



WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE

KRIS WARNER

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION

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Office of West Virginia
Secretary Of State

**NOTICE OF FINAL FILING AND ADOPTION OF A LEGISLATIVE RULE AUTHORIZED
BY THE WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

AGENCY: Natural Resources

TITLE-SERIES: 58-58

RULE TYPE: Legislative Amendment to Existing Rule: Yes Repeal of existing rule: No

RULE NAME: Special Waterfowl Hunting

CITE STATUTORY AUTHORITY: §20-1-7(31)

The above rule has been authorized by the West Virginia Legislature.

Authorization is cited in (house or senate bill number) HB 2331

Section §64-10-2(g) Passed On 4/7/2025 12:00:00 AM

This rule is filed with the Secretary of State. This rule becomes effective on the following date:

May 19, 2025

This rule shall terminate and have no further force or effect from the following date:

August 01, 2030

BY CHOOSING 'YES', I ATTEST THAT THE PREVIOUS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

Yes

Emily Rector -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.

TITLE 58
LEGISLATIVE RULES
BUREAU OF COMMERCE
DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

SERIES 58
SPECIAL WATERFOWL HUNTING

§58-58-1. General.

1.1. Scope and Purpose. -- This rule establishes provisions regarding the proper management of waterfowl with respect to the hunting of waterfowl in West Virginia.

1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Code §20-1-7(31).

1.3. Filing Date. -- May 16, 2025.

1.4. Effective Date. -- May 19, 2025.

1.5. Sunset Provision. -- This rule shall terminate and have no further force or effect on August 1, 2030.

1.6. Seasons in General. -- All hunting seasons are subject to change under the provisions of W. Va. Code §20-1-7(7). Opening and closing dates are inclusive and the time periods are prevailing time unless otherwise noted in this rule.

§58-58-2. Definitions.

2.1. "Aggregate" means the total bag or possession limit of similar kinds of waterfowl.

2.2. "Bait" means shelled, shucked, or unshucked corn, wheat or other grain, any other feed or edible enticement, or any non-edible facsimile of an edible enticement.

2.3. "Baited Area" means any area where baiting occurs.

2.4. "Baiting" means the direct or indirect placing, exposing, depositing, distributing, or scattering of bait so as to constitute for waterfowl a lure, attraction, or enticement to or on any areas where hunters are attempting to take them. An area is considered baited for 10 days after the removal of the bait.

2.5. "Blind Area" means the area within 75 yards of the hunter's assigned blind.

2.6. "Prevailing Time" means either Eastern Standard Time or Eastern Daylight Time as established by the United States Congress.

2.7. "Sinkbox" means a low floating device having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water.

2.8. "Waterfowl" means members of the family Anatidae (ducks, geese, mergansers, and swans) and members of the family Rallidae (coots and gallinules) for which open seasons are prescribed in Section 4 of the W. Va. Code of State Rules, Title 58 Series 57, Waterfowl Hunting Rule.

2.9. "Wildlife Management Area" means any public access area, public hunting area, public fishing area, public hunting and fishing area, public shooting ground, or public wildlife management area that is administered, leased, or owned by the State of West Virginia.

§58-58-3. General Waterfowl Hunting Rules.

3.1. Dual Violation. Violation of any provision of this rule is also a violation of federal migratory bird hunting regulations pursuant to Migratory Bird Hunting, 50 C.F.R. Part 20 Subpart H.

3.2. Illegal Methods of Taking Waterfowl.

3.2.1. No person may take waterfowl with a trap, snare, net, crossbow, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive, or stupefying substance.

3.2.2. No person may take waterfowl with a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler which is incapable of being removed without disassembling the gun.

3.2.3. No person may take waterfowl from a sinkbox.

3.2.4. No person may take waterfowl from or with the aid or use of a motor vehicle, other land conveyance, or an aircraft of any kind, except as provided in paragraph 3.2.4.a. of this rule.

3.2.4.a. A person who holds a valid Class Q special resident hunting permit may take waterfowl from a stationary motor vehicle provided that he or she is the only occupant of that vehicle, that the engine of the vehicle is not operating, and that the vehicle is not parked on the right-of-way of any public road or highway.

3.2.5. No person may take waterfowl from or by means of any motorboat or sailboat unless the motor has been completely shut off or the sail furled and the progress from the motor or sail has ceased.

3.2.6. No person may take waterfowl by the use or aid of live birds as decoys.

3.2.6.a. All live, tame, or captive ducks and geese shall have been removed by the landowner from the hunt area for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals the tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.

3.2.7. No person may take waterfowl by the use of records or tapes of waterfowl calls or sounds, or recorded or electrically-amplified imitations of waterfowl calls.

3.2.8. No person may take waterfowl by concentrating, driving, rallying, or chasing the birds with any motorized land, water, or air conveyance or any sailboat.

3.2.9. No person may take waterfowl by the aid of baiting, or on or over any baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after the removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is baited to be in violation of federal regulations and section 3.2 of this rule.

3.3. Tagging. No person may give, put, or leave waterfowl at any place, or in the custody of another person, unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

3.3.1. The hunter's signature and address; the total number of birds involved, by species; and the date on which each bird was killed.

3.4. Field Dressing. No person may completely field dress waterfowl and then transport the birds from the field. The head or one fully-feathered wing must remain attached to all birds while being transported from the field to the hunter's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility, as defined in Migratory Bird Hunting, 50 C.F.R. §20.11.

3.5. Shipment. No person may ship waterfowl unless the package is marked on the outside with the following information:

3.5.1. The name and address of the person sending the birds;

3.5.2. The name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent; and

3.5.3. The number of birds, by species, contained in the package.

3.6. Importation. For information regarding the importation of waterfowl from another country, hunters should consult Migratory Bird Hunting, 50 C.F.R. §§20.61 through 20.66. One fully-feathered wing must remain attached to all waterfowl being transported between the port of entry and one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility, as defined in Migratory Bird Hunting, 50 C.F.R. §20.11. No person may import waterfowl killed in any foreign country, except Canada, unless the birds are dressed (except as required in Migratory Bird Hunting, 50 C.F.R. §20.63), drawn, and the head and feet removed. No person may import waterfowl belonging to another person.

3.7. Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp. Each waterfowl hunter 16 years of age and over must carry on his or her person a valid federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (i.e., "duck stamp") signed in ink across the face. This stamp is not needed in order to hunt coots or gallinules.

3.8. Mandatory Use of nontoxic Shot. Use of nontoxic shot approved by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is mandatory when hunting waterfowl. Only nontoxic shot size "T" or smaller shall be used or in hunter's possession while hunting of waterfowl.

3.9. Concurrent Waterfowl Hunting. Concurrent hunting of waterfowl on major rivers, lakes, reservoirs, and wetlands is legal during the bucks-only deer season if the season for the waterfowl is also open.

3.10. Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season. Youth hunters must be 17 years of age or younger to participate in the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season. Youth hunters aged 15-17 must comply with the state and federal licensing requirements. Youth hunters under the age of 15 must be accompanied by a licensed adult 18 years of age or older as defined in W. Va. Code of State Rules, Title 58 Series 46,

Defining the Terms Used in All Hunting and Trapping, who may not take, shoot, or kill any wildlife while so accompanying the youth hunter.

3.11. Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program. No persons, except those legally exempt from purchasing a hunting license, may take or attempt to take waterfowl in West Virginia after July 1, 1998, unless they are enrolled annually in the Federal Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program as required by Migratory Bird Hunting, 50 C.F.R. §20.20.

3.11.1. The hunter shall carry current proof of annual enrollment while hunting waterfowl.