

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission

**Will Meet at 10:30 AM
On Wed., February 18, 2026
Department of Natural Resources
Google Meet**

Meeting Agenda:

Approval for February 18, 2026, Meeting Agenda

Approval of January 21, 2026, Meeting Minutes

2026-2028 Hunting Regulations Concepts Update (Associate Director Brian Eyler and Staff)

2026 Legislative Session Update (Associate Director Brian Eyler)

Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation (R3) Program Update (Associate Director Chris Markin)

Maryland Farm Bureau Update (Tyler Hough)

Natural Resources Police Update (Lieutenant Brian Miller or Lieutenant Bill Davis)

Old Business:

- **Sunday Hunting Discussion – (Group Discussion)**
- **Non-Lead Hunting Ammunition – (Group Discussion)**
- **Reptile and Amphibian Regulation Concepts – (Group Discussion)**

New Business:

Public Comment:

Adjourn

NOTE: Free Parking will be available on the Navy Stadium Parking Lot, which is the third entrance on right off of Taylor Avenue.

**The Proposed Schedule for the 2026 Meetings
Of the Wildlife Advisory Commission is as follows:**

January 21st	Google Meet
February 18th	Google Meet
March 18th	In-Person Meeting at Tawes State Office Building
April 15th	Google Meet
May 20th	No Meeting
June 17th	Google Meet
July 15th	No Meeting
August 19th	Google Meet
September 16th	Field Trip (Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge)
October 21st	Google Meet
November 18th	In-Person Meeting at Tawes State Office Building
December 16th	No Meeting

***PLEASE NOTE THAT MEETING DATES ARE HELD
ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH***

Note: Unless notified otherwise, all meetings will be held via Google Meet. When meeting in person, they will be held in the C-4 Conference Room of the Department of Natural Resources—Tawes State Office Building beginning at 10:30 a.m. Available parking is located at the Navy Stadium Parking Lot.

NOTE: Free Parking will be available on the Navy Stadium Parking Lot, which is the third entrance on right off of Taylor Avenue.

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES

FEBRUARY 18, 2026

Chair Wagner called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m. This meeting was held by teleconference. Chair Wagner requested a roll call from individuals on by teleconference. Unfortunately, due to Google Meet's anonymous caller system, it was impossible to identify every participant.

Approval of February 18, 2026, Meeting Agenda

- Motion:
 1. Vice Chair Schroyer moved to accept the agenda for the February 18, 2026, Wildlife Advisory Commission meeting.
 2. Commissioner Rasche seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval of January 21, 2026, Meeting Minutes

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Smith moved to approve the January 21, 2026, meeting minutes.
 2. Vice Chair Schroyer seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

2026-2028 Hunting Regulation Concepts – Associate Director Brian Eyler

- The 2026-2028 Regulation Concepts were released online for public comment.
- Staff will download the first round of comments on February 18, 2026, for review, clean them up for language if needed, and post them live online. Mostly, staff will go through this process twice more during the comment period.
- The public comment will end on February 28, 2026.
- There was a glitch with the late goose season. Due to the federal regulations, staff had to split up the zones.
- Late Goose Season summary of the original and current proposal clarification.
 1. The background related to the proposed snow goose hunting season and the authorized use of special hunting methods (unplugged shotguns, shooting hours that close a half-hour after sunset, and the use of electronic callers).
 2. These methods are permitted during the conservation order season. They may only be used during the regular snow goose season, when all other waterfowl seasons are closed.
 3. The initial proposal to allow these methods statewide from February 8th to March 10th, 2027, would have overlapped with the late resident goose season in Western Maryland, violating federal compliance for the use of special methods.
 4. To remain in compliance with federal regulations while still offering these opportunities, staff had to adjust the proposal to zone that late-season segment to the traditional conservation order season zone.
 5. The special methods will now be restricted to the traditional conservation order zone in the eastern part of the State. Snow goose hunting in the western zone will close on January 31, 2027.
 6. The adjustment ensures Maryland remains in compliance while allowing for the continued use of special methods in the designated zone through March 10, 2027.
- Q&A Section
 1. Vice Chair Schroyer asked if, when staff posts the comments, are the comments only relevant to the proposals?
 - a. No, as long as the comments are clean and not offensive, staff will post them regardless. The comments are 99% fine and not offensive, but staff must review them first before they go straight online.
 2. Vice Chair Schroyer asked if staff have been reading the comments on social media.

- a. Yes, and staff recognized it comes with the territory.
- b. Staff members are required to remove personal information, such as telephone numbers.
- c. Staff do not discriminate against the content of the comments.

2026 Legislative Session Update – Associate Director Brian Eyler

Associate Director Eyler presented the 2026 Legislative Session Summary Update. [ATTACHMENT A]

- The Commission members can track the bills online at the Maryland General Assembly website at <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/>.
- Comments on Bills by Members of the Commission:
 1. HB0091 Agriculture – Neonicotinoid Pesticides – Prohibitions
 - a. Commissioner Rasche noted that neonicotinoids are widely used in various products, including veterinary and pet topical powders for tick control. That harm to pollinators has not been definitively proven. Commissioner Rasche read European studies that show possible reproduction problems in honeybees, and additionally demonstrated a very detrimental effect on the production of some of the crops
 - b. Chair Wagner indicated that this bill is not currently cross-filed.
 - c. Commissioner Rasche added that this bill is not garnering significant support.
 2. HB0447 Natural Resources – Right to Hunt, Fish, and Harvest Wildlife
 - a. Chair Wagner noted that this bill is interesting because it has passed through rules and an executive nominations committee due to its nature as a constitutional change.
 3. HB0578/SB0431 Fish and Wildlife – Endangered and Threatened Species and Migratory Birds – Regulations, Lists, Petitions, Essential habitats, and Takings
 - a. Commissioner Rasche stated that the Maryland Farm Bureau opposes this bill because the Maryland Farm Bureau currently holds a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service depredation permit for black-headed vultures, which have been attacking and killing newborn livestock (cattle and sheep).
 4. HB0716/SB0545 Land Surveyors and Property Line Surveyors – Private Property Access – Prohibition
 - a. Chair Wagner noted that these bills resulted directly from the power line companies' shutting down hunting on Saturdays and Sundays on private land while conducting surveys.
 - b. Chair Wagner mentioned that these bills have gained traction and will probably continue.
 5. HB0780/SB0918 Wicomico County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions – Repeal
 - a. Chair Wagner suggested that these bills may be addressed in the larger Sunday hunting bill.
 6. HB0949/SB0613 Agriculture – Noxious Weeds – Palmer Amaranth
 - a. Commissioner Rasche highlighted that these bills affect all landowners, not just farmers, and controlling Palmer Amaranth is difficult; the recent EPA restriction on Dicamba, an effective control product, makes the situation harder, especially near buffer zones.
 7. HB1063/SB0643 – Natural Resources – Hunting – Management
 - a. These are the larger Sunday hunting bills resulting from a stakeholder process. It would give the DNR authority to set Sunday hunting dates. It also broadens DNR's authority in §10-206 to a wider range of permits to help address deer damage, removing the requirement for an agricultural or forest management component. Additionally, these bills add Sunday hunting for waterfowl for all users and for Atlantic Population (AP) geese for juniors, seniors, apprentices, and full-time students.
 - b. Chair Wagner expressed that these bills addressed concerns of 100's of stakeholders, who attended the meetings, and a masterful job was done. Nobody really likes the bills by 100%, which probably means it is fair to all groups. In the end, the bills are very fair.
 - c. Chair Wagner indicated that he would like the Commission to send a letter of support to the following committees: the Environment and Transportation Committee on the House side and the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee on the Senate side.
 - d. Vice Chair Schroyer replied that he was good with the bills.
 - e. Commissioner Rasche reminded the Commission about his personal stand on these bills.

- Commissioner Rasche added that he thinks that the Maryland Farm Bureau's stand against the Sunday hunting bills is due to their partnership with some of the Eastern Shore Outfitters.
- f. Commissioner Rasche mentioned that he had the opportunity to discuss the Sunday hunting bills with a handful of Eastern Shore Outfitters at the Great American Outdoor Show held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and every single one of them was against the Sunday hunting bills. Maybe some of the outfitters are operating on agricultural properties. It may be that the Maryland Farm Bureau could be sympathetic to the outfitters.
 - g. Chair Wagner informed the Commission that he had the opportunity to attend the Great American Outdoor Show and spoke with a couple of outfitters. Chair Wagner added that one of the largest outfitters on the Eastern Shore supports the Sunday hunting bills, along with other outfitters in the Chestertown area, who are in favor of the Sunday hunting bills. Chair Wagner added that the structure of these bills is intended to address issues related to Sunday hunting, including Sunday waterfowl hunting. Chair Wagner expressed his disappointment that the Maryland Farm Bureau will not support the Sunday hunting bills.
 - h. Commissioner Bowman supported the Sunday hunting bills and said he doesn't understand why we wouldn't offer more harvest opportunities and align with the rest of the world. Maryland is almost the last state still having issues with Sunday hunting.
 - i. Commissioner Herrera echoed Commissioner Bowman's comments.
 - j. Commissioner Kullberg and Commissioner Cohen had no comments.
8. HB1067/SB0181 Hunting – Lead and Lead-Based Ammunition – Phase-Out
- a. Arguments for Supporting HB1067/SB0181: Commissioner Kullberg suggested that the Commission should be proactive and demonstrate concern for Maryland's Wildlife, the health of hunters, and the environment by supporting these bills. Since the bill was already heard in the Senate Committee in early February and has a House hearing scheduled for a couple of weeks in March, now is the time to support it. Commissioner Cohen supported these bills. Commissioner Cohen, with a scientific background, stated that the science on lead effects is entirely clear and that the Commission should think long-term rather than short-term.
 - b. Arguments for Opposing HB1067/SBSB0181 (Timing, Availability, and Heritage Concerns: Vice Chair Schroyer questioned the motivation, citing the preamble's mention of England, Scotland, and Wales implementing similar measures by 2029. He added that in those countries, wildlife is owned by private landowners and reserved for the upper class, in contrast to the United States, where hunting is tied to heritage and family traditions. This raises a "big red flag" that the bills might lead the U.S. toward a European model. Additionally, Vice Chair Schroyer expressed that hunters should be asked to switch voluntarily rather than being told, suggesting a focus on better outreach to encourage a voluntary switch to copper bullets. There is a major concern about the current lack of alternatives, as evidenced by the shelves at sports stores and big-box stores, where there are very few and far between. These bills will also hurt efforts to recruit and retain hunters. Vice Chair Schroyer moved to oppose HB1067/SB0181. Commissioner Smith noted that there is already a lack of participation with hunters, which will be impacted.
 - c. Concerns about Implementation and Cost of HB1067/SB0181: Commissioner Bowman shared concerns about the timing and practicality of the bills. Commissioner Bowman provided his personal example of having to purchase seven different boxes of ammunition from various manufacturers and weights, costing hundreds of dollars, to find a copper round that would shoot accurately from his rifle, leaving him with unusable boxes. Also, Commissioner Bowman noted that while he can afford the cost, many fellow hunters cannot. Additionally, Commissioner Bowman expressed concerns about the provision for exclusions if copper ammunition is unavailable and questioned who would maintain the exclusion list and notify hunters when ammunition becomes available, especially if the available ammunition does not group correctly with a firearm like a muzzleloader. Commissioner Bowman agreed with Vice Chair Schroyer that encouraging a voluntary shift is better, as forcing the change in other states did not go well, and added unnecessary barriers to hunter

- recruitment and retention.
- d. Discussion on Voluntary Switch to Lead-Free Ammunition and Implementation in Other States: Commissioner Herrera supported a voluntary switch but suggested that more aggressive steps should be taken to promote it. He asked if Commissioner Bowman could elaborate on the challenges faced when the change was mandated in other states. Commissioner Bowman explained that other states encountered issues with availability and cost. For example, California had programs to cover the initial ammunition costs, but those were not maintained. California's situation was unique because of the critical risk posed to the California Condor, leaving the state with no real choice. Commissioner Bowman questioned whether the issues in Maryland were serious enough to require immediate legislative action, doubting that the impact on wildlife populations matched that seen with the California Condor. Additionally, Commissioner Bowman expressed skepticism about some research linking meat consumption and health, questioning the fairness of the methodology for those who hunt wild game.
 - e. Enforcement and Economic Impact Concerns (Handloaders and DNR): Commissioner Rasche echoed the comments of Commissioner Bowman and Vice Chair Schroyer, adding that many members of their group are handloaders who have accumulated enough lead rounds for a long time, making the switch very costly. Also, Commissioner Rasche expressed concern about the difficulty the DNR faces in "policing" the ban. Commissioner Rasche noted that if lead ammunition were removed from shelves in Maryland, hunters could easily buy it out of state. Furthermore, with newer ammunition featuring tip bullets that show no lead, enforcement officers would have difficulty identifying restricted rounds when inspecting a hunter's ammunition.
 - f. Response to Objections and Call for Action on Lead Ban: Commissioner Kullberg noted the odd reference in the preamble to Scotland and Wales instead of the United States, such as California. Commissioner Kullberg warned the Commission that the same discussions recur each year and that the bill will likely pass in the end. Commissioner Kullberg suggested the Commission should be on the right side of history by acting proactively. Commissioner Kullberg reasoned that just advising hunters to switch voluntarily isn't effective, making legislative action necessary. Commissioner Kullberg highlighted the impact of lead, mentioning poisoned bald eagles found at rehab centers, human exposure through game consumption, and broader environmental damage. Commissioner Kullberg emphasized that the Commission should prioritize health concerns for hunters, animals, and the environment, and stop resisting change.
 - g. Chair Wagner's stance and proposed alternatives to HB1067/SB0181: Chair Wagner voiced his opinion, stating that he does not believe the science is as clear or the studies are thorough enough to justify the immediate passage of these bills. Chair Wagner referenced the Partnership for a Lead-Free America (funded by the Peregrine Fund, a bird conservation group), whose research supported a voluntary phase-out. Chair Wagner stated that there has never been a documented case of humans suffering from lead poisoning after ingesting wild birds or deer, setting it apart from lead paint or lead gasoline. However, Chair Wagner agreed that lead is environmentally harmful but maintained that science is not completely clear. Chair Wagner argued that a 2029 implementation deadline is unrealistic and suggested finding a "middle ground" that avoids pushing the current legislation while also avoiding "doing nothing." This compromise could involve encouraging DNR to develop a program to educate hunters and introduce them to alternatives. Additionally, Chair Wagner agreed that availability remains a major issue, noting that at the Great American Outdoor Show in Harrisburg, PA, the supply of copper ammunition was "almost none," and manufacturers are still under pressure. Furthermore, Chair Wagner clarified that a lead ban limited to hunting would not prevent the sale of lead ammunition, as bench shooters would still use it. Chair Wagner concluded that, while he will not support the current bill as written, the Commission must take positive, forward-looking actions that benefit both the environment and hunters.

- h. DNR Perspective and the Issue of Timing: Assistant Secretary Peditto acknowledged that the lead ban is “coming” and “inevitable,” and that staff have observed more copper products entering the market. Assistant Secretary Peditto expressed concern about a vague provision in the bills that would require the DNR to determine “what is not readily available,” calling it a “pretty vague test.” Assistant Secretary Peditto viewed the Commission’s disagreement as a “timing problem,” not as a simple yes-or-no question about the ban. Assistant Secretary Peditto stated that the DNR was okay with a phase-in plan included in last year’s unsuccessful bill. Assistant Secretary Peditto suggested to the Commission that the lawmakers might be willing to accept an extended timeline rather than have the bills completely rejected.
 - i. Commission Consensus on Lead and Moving Forward: Chair Wagner affirmed that no member of the Commission thinks “lead is good”. Chair Wagner reiterated that the key issues are the amount of scientific support for the immediate ban, current ammunition availability, recruitment issues, and the impact on handloaders. Chair Wagner suggested that the Commission should take a forward stance, potentially collaborating with politicians to craft mutually agreeable legislation (similar to the Sunday hunting bill discussion) to ensure Maryland is a leader in conservation.
 - j. The Commission voted not to support the bills’ stand. Chair Wagner stated this does not preclude working on programs or having an internal discussion to advise on moving another initiative forward.
- Q&A Section:
 - 1. Vice Chair Schroyer asked if Baltimore City would need HB0186 (Natural Resources – Bow Hunting – Sunday) to allow sharpshooters to control deer on Sundays.
 - a. Associate Director Eyler clarified that sharpshooting conducted under a DNR deer cooperator permit is separate from hunting and is not limited to six days a week. Therefore, the Sunday hunting bill is not necessary for Sunday sharpshooting operations.
 - 2. Chair Wagner asked about the following bills: SB0118/HB0197 (Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act) and whether there are concerns for WHS related to these two bills.
 - a. These bills have not made it to WHS radar; therefore, staff were not familiar with the specifics of the bills, and Associate Director Eyler will review them.
 - Motion to Support HB1063/SB0643:
 - a. Vice Chair Schroyer moved to support Sunday hunting bills HB1063/SB0643 – Natural Resources – Hunting – Management and send a letter of support to the committees.
 - b. Commissioner Bowman seconded.
 - c. Assistant Secretary Peditto mentioned that he had hoped Maryland Farm Bureau Director of Relations Tyler Hough would be present for this discussion. Assistant Secretary Peditto recalled that at an earlier fall WAC meeting, there was a similar conversation to what the members had today. It was his understanding that the last time the Maryland Farm Bureau discussed this issue was about twenty years ago, when they adopted a policy, and that the plan was to bring the county leaders together again to vote on it. However, based on the discussion at this meeting, it appears that the majority of voting members support these bills, but a few counties on the shore do not, leading the Maryland Farm Bureau to decide not to support the bill at all.
 - d. Commissioner Rasche replied that, as of now, that is correct. He added that Carroll County and a few other counties on the Western Shore contributed to policy development, which led to standardized Sunday hunting regulations. The proposal then went from the counties to the Maryland Farm Bureau State Review Committee for approval, and that is as far as it progressed. Commissioner Rasche stated that he could not provide any information on why it did not move forward from the Maryland Farm Bureau State Review Committee. There was no resolution on the floor at the Maryland Farm Bureau Convention.
 - e. Assistant Secretary Peditto asked if there is a scenario where the Maryland Farm Bureau opposes these bills.
 - f. Commissioner Rasche replied that the Eastern Shore members are the only ones who oppose

these bills; therefore, the Maryland Farm Bureau is somewhat divided. Commissioner Rasche indicated that he does not know the members of the Maryland Farm Bureau State Review Committee.

- g. Assistant Secretary Peditto expressed appreciation for Commissioner Rasche's comments and indicated that he was trying to understand the Maryland Farm Bureau policy process.
- h. Chair Wagner acknowledged Assistant Secretary Peditto's questions and statements. Additionally, Chair Wagner hoped that the Maryland Farm Bureau would reconsider these Sunday hunting bills to determine whether they will oppose, support, or abstain from supporting them. Furthermore, Chair Wagner stated that these bills address all constituents' concerns, and it would be a shame if they did not move forward.
- i. The results of the motion are 3-Abstain and 6-Support. The motion passed. The Commission will support HB1063/SB0643 – Natural Resources – Hunting – Management with three abstentions.
- j. The Commission will send a letter of support to the legislative environmental committees.
- j. Motion to Support HB1067/SB0181:
 - a. Commissioner Kullberg made a motion to support HB1067/SB0181.
 - b. Commissioner Herrera seconded.
 - c. The vote resulted in three supporting votes and five opposing votes. Motion failed.
- Commission Summary on Other Bills: Chair Wagner briefly touched on the other legislative items. The Commission did not express immediate concern over the other bills.

DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service Update on Hunter Education Safety Program Integration:

- Director Stonesifer reminded the Commission that the Hunter Safety Program will be integrated into the Wildlife and Heritage Service.
- The first of a series of kick-off meetings had to be rescheduled, but the process is moving forward.
- Director Stonesifer proposed providing the Commission with monthly metrics for both R3 and the Hunter Safety Program once fully integrated. This reporting would include the number of workshops and courses held, the number of students reached, and social media engagement statistics. The draft of this reporting structure will be presented at the March 18, 2026, WAC Meeting.
- Vice Chair Schroyer noted that integrating the Hunter Education Safety Program with the Wildlife and Heritage Service offers a great opportunity to educate Hunter Education instructors about non-lead ammunition and share that information.
- Director Stonesifer agreed, stating that the current Hunter Education instructors are likely already doing more than they realize and are excited about the opportunity for increased outreach opportunities.

Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation (R3) Program Update – Associate Director Chris Markin

- Associate Director Markin reported on R3 efforts. Associate Director Markin confirmed that non-lead ammunition is frequently mentioned during mentored hunts for new hunters. The incorporation of the Hunter Education Safety Program within the Wildlife and Heritage Service will enable more extensive efforts to disseminate information on non-lead ammunition to the general public.
- Youth/Veteran Waterfowl Hunt Event: Associate Director Markin reported on the recent youth, veteran, and active military waterfowl hunt, which encountered "nasty" weather earlier in the month. Although some participants canceled due to concerns about the cold and wind, the event reached approximately 50 new youth hunters, active and retired military participants, and around 20 accompanying parents, for a total of 70-75 people reached.
- Future R3 Program Initiatives: The team is collaborating with Chair Wagner and the Maryland Sportsman's Foundation to identify new organizations and individuals to help expand the waterfowl program. Also, the team is preparing for turkey season by organizing mentored turkey hunts and partnering with external groups to manage logistics, including outreach to audiences. Associate Director Markin highlighted that DNR can reach a broader audience than typical organizations that typically serve niche groups, helping to engage new youth and adults. Engaging young adults is vital

for sustaining license sales and encouraging the next generation of license buyers.

- Staff Training and Program Review: Associate Director Markin mentioned that new staff recently attended a conference for R3 training, receiving formal instruction from professionals with 20+ years of experience. The team returned excited and plans to look at their programming under a “microscope” to ensure it is effective and moving in the necessary direction.
- Need for More Turkey Hunting Land: Chair Wagner reported positive feedback from participants and landowners in the waterfowl hunt. Most of the people who participated last year opened it up and actually asked for more participants. For mentored turkey hunting, more land is urgently needed, since the typical structure limits participation to one-on-one (mentor/youth) or one-on-one plus a parent, which demands a substantial hunting area. Chair Wagner encouraged anyone with available land to contact him or Associate Chris Markin so they can start recruiting property through the Turkey Federations and other organizations.
- Q&A Section
 1. Chair Wagner asked if the DNR tracks data on the number of new license holders gained each month, or how many new hunters come through the R3 Program versus the number of hunters lost.
 - a. Associate Director Markin confirmed that pulling the data is possible but requires significant individual effort because the current licensing system is not conducive to easily generating those numbers. Staff are working to leverage the new licensing system, which is expected to track individuals over time. Associate Director Markin said he believes monthly or year-to-date new-licensed buyer numbers can be pulled relatively easily, and staff will coordinate with the Licensing and Registration Service to collect that information.
 - b. Chair Wagner emphasized the importance of actively tracking recruitment and outreach success, praising the integration of the Hunter Education Safety Program into the Wildlife and Heritage Service.

Maryland Farm Bureau Update (MFB) - MFB Director Hough was not in attendance.

Natural Resources Police Update (NRP) – Lieutenant Bill Davis gave an update.

- Lieutenant Davis reported on NRP activity for January. NRP addressed 733 total violations using their electronic ticket system, including 287 hunting-related, 36 fishing, 69 public lands, 11 forestry, and 93 boating violations.
- There were numerous instances of prohibited felons being apprehended, resulting in other violations and jail time.
- NRP handled 6,801 calls for service and generated 94 reports.

Old Business

- Non-Lead Ammunition Discussion – Chair Wagner requested to keep this topic on the agenda. Also, Chair Wagner tasked the Commission with developing ideas to present to DNR on how to move forward based on the legislation outcome on the non-lead ammunition bills. At the next meeting, the Commission will have another discussion to determine how it can move forward and be proactive, as Commissioner Kullberg said, in addressing conservation on that topic.
- Reptile and Amphibian Regulation Changes Update – Director Stonesifer noted that the stakeholder process has slowed down because State Herpetologist Beth Schlimm has been heavily occupied addressing a “rather large request for information” from the public via the Public Information Act (PIA) portal.
 1. State Herpetologist Beth Schlimm provided an update on the proposed changes, which involve moving forward to prohibit the collection, possession, breeding, and trade of native reptiles and amphibians, with exceptions for the bullfrog and red corn snake.
 2. The stakeholders meeting in the fall yielded broad, near-unanimous support for prohibiting collection from the wild. Still, there was more “push back” on prohibiting the possession of captive-bred animals. Staff used the feedback to develop a solid draft of changes.

3. State Herpetologist Beth Schlimm met with the NRP to review the draft and gain clarification on areas related to legal collection and trade to “tighten things up”.
4. Discussion will continue after the PIA request is concluded.
5. Chair Wagner requested that the Reptile and Amphibian Regulation Update remain on the agenda.

New Business – No New Business.

Public Comment –

- There were no other public comments.
- The public may contact the Members of the Commission at wac.dnr@maryland.gov.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 10:30 am, and will be held in person and via Google Meet.

Attendance

Members:	J. Bowman, E. Cohen, D. Herrera, K. Kullberg, W. Rasche, K. Rossignuolo, J. Schroyer, M. Smith, and C. Wagner
Absent:	J. Parks
Guest:	K. Thompson and A. Ward
Staff:	B. Davis, G. Brewer, C. Coriell, H. Devine, B. Eyler, K. Fleming, K. Harvey, J. Homyack, K. Lamp, B. Long, C. Markin, J. Moulis, P. Peditto, B. Schlimm, T. Spencer, K. Stonesifer, J. Tabora, and J. Trudeau

**Summary of 2026 Proposed Legislation
Wildlife and Heritage Service
(as of February 17, 2026)**

Number/ Chapter (Cross File) Total: 31	Title	Primary Sponsor	Current Status	Original House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates	Opposite House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates
HB0091	Agriculture - Neonicotinoid Pesticides - Prohibitions	Delegate Healey	In the House - Hearing 2/04 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/04/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB0175	Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation - Alterations	Delegate Ziegler	In the House - Hearing 1/20 at 1:00 p.m.	Ways and Means 1/20/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB0186	Natural Resources - Bow Hunting - Sundays	Delegate Bouchat	In the House - Hearing 2/04 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/04/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB0420 (SB0242)	Modernizing Civil Relief for Service Members Act	Delegate Rogers	In the House - Reassigned to Government, Labor, and Elections and Health	Government, Labor, and Elections 2/17/2026 - 1:00 PM Health	
HB0447	Natural Resources - Right to Hunt, Fish, and Harvest Wildlife	Delegate Grammer	In the House - First Reading House Rules and Executive Nominations	Rules and Executive Nominations	
HB0578 (SB0431)	Fish and Wildlife - Endangered and Threatened Species and Migratory Birds - Regulations, Lists, Petitions, Essential Habitats, and Takings	Delegate Palakovich Carr	In the House - Hearing 2/18 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/18/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB0613 (SB0368)	Calvert and St. Mary's Counties - Living Shorelines and Nonstructural Shoreline Stabilization Measures	Delegate Morgan, T.	In the House - Hearing 2/25 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/25/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB0701 (SB0523)	Department of the Environment - Water Resources - Protection of Vernal Pools (Vernal Pool Wetlands Protection Act of 2026)	Delegate Hill	In the House - Hearing 2/18 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/18/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB0716 (SB0545)	Land Surveyors and Property Line Surveyors - Private Property Access - Prohibition	Delegate Pippy	In the House - Hearing 2/18 at 1:00 p.m.	Economic Matters 2/18/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB0780 (SB0918)	Wicomico County - Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions - Repeal	Wicomico County Delegation	In the House - Hearing 3/04 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 3/04/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB0949 (SB0613)	Agriculture – Noxious Weeds – Palmer Amaranth	Talbot County Delegation	In the House - Hearing 2/27 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/27/2026 - 1:00 PM	

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Wildlife and Heritage Service
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HB1063 (SB0643)	Natural Resources - Hunting - Management	Delegate Boyce	In the House - Hearing 2/27 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/27/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB1067 (SB0181)	Hunting - Lead and Lead-Based Ammunition - Phase-Out	Delegate Guyton	In the House - Hearing 3/04 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 3/04/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB1120 (SB0418)	Professional Licensing Portability - Members of the Foreign Service and Spouses	Delegate Rogers	In the House - First Reading Economic Matters and Health	Economic Matters Health	
HB1237	Pesticide Applications - Subscription Contract Requirements and Registry Establishment	Delegate Ruth	In the House - Hearing 3/04 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 3/04/2026 - 1:00 PM	
HB1324 (SB0879)	Baltimore City - Natural Resources - Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones	Delegate Rosenberg	In the House – Hearing Canceled	Environment and Transportation	
SB0181 (HB1067)	Hunting - Lead and Lead-Based Ammunition - Phase-Out	Senator Lewis Young	In the Senate - Hearing 2/03 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 2/03/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0242 (HB0420)	Modernizing Civil Relief for Service Members Act	Senator Simonaire	In the Senate - Hearing 2/12 at 2:00 p.m. (Education, Energy, and the Environment)	Education, Energy, and the Environment 2/12/2026 - 2:00 PM Finance	
SB0304	Collisions With Wild Animals - Prohibited Actions by Insurer	Senator Bailey	In the Senate - Hearing 2/04 at 1:00 p.m.	Finance 2/04/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0368 (HB0613)	Calvert and St. Mary's Counties - Living Shorelines and Nonstructural Shoreline Stabilization Measures	Senator Bailey	In the Senate - Hearing 2/10 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 2/10/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0418 (HB1120)	Professional Licensing Portability - Members of the Foreign Service and Spouses	Senator Simonaire	In the Senate - Hearing 2/19 at 1:00 p.m. (Education, Energy, and the Environment)	Education, Energy, and the Environment 2/19/2026 - 1:00 PM Finance	
SB0431 (HB0578)	Fish and Wildlife - Endangered and Threatened Species and Migratory	Senator Brooks	In the Senate - Hearing 2/17 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment	

**Summary of 2026 Proposed Legislation
Wildlife and Heritage Service
(as of February 17, 2026)**

	Birds - Regulations, Lists, Petitions, Essential Habitats, and Takings			2/17/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0523 (HB0701)	Department of the Environment - Water Resources - Protection of Vernal Pools (Vernal Pool Wetlands Protection Act of 2026)	Senator Washington, M.	In the Senate - Hearing 2/24 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 2/24/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0545 (HB0716)	Land Surveyors and Property Line Surveyors - Private Property Access - Prohibition	Senator Ready	In the Senate - Hearing 2/19 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 2/19/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0588	Natural Resources - Complimentary Fishing and Hunting Licenses - Alterations	Senator Simonaire	In the Senate - Hearing 3/10 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 3/10/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0613 (HB0949)	Agriculture - Noxious Weeds - Palmer Amaranth	Talbot County Senators	In the Senate - Hearing 3/03 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 3/03/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0643 (HB1063)	Natural Resources - Hunting - Management	Senator Bailey	In the Senate - Hearing 3/10 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 3/10/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0754	Land Use - Preservation of Natural Resources	Senator Washington, M.	In the Senate - Hearing 3/10 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 3/10/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0879 (HB1324)	Baltimore City - Natural Resources - Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones	Senator Attar	In the Senate - Hearing 3/10 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 3/10/2026 - 1:00 PM	
SB0918 (HB0780)	Wicomico County - Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions - Repeal	Senator Mautz	In the Senate - Hearing 3/10 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Energy, and the Environment 3/10/2026 - 1:00 PM	