

**WEST VIRGINIA  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
KEN HECHLER  
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION**

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OCT 17 1 44 PM '97

Form #2

OFFICE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**NOTICE OF COMMENT PERIOD ON A PROPOSED RULE**

AGENCY: BUREAU OF COMMERCE, DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES TITLE NUMBER: 58

RULE TYPE: LEGISLATIVE CITE AUTHORITY: 20-1-7(30)

AMENDMENT TO AN EXISTING RULE: YES  NO

IF YES, SERIES NUMBER OF RULE BEING AMENDED: 65

TITLE OF RULE BEING AMENDED: FALCONRY

IF NO, SERIES NUMBER OF NEW RULE BEING PROPOSED: \_\_\_\_\_


TITLE OF RULE BEING PROPOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

IN LIEU OF A PUBLIC HEARING, A COMMENT PERIOD HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED DURING WHICH ANY INTERESTED PERSON MAY SEND COMMENTS CONCERNING THESE PROPOSED RULES. THIS COMMENT PERIOD WILL END ON November 18, 1997 AT 10:00 a.m. ONLY WRITTEN COMMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AND ARE TO BE MAILED TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

GORDON ROBERTSON, DEPUTY CHIEF  
DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
WILDLIFE RESOURCES SECTION  
ROOM 842, BLDG. 3, CAPITOL COMPLEX  
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305

THE ISSUES TO BE HEARD SHALL BE LIMITED TO THIS PROPOSED RULE.

*The Public Hearing has been cancelled, but the public comment period will continue as previously announced and end November 18, 1997 at 10:00 a.m.*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN B. RADER, DIRECTOR

ATTACH A **BRIEF** SUMMARY OF YOUR PROPOSAL

**WEST VIRGINIA  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
KEN HECHLER  
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION**

Form #1

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Oct 7 3 06 PM '97

OFFICE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON A PROPOSED RULE**

AGENCY: BUREAU OF COMMERCE, DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES TITLE NUMBER: 58

RULE TYPE: Legislative CITE AUTHORITY: §20-1-7(30)

AMENDMENT TO AN EXISTING RULE: YES: X NO:         

IF YES, SERIES NUMBER OF RULE BEING AMENDED: 65

TITLE OF RULE BEING AMENDED: Falconry

IF NO, SERIES NUMBER OF NEW RULE BEING PROPOSED:         

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: November 18, 1997 TIME: 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING: Division of Natural Resources  
State Capitol Complex, Bldg. 3, Room 674  
Charleston, WV 25305

COMMENTS LIMITED TO: ORAL,          WRITTEN,          BOTH X

COMMENTS MAY ALSO BE MAILED TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS: Gordon Robertson  
DNR - Wildlife Resources  
State Capitol Complex, Bldg. 3, Room 842  
Charleston, WV 25305

The Division requests that persons wishing to make comments at the hearing make an effort to submit written comments at the hearing in order to facilitate the review of these comments. The issues to be heard shall be limited to the proposed rule.

ATTACH A **BRIEF** SUMMARY OF YOUR PROPOSAL

  
JOHN B. RADER, DIRECTOR

\$5.00

## FISCAL NOTE FOR PROPOSED RULE

**Rule Title:** Series 65, Falconry

**Type of Rule**      X   **Legislative**                  **Interpretive**                  **Procedural**

**Agency**       Division of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Section

**Address**       Capitol Complex

Building 3, Room 842

Charleston, WV 25305

**1. Effect of Proposed Rule**

	ANNUAL			FISCAL YEAR	
	INCREASE	DECREASE	CURRENT	NEXT	THEREAFTER
<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL COST</b>	310.00	0	0	-5.00	+805.00
<b>PERSONAL SERVICES</b>	1,560.00	0	0	1,755.00	195.00
<b>CURRENT EXPENSE</b>					
<b>REPAIRS &amp; ALTERATIONS</b>					
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>					
<b>OTHER</b>	1,250.00	0	0	1,750.00	1,000.00

**2. Explanation of above estimates:** Total costs are based on personal services to inspect facilities and test applicants minus the applicant's annual fee for these services.

**3. Objectives of these rules:** To establish standards to govern the possession, training, and use of falcons for the purpose of hunting in West Virginia.

**4. Explanation of overall Economic Impact of Proposed Rule.**

**A. Economic Impact on State Government:** \$310.00 initial cost to administer falconry in West Virginia.

**Rule Title:** Series 65, Falconry

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**B. Economic Impact on Political Subdivisions; Specific Industries; Specific Groups of Citizens:** None

**C. Economic Impact on Citizens/Public at Large:** None.

**Date:** 9/29/97

**Signature of Agency or  
Authorized Representative:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN B. RADER, DIRECTOR

**RULE SUMMARY**

**TITLE 58  
LEGISLATIVE RULE  
BUREAU OF COMMERCE  
DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**SERIES 65  
FALCONRY**

This rule establishes, within the regulatory guidelines of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the requirements for an individual to possess a raptor for the purpose of "falconry" within the State of West Virginia. These requirements include standards for housing the bird(s), training the bird(s), equipment, the number and species of birds that may be possessed; the training and testing requirements for the "falconer" and other state and federal permits which are required. The rule also establishes an annual fee schedule for the testing and inspection of falconers and their equipment and facilities, respectively.

**STATEMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRING RULE**

**TITLE 58  
LEGISLATIVE RULE  
BUREAU OF COMMERCE  
DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**SERIES 65  
FALCONRY**

Series 65, Falconry, is required to permit individuals to practice falconry within the State of West Virginia. Before individuals may legally practice falconry in West Virginia, rules must be adopted prescribing how individuals are trained, what equipment they must have and how they must maintain the birds. These rules must follow the regulations established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the federal agency responsible for migratory birds) and be approved by that agency.

FILED

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TITLE 58  
LEGISLATIVE RULE  
BUREAU OF COMMERCE  
DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
SECRETARY OF STATE

SERIES 65  
FALCONRY

**§58-65-1. General.**

1.1. Scope and Purpose. -- This legislative rule establishes standards to govern the possession, training, and use of ~~falcons~~ raptors for the purpose of hunting in West Virginia.

1.2. Authority. -- West Virginia Code §20-1-7(30)

1.3. Filing Date. --

1.4. Effective Date. --

**§58-65-2. Definitions.**

2.1. "Director" means the Director of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources.

2.2. "Division" means the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources.

2.3. "Falconry" means the sport of taking quarry by means of a trained raptor.

2.4. "Raptor" means a live migratory bird of the Order Falconiformes or the Order Strigiformes, other than a bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) ~~or a golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)~~.

**§58-65-3. Permit Requirements.**

3.1. A West Virginia falconry permit is required before any person may take, possess, transport, sell, purchase, barter, or offer to sell, purchase or barter raptors for falconry purposes or practice falconry in the state of West Virginia.

3.2. Permittees may not take, possess, transport, sell, purchase, barter, or transfer any raptor for falconry purposes except under authority of a Federal falconry permit which is issued in conjunction with the state permit and in accordance with appropriate State and Federal rules and regulations.

3.3. The Director may issue falconry permits to applicants who meet the requirements and otherwise comply with the provisions of this rule.

3.4. Applicants must complete and submit an application on forms provided by the Division.

3.5. Permits are valid from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Permits are renewable, but may not be transferred to any other person. Permits may be revoked or denied for cause or for violation of any of the provisions of the permit or Subsection 11.1 of this rule.

3.6. The fees for permits are as follows:

3.6.1. An applicant who applies for a permit, who does not currently possess a permit issued by the Division in one of the three classes set forth in Section 4 of this rule, shall pay an initial \$250 application and issuance fee for any class permit.

3.6.2. The annual renewal fee for any class permit is \$100. Any lapse in renewal of more than thirty (30) days subjects the applicant to the same \$250 fee as an initial applicant.

3.6.3. An applicant, who currently possess a permit issued by the Division in one of the classes set forth in Section 4 of this rule, who applies for a permit in one of the other classes shall not pay an application and issuance fee.

3.7. Hunting License Requirements.

3.7.1. In addition to a falconry permit, permittees are required to possess a valid hunting license and any other applicable stamps or licenses that are required by law.

3.7.2. When hunting waterfowl with a raptor, the permittee must hold a valid federal and state waterfowl stamp.

3.8. Seasons and bag limits.

3.8.1. Falconers may only hunt during seasons established by the Director.

3.8.2. Falconers must abide by all bag limits established by the Director.

**§58-65-4. Classes of Permits.**

4.1. Apprentice class.

4.1.1. An applicant for a permit shall be at least 14 years old.

4.1.2. A permittee must be sponsored by a holder of a valid West Virginia General or Master Falconry Permit or a valid General or Master Falconry Permit from another state meeting Federal falconry standards and listed in appropriate Federal regulations for the first two years in



which an apprentice permit is held, regardless of the age of the permittee. A sponsor may not have more than three apprentices at any one time;

4.1.3. A permittee shall not possess more than one raptor and may not obtain more than one raptor for replacement during any 12-month period.

4.1.4. A permittee shall possess only an American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) or a red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), which must be taken from the wild.

4.2. General Class.

4.2.1. An applicant for a permit shall be at least 18 years old.

4.2.2. An applicant for a permit shall have at least two years experience in the practice of falconry at the apprentice class level.

4.2.3. A permittee may not possess more than two raptors and may not obtain more than two raptors for replacement birds during any 12-month period.

4.2.4. A permittee may not take, transport, or possess any golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), or any species listed as threatened or endangered in appropriate Federal regulations.

4.3. Master Class.

4.3.1. An applicant for a permit shall have at least five years experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level.

4.3.2. A permittee may not possess more than three raptors, and may not obtain more than two raptors for replacement birds during any 12-month period.

4.3.3. A permittee may not take any species listed as threatened or endangered in appropriate Federal regulations, but may transport or possess those species in accordance with the federal regulations and with authorization in writing by the Director.

4.3.4. A permittee may not take, transport, or possess any golden eagle or any raptor not indigenous to this State for falconry purposes, unless authorized in writing by the Director.

**§58-65-5. Examination.**

5.1. Applicants for ~~an apprentice class~~ a falconry permit are required to answer correctly at least 80 percent of the questions on a supervised examination relating to basic biology, care and handling of raptors, literature, laws, rules, regulations and other appropriate subject matter before

the Division will issue a falconry permit. The examination will be provided and administered by the Division.

5.2. Division employees representing the Director shall inspect and certify raptor housing and other equipment prior to issuing a permit to an applicant. Facilities and equipment must meet the standards listed in Subsection 6.1 of this rule.

**§58-65-6. Facilities and Equipment.**

6.1. Before a falconry permit is issued, the applicant's raptor housing facilities and falconry equipment shall be inspected and certified by a representative of the Wildlife Resources Section of the Division as meeting the following standards:

6.1.1. Facilities.

6.1.1.a. The primary consideration for raptor housing facilities, whether indoors (mews) or outdoors (weathering area), is protection from the environment, predators, or undue disturbance. The applicant ~~may~~ shall have ~~either of the~~ following facilities, except that depending upon climatic conditions, the issuing authority may require only one of the following facilities:

6.1.1.b. Indoor facilities (mews) which are large enough to allow easy access for caring for the raptors housed in the facility. If more than one raptor is to be kept in the mews, the raptors shall be tethered or separated by partitions and the area for each bird shall be large enough to allow the bird to fully extend its wings. There shall be at least one window, protected on the inside by vertical bars, spaced narrower than the width of the bird's body, and a secure door that can be easily closed. The floor of the mews shall permit easy cleaning and shall be well drained. Adequate perches shall be provided; or

6.1.1.c. Outdoor facilities (weathering area) which are fenced and covered with netting or wire, or roofed to protect the birds from disturbance and attack by predators except that perches more than 6 ½ feet high need not be covered or roofed. The enclosed area shall be large enough to insure the birds cannot strike the fence when flying from the perch. Protection from excessive sun, wind, and inclement weather shall be provided for each bird. Adequate perches shall be provided.

6.1.2. The following equipment must be possessed by the applicant before he or she will be issued a permit:

6.1.2.a. Jesses -- An applicant shall possess at least 1 pair of Alymeri jesses or jesses of similar type, constructed of pliable, high-quality leather or suitable synthetic material to be used when any raptor is flown free. Traditional 1-piece jesses may be used on raptors when they are not being flown;

6.1.2.b. Leashes and swivels -- An applicant shall possess at least 1 flexible, weather-resistant leash and 1 strong swivel of acceptable falconry design;

6.1.2.c. Weighing device -- An applicant shall possess a reliable scale or balance suitable for weighing the raptors held and graduated to increments of not more than ½ ounce (15 gram);

6.1.2.d. Bath container -- An applicant shall possess at least 1 suitable container, 2 to 6 inches deep and wider than the length of the raptor, for drinking and bathing for each raptor; and

6.1.2.e. Outdoor perches -- An applicant shall possess at least 1 weathering area perch of an acceptable design for each raptor.

6.1.3. Maintenance.

6.1.3.a. All facilities and equipment must meet or exceed the standards listed in Subsections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 of this rule at all times.

6.1.4. Transportation and temporary holding.

6.1.4.a. A raptor possessed under authority of a West Virginia falconry permit may be temporarily held by a person other than the permittee only if that person is otherwise authorized to possess raptors, and then only if the raptor is accompanied at all times by the properly completed Federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) designating the permittee as the possessor of record and by a signed, dated statement from the permittee authorizing the temporary possession.

6.1.4.b. Raptors may be transported or held for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days in a temporary facility, if it is equipped with a perch and is protected from extreme temperatures and excessive disturbance.

6.1.4.c. Raptors legally held under a valid West Virginia falconers permit may be transported to other states for meets, trials, and hunting and may be returned to West Virginia by the permittee without having to obtain an importation permit. Nothing in this rule exempts the falconer from having to obtain the necessary permits or licenses before transporting any raptor into another state.

**§58-65-7. Nonresident Permits.**

7.1. Nonresident falconers must possess both a West Virginia falconry permit and the appropriate nonresident hunting licenses to hunt with a raptor in West Virginia.

7.2. Nonresident falconers are not subject to the examination and facilities and equipment conditions outlined in Sections 5 and 6 of this rule, but must show proof of possession of a valid permit from another State that meets Federal falconry standards and is listed in appropriate Federal regulations.

7.3. Nonresident falconers must obtain an importation permit as required by West Virginia code §20-2-13, prior to bringing raptors into West Virginia.

**§58-65-8. Reporting.**

8.1. The permittee may not take, purchase, receive, or otherwise acquire, sell, barter, transfer, or otherwise dispose of any raptor unless he or she submits a Federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report), completed and filed in accordance with the instructions on the form, to the Division office within five (5) calendar days of any transaction.

8.2. A permittee may not possess a raptor, unless the permittee has a properly completed Federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) for each bird possessed.

**§58-65-9. Marking.**

9.1. The Division shall conduct an inventory of all raptors held within the State, except those held for scientific or zoological purposes.

9.2. Any raptor taken, possessed or transported for falconry purposes, except a captive bred raptor lawfully marked by a numbered, seamless band issued by the Division or the US Fish and Wildlife Service, must be banded with a permanent, non-reusable numbered band issued by the Division or the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

9.3. Raptors removed from the wild shall not be banded with a seamless numbered band.

9.4. A permittee shall report the loss or removal of any band to the issuing office within five (5) working days of the loss. The lost band must be replaced by a permanent, non-reusable numbered band supplied by the Division or by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The permittee must file a Federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) in accordance with the instructions on the form reporting the loss of the band and the rebanding.

9.5. Alteration, counterfeiting or defacing of a marker is prohibited except that a permittee may remove the rear tab on markers and may smooth an imperfect surface provided the integrity of the marker and numbering are not affected.

**§58-65-10. Restrictions.**

10.1. Taking Restrictions.

10.1.1. It is illegal to take at any time any golden eagle or any species of raptor listed as threatened or endangered in appropriate State or Federal rules or regulations.

10.1.2. Only resident falconers may take raptors from the wild for the purposes of falconry.

10.1.3. Resident falconers are only allowed to take American kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) and red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) from the wild for the purpose of falconry.

10.1.4. Resident falconers who desire to take either of the two species listed in Subdivision 10.1.3 of this Section must obtain a scientific collecting permit from the Director. Any permit for collecting birds from the wild shall include, as a provision of collection, the written permission of the landowner, including State and Federal agencies, from which the bird(s) would be taken.

10.1.5. Immature raptors of the species listed in Subdivision 10.1.3 of this Section which are not yet capable of flight (eyases) may only be taken by a General or Master Falconer during the period of May 1 to June 15, and no more than two eyases may be taken by the same permittee during the specified period.

10.1.6. First-year (passage) birds may be taken only during the period of September 1 to November 30.

10.1.7. A marked or banded raptor may be retrapped at any time.

10.1.8. Only American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) may be taken when over one year old ~~may be taken~~ for falconry. Any raptor ~~listed as other than~~ threatened or endangered species listed by state or federal laws, rules or regulations, ~~other than golden eagles,~~ taken under the authority of a depredation or special purpose permit issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be used for falconry by General and Master class falconers.

## 10.2. Other Restrictions and Provisions.

10.2.1. Any person who possesses a lawfully acquired raptor before the enactment of this rule and who fails to meet the permit requirements of this rule ~~may~~ shall be allowed to retain the raptor(s), provided he or she meets all the housing requirements listed in Subdivision 6.1.1 of this rule and provided further that the raptor is not used for falconry purposes by the holder. Any person possessing raptors under the authority of this section must also comply with the provisions of Division rule, Miscellaneous Permits and Licenses 58 CSR 64-2.1.3. These birds shall be identified with markers supplied by the Director and cannot be replaced if death, loss, release, or escape occurs.

10.2.2. A person who possesses raptors before the enactment of this rule, in excess of the number allowed under his or her class of permit, ~~may~~ shall be allowed to retain the extra raptors. These birds shall be identified with markers supplied by the Director and no replacement shall occur, nor may an additional raptor be obtained, until the number in possession is at least one less than the total number authorized by the class of permit held by the permittee.

10.2.3. A falconer shall remove and surrender to the Division any markers from an intentionally released bird which is indigenous to the state. A standard Federal bird band shall be attached to these birds by a Division or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service bird bander prior to release.

10.2.4. No non-indigenous birds may be released in this state.

10.2.5. Another person may care for the birds of a permittee, ~~if written authorization from the permittee accompanies the birds when they are transferred. for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days. The raptor must be accompanied at all times by a properly completed form 3-186A designating the person caring for the raptor as the possessor of record and by a signed, dated statement from the permittee authorizing the temporary possession. If the period of care will exceed thirty (30) days, the Director must be notified in writing by the permittee within three (3) days of the transfer. The notification must include the location where the birds are being held, the reason for the transfer, the name and address of the person responsible for their care, and the approximate number of days they will be in the care of that person.~~

10.2.6. Feathers that are molted or those feathers from birds held in captivity that die, may be retained and exchanged by a permittee only for imping purposes.

10.2.7. A permittee may not sell, purchase, barter, or offer to sell, purchase or barter any raptor unless the raptor is marked on the metatarsus by a seamless, numbered band supplied by the Division or US Fish and Wildlife Service.

10.2.8. A permittee may not propagate raptors without prior acquisition of a valid raptor propagation permit issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and written authorization from the Director in writing.

#### **§58-65-11. Revocation of Permit.**

11.1. The Director may revoke a falconry permit under the authority granted by West Virginia Code §20-2-38. The Director shall send notice to the permittee by certified mail which specifies the reason for the revocation, which may include, but is not limited to, the following reasons:

11.1.1. Improper care for a raptor;

11.1.2. A raptor becomes a public nuisance;

11.1.3. A violation of West Virginia game laws or rules;

11.1.4. Non-compliance with the terms or conditions of permit; or

11.1.5. Revocation of the permittee's Federal falconry permit.



**CECIL H. UNDERWOOD**  
Governor

Equal Opportunity Employer

<b>Administration</b> (304) 558-3315 FAX (304) 558-2768	<b>Law Enforcement</b> (304) 558-2783 FAX (304) 558-1170	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> (304) 558-2764 FAX (304) 558-0077	<b>Wildlife Resources</b> (304) 558-2771 FAX (304) 558-3147	<b>Conservation Education and Litter Control</b> (304) 558-3370 FAX (304) 558-2768	<b>Public Information</b> (304) 558-3380 FAX (304) 558-2768	<b>Real Estate Management</b> (304) 558-3225 FAX (304) 558-3680	<b>Wonderful West Virginia Magazine</b> (304) 558-9152 FAX (304) 558-2768
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October 7, 1997

The Honorable Ken Hechler  
Secretary of State  
Building #1, Suite 157-K  
Charleston, WV 25305

FILED  
OCT 7 3 06 PM '97  
OFFICE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**ATTENTION STATE REGISTER**

Re: Publication of Notice to the Public

Dear Mr. Hechler:

There has been scheduled a public hearing to explain and receive comments concerning revisions to rules for falconry (58 C.S.R. 65). This meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 18, 1997 at 10:00 a.m. in Charleston, West Virginia, at the Division of Natural Resources, Building #3, Conference Room 674.

Please publish one (1) copy of this notice in the State Register and return a copy to this office with your stamp showing it as filed with your office.

Your assistance is most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Gordon C. Robertson  
Deputy Chief

GCR/b

cc: Bernie Dowler

