
Maryland Fishing and Hunting Licenses, Permits, and Stamps

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Maryland Fishing and Hunting Licenses, Permits, and Stamps

Background

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is to secure a sustainable future for the environment, society, and the economy by preserving, protecting, restoring, and enhancing the State's natural resources. As part of this mission, DNR's Fishing and Boating Service manages Maryland's fisheries for the conservation and equitable use of fisheries resources for present and future generations. Similarly, DNR's Wildlife and Heritage Service strives to conserve Maryland's diverse native wildlife, manage game species, regulate hunting and trapping activity, and conserve wildlife habitat.

This report describes the various recreational and commercial fishing licenses, permits, and stamps available in the State and the activities authorized under the licenses, permits, and stamps, as well as fishing activities that are authorized without a license. This report further describes various hunting licenses, permits, and stamps available in the State and the activities authorized under the licenses, permits, and stamps, as well as hunting activities that are authorized without a license. It also includes an appendix that summarizes Sunday hunting in Maryland.

Chapter 1. Fishing Licenses, Permits, and Stamps

Background

The Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Fishing and Boating Service is responsible for conservation management of the fish, fisheries, fish resources, and aquatic life within the State. DNR issues the licenses for fishing in nontidal (fresh) waters, tidal (salt or brackish) waters, and both nontidal and tidal waters. DNR determines whether waters of the State are tidal or nontidal by regulation. Both nontidal and tidal fishing licenses are further categorized as recreational (sport) or commercial fishing licenses.

DNR is tasked with (1) protecting, conserving, and enhancing fisheries resources; (2) providing and enhancing fishing opportunities, including access to the waters of the State; (3) providing sustainable economic opportunities in fisheries; and (4) promoting and protecting fisheries resources through public outreach and education. To support these tasks, DNR charges various annual fees, usually set by State statute, for a trout stamp and fishing licenses and permits. In general, DNR collects the fees for nontidal licenses and the trout stamp and deposits the proceeds into the State Fisheries Management and Protection Fund for the scientific investigation, protection, propagation, and management of nontidal fish. Similarly, DNR collects the fees for tidal recreational and commercial licenses and permits and deposits the proceeds into the Fisheries Research and Development Fund to be used for the replenishment of tidal fish resources and related research and for matching federal funds available for research and development of fisheries resources. DNR, however, is required to use certain proceeds from commercial license fees specific to the striped bass and oyster fisheries for the management of the respective fisheries and to use the seafood marketing surcharge only for seafood marketing programs.

Recreational Fishing Licenses and Trout Stamp

A person is considered to be engaging in recreational fishing (also known as sport fishing) if the person is fishing for pleasure or competition. In the context of Maryland law, subsistence fishing also requires a recreational fishing license. Recreational fishing licenses remain effective for one year after purchase. In addition, a trout stamp is necessary to fish for or possess trout in nontidal areas. DNR is required to issue, on request, nontidal fishing licenses, trout stamps, and most Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing licenses in a digital or electronic format.

Recreational Nontidal Fishing Licenses and Trout Stamp

A nontidal fishing license holder may fish only during open season for the species targeted. DNR sets open seasons for a wide variety of nontidal finfish, including walleye, trout, catfish, suckers, carp, eel, gudgeon, sunfish, rock bass, fallfish, crappie, perch, largemouth and smallmouth bass, pickerel, northern pike, and muskellunge.

Nontidal Fishing License (General)

In general, a person who is 16 years of age or older is required to obtain a nontidal (freshwater) fishing license (also known as an angler's license) before fishing in the nontidal waters of the State. The annual license fee for a Maryland resident is \$20.50, while the fee for a resident seven-day short-term nontidal fishing license is \$7.50. In general, for nonresidents, the annual license fee is \$30.50, the seven-day short-term license fee is \$7.50, and the fee for a three-day short-term license is \$5.00. However, these fees increase to the amount charged by the home state of the nonresident for a substantially similar license if those amounts are greater than the general Maryland nonresident fees. Maryland residents who are recipients of the Purple Heart award are eligible for a 50% discount on nontidal fishing licenses, and DNR does not charge a fee to resident or nonresident blind persons for a nontidal fishing license. There is also a Recreational License Incentive Discount Program that authorizes DNR to incentivize individuals to obtain angler's licenses and other licenses by offering a discount of no more than 50% to certain individuals, though the program has not yet been implemented.¹

Reciprocal Fishing License

DNR may grant resident holders of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia fishing licenses reciprocal fishing privileges in specified Maryland nontidal waters without holding a Maryland nontidal fishing license. These reciprocal fishing privileges may be exercised for (1) Pennsylvania residents, in the waters of the Conowingo and Youghiogheny reservoirs; (2) Virginia residents, in the nontidal portion of the Potomac River opposite of the Virginia shore; and (3) West Virginia residents, in the nontidal portion of the Potomac River opposite of the West Virginia shore, including the North Branch of the river and the Jennings Randolph Reservoir. These reciprocal fishing privileges are only effective if the other states grant the same reciprocal privileges to Maryland recreational fishing license holders.

