. 31, 2026	
Deer (Archery & Crossbow)	Sept. 27, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025	
Deer (Bucks Only)	Nov. 24, 2025 - Dec. 7, 2025	
Deer (Antlerless) {Selected Counties} {Selected Counties} {Selected Counties} {Selected Counties}	Oct. 23, 2025 - Oct. 26, 2025 Nov. 24, 2025 - Dec. 7, 2025 Dec. 11, 2025 - Dec. 14, 2025 Dec. 28, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025	See Attached Antlerless Tables for Selected Counties
Deer (Youth/Q/XS Season -Antlerless)	Oct. 18, 2025 - Oct. 19, 2025 Dec. 26, 2025 - Dec. 27, 2025	
Deer (Muzzleloader)	Dec. 15, 2025 - Dec. 21, 2025	
Turkey (Fall) - (4 week counties)	Oct. 11, 2025 - Oct. 19, 2025 Oct. 27, 2025 - Nov. 16, 2025	
Turkey (Fall) - (2 week counties)	Oct. 11, 2025 - Oct. 19, 2025 Oct. 27, 2025 – Nov 2, 2025	Fall counties determined after 2025 spring gobbler season
Turkey (Fall) - (1 week counties)	Oct. 11, 2025 - Oct. 19, 2025	Fall counties determined after 2025 spring gobbler season
Turkey (Spring 2026 Youth Season)	April 18, 2026 - April 19, 2026	
Turkey (Spring 2026)	April 20, 2026 – May 24, 2026	

Proposed Opening and Closing Dates for the 2026-2027 Hunting and Trapping Seasons

Species	Opening & Closing Dates	Comments/Changes
Squirrel	Sept. 12, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Squirrel (Youth)	Sept. 5 - 6, 2026	
Raccoon (Hunting)	Oct. 17, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Raccoon (Trapping)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Ruffed Grouse	Oct. 17, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Quail (Tomblin WMA closed)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Jan. 2, 2027	
Rabbit	Nov. 7, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Snowshoe Hare	Nov. 7, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Ring-necked Pheasant (Statewide) (Hillcrest WMA)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Jan. 2, 2027 Nov. 14, 2026 - Dec. 5, 2026	
Fox (Hunting & Trapping) (Hunting at night using any color artificial lights or night vision technology, including image intensification, thermal imaging, or active illumination)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027 Jan. 1, 2027 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Bobcat (Hunting & Trapping)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Mink/Muskrat (Trapping)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Fisher (Trapping)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Jan. 31, 2027	
Beaver (Trapping)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Mar. 31, 2027	
Otter (Trapping)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Crow (Hunting)	Oct. 1, 2026 - Nov. 21, 2026 Jan. 1, 2027 - Mar. 6, 2027	
Skunk/Opossum/Coyote/Weasel/ Woodchuck/English Sparrow/European Starling/Pigeon (Hunting)	Open year-round	* September 1 through December 31 – night hunting on private land only with written consent of the landowner.
Coyote (Hunting) (Hunting at night using any color artificial lights or night vision technology, including image intensification. Thermal imaging, or active illumination)	Jan. 1, 2027 – Dec. 31, 2027*	
Skunk/Opossum/Coyote/Weasel (Trapping)	Nov. 7, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2027	
Elk, Song & Insectivorous Birds, Hawks, Owls, Falcons & Eagles	No Open Season	