



*Larry Hogan, Governor*  
*Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor*  
*Mark Belton, Secretary*  
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**SELECTED  
HUNTING AND TRAPPING  
REGULATION  
CHANGES  
FOR  
2016-2017 AND 2017-2018**

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**Below are the regulation changes that have been selected for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 hunting seasons. Unless affected by new legislation, all other regulations would remain unchanged and the associated season dates and bag limits would be similar to past years.**

### **Providing False Information Prohibited**

- 1. Add language to the existing regulation (08.03.04.03) requiring the check-in of deer and turkeys to clarify it is illegal to knowingly provide false information during the check-in process.**

**Rationale/Goal:** To clarify that it is illegal to knowingly provide false information when registering a deer or turkey harvest via the various check-in mechanisms provided by the Department.

**Comments:** Hunters may knowingly provide false information during the check-in process to cover an illegal act, or to allow for an illegal act in the future. This would include registering an antlered deer as an antlerless deer, non-bearded turkey as bearded or claiming to have killed a deer they did not kill.

### **Northern Bobwhite**

- 1. Reduce the season length for bobwhites (quail) on lands owned or managed by DNR. The season will end on December 15.**

**Rationale/Goal:** Bobwhite populations on public lands are largely a result of intensive habitat management efforts. Reducing the season length will minimize the risk of overharvest where habitat improvements are being conducted and evaluated.

**Comments:** Bobwhite populations have declined by over 90% in Maryland and surrounding states. While hunting is not considered to be a causative factor, a conservative harvest strategy is prudent in areas of low density. Research suggests hunting mortality for bobwhites can be additive to natural mortality, particularly during the latter portions of the season. Furthermore, high harvest rates in local areas have been shown to inhibit population growth and potentially cause population declines. Private land managers typically manage harvest levels to minimize the risk of overharvest. However, hunting pressure is difficult to control on public lands, significantly increasing the risk of overharvest and limiting potential population increases due to habitat management efforts.

### **Wild Turkey**

- 1. Create a set distance (150 yards) that turkey hunters and turkeys must be from an artificial feeding/bait source to remain legal when hunting during the fall turkey season only in Allegany, Garrett and Washington counties. Remove references to salt or minerals from the definition of baiting for this regulation.**

**Rationale/Goal:** This change is intended to resolve confusion over what constitutes hunting turkeys with the aid of bait. Additionally, by setting a definitive distance, it will allow turkey hunting on those tracts of land where some areas have been legally baited for deer hunting.

**Comments:** Confusion over what constitutes hunting turkeys with the aid of bait excludes turkey hunters from a significant amount of potential hunting ground due to the presence of bait placed for deer hunting. For example, large hunting leases (e.g. several hundred acres) may effectively be excluded from turkey hunting by the presence of even one baited site. This is a consistent concern expressed by turkey hunters wanting to hunt legally on tracts shared by other hunters, such as on hunting club property. The fall season is only open in the counties noted and the winter turkey season is not included in this change as it is timed to minimize baiting conflicts.

## **Black Bear**

- 1. Create a set distance (150 yards) that bear hunters and bears must be from an artificial feeding/bait source to remain legal when hunting in the bear hunting zone. Remove references to salt or minerals from the definition of baiting for this regulation.**

**Rationale/Goal:** This change is intended to resolve confusion over what constitutes hunting bears with the aid of bait. Additionally, by setting a definitive distance, it will allow bear hunting on those tracts of land where some areas have been legally baited for deer hunting.

**Comments:** Confusion over what constitutes hunting bears with the aid of bait excludes bear hunters from a significant amount of potential hunting ground due to the presence of bait placed for deer hunting. For example, large hunting leases (e.g. several hundred acres) may effectively be excluded from bear hunting by the presence of even one baited site. This is a consistent concern expressed by bear hunters wanting to hunt legally on tracts shared by other hunters, such as on hunting club property. The current prohibition on attracting bears (08.03.04.16) will remain in effect and prevent hunters from placing bait specifically for bears but remaining outside the set distance when hunting.

- 2. Expand the bear hunting zone to include Washington and Frederick counties.**

**Rationale/Goal:** The bear population east of Allegany County is growing and the number of bear related complaints are increasing. We have seen a notable increase in the number of bear complaints in the Central Region in recent years. Applying hunting pressure across all of the occupied bear range should help to slow the expansion of bears into the Central Region.

**Comments:** This is a popular request from farmers and landowners in these counties and the bear population can sustain a managed harvest in these counties. The bear population in Garrett and Allegany counties increased over the 12 years a bear hunting season has been open in those counties.

**3. Allow a subpermittee to hunt black bears regardless of whether the permittee is hunting.**

**Rationale/Goal:** The permittee may be limited on availability while their subpermittee(s) may be available to participate throughout more of the hunt. This would potentially maintain hunting pressure throughout the season and therefore increase harvest.

**Comments:** This is a popular request by bear hunters and is consistent with our bear harvest goals.

**Deer**

**1. Modify the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) transport restrictions to allow whole carcasses from other state CWD-positive areas to be brought into the Maryland CWD Management Area (CWDMA) or to a CWD-approved processor or taxidermist.**

**Rationale/Goal:** Restrictions associated with CWD management can deter hunters from hunting in a particular area. Lack of hunter effort results in increased deer numbers, which can promote the spread of the disease. Removing restrictions such as carcass transport can aid with regional deer control, hunter compliance and CWD management.

**Comments:** Carcass transport does not appear to be a significant cause of the spread of CWD. Allowing whole carcasses to be brought into our CWDMA or to approved CWD taxidermists and processors should not increase the rate of expansion of CWD in Maryland.

**2. Remove the county restrictions for sika deer hunting.**

**Rationale/Goal:** Opening all counties to legal sika deer harvest will help prevent further expansion of the population into areas outside of the current occupied range.

**Comments:** The long standing goal of the Department for sika deer is to maintain a sustainable population primarily in Dorchester County. The species has expanded into Caroline, Somerset, and Wicomico counties and is present in Worcester County from the Assateague Island introduction. Confirmed sightings/harvest of sika deer have occurred as far north as Kent County, Maryland. Sika deer have been shown to cause significant crop damage where they currently exist outside of southern Dorchester County.