Complimentary Fishing Licenses

DNR is authorized to issue an *annual* complimentary nontidal fishing license to (1) the President of the United States; (2) the governor of any state; and (3) any out-of-state fish and game official. DNR also may issue a *lifetime* complimentary nontidal fishing license to (1) a Maryland resident who certifies that the resident is a former prisoner of war or a 100% service-connected disabled American veteran and (2) a nonresident who certifies that the nonresident is a former prisoner of war or a 100% service-connected disabled American veteran if the nonresident's state of residence extends similar, reciprocal privileges to Maryland residents. There are no fees for the complimentary nontidal fishing licenses, and the licenses are not transferable. No more than 20 complimentary nontidal fishing licenses for each state other than Maryland may be outstanding at any one time.

¹ Chapter 62 of 2018 established the Recreational License Incentive Discount Program and authorized DNR to adopt regulations to implement the program.

Nontidal Fishing License Exemptions

State law establishes exemptions from the nontidal fishing licensure requirement for certain nontidal fishing activities undertaken by certain persons or under certain circumstances. Specifically, a person is exempt from the requirement to obtain a nontidal fishing license if the person is:

- the owner or tenant of land and is fishing on nontidal water bordering the land (this exemption extends to the owner's or tenant's spouse, child, or child's spouse who resides on the land);
- a Maryland resident serving in the U.S. Armed Forces while on leave in the State and possessing a copy of the person's official leave orders;
- fishing on free fishing days established by DNR (the first two Saturdays in June and July 4);
- fishing in free fishing areas established by DNR;
- fishing under a one-day license exemption issued to a nonprofit organization benefitting persons with disabilities;
- fishing under an annual license exemption issued to a government entity or nonprofit organization benefitting current or former service members with disabilities;
- fishing under an annual license exemption issued to a government entity or nonprofit organization to provide fishing clinics or instruction to individuals who are (1) serving or have served in the U.S. Armed Forces; (2) participating in a physical or mental wellness outdoor event; (3) participating in a special needs outdoor event; (4) acting under the authority of a scientific collection permit; or (5) State residents who are underserved with respect to fishing opportunities;²
- fishing under an exemption for patients under treatment at a mental health facility; or
- fishing under an exemption for persons who attend or reside at a State-approved program for persons with a developmental disability.

² Chapter 497 of 2023 established the license exemption for a government entity or nonprofit organization that provides specified fishing clinics or instruction.

Trout Stamp

A person who is 16 years of age or older may not fish for or possess trout in nontidal areas designated by DNR without first obtaining a trout stamp. A trout stamp is required in addition to a nontidal fishing license and allows DNR to more closely manage the trout stock in the State. The annual fee for a trout stamp is \$5 for a resident and \$10 for a nonresident. Maryland residents who are recipients of the Purple Heart award are eligible for a 50% discount on the annual fee for a trout stamp.

State law also establishes exemptions from the trout stamp requirement for certain nontidal fishing activities undertaken by certain persons or under certain circumstances. Specifically, a person is exempt from the requirement to obtain a trout stamp if the person:

- holds a *lifetime* complimentary nontidal fishing license for 100% service-connected disabled American veterans or former prisoners of war;
- is a Maryland resident serving in the U.S. Armed Forces while on leave in the State and possesses a copy of the person's official leave orders while fishing;
- is fishing under a one-day license exemption issued to a nonprofit organization benefitting persons with disabilities;
- is fishing under an annual license exemption issued to a government entity or nonprofit organization benefitting current or former service members with disabilities;
- is fishing under an annual license exemption issued to a government entity or nonprofit organization to provide fishing clinics or instruction to individuals who are (1) serving or have served in the U.S. Armed Forces; (2) participating in a physical or mental wellness outdoor event; (3) participating in a special needs outdoor event; (4) acting under the authority of a scientific collection permit; or (5) State residents who are underserved with respect to fishing opportunities
- is fishing under an exemption for patients under treatment at a mental health facility; or
- is fishing under an exemption for persons who attend or reside at a State-approved program for persons with a developmental disability.³

³ Chapter 497 established the license exemption for a government entity or nonprofit organization that provides specified fishing clinics or instruction.

Recreational Tidal Fishing Licenses

A recreational tidal fishing license holder may fish only during open season for the species targeted. DNR sets recreational open seasons for a wide variety of tidal finfish, including striped bass (rockfish), summer flounder, bluefish, Spanish mackerel, and yellow perch.

Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License

In general, a person who is 16 years of age or older is required to obtain a Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing (recreational tidal) license before fishing for finfish in the tidal waters of the State, including the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, the State waters of the Atlantic Ocean, and the Atlantic coastal bays. The annual license fee for a Maryland resident is \$15.00, while the fee for a resident seven-day short-term recreational tidal fishing license is \$6.00. The annual license fee for a nonresident is \$22.50, while the fee for a nonresident seven-day short-term recreational tidal fishing license is \$12.00. Maryland residents who are recipients of the Purple Heart award are eligible for a 50% discount on recreational tidal fishing licenses, and DNR does not charge a fee to resident or nonresident blind persons for a recreational tidal fishing license. There is also a Recreational License Incentive Discount Program that authorizes DNR to incentivize individuals to obtain Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing licenses and other licenses by offering a discount of no more than 50% to certain individuals, though the program has yet to be implemented.⁴

Reciprocal Fishing License

DNR may grant reciprocal tidal fishing privileges to a holder of a valid tidal sport fishing license issued by the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, Virginia, or Washington, DC. These reciprocal privileges take effect when DNR determines that the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, Virginia, or Washington, DC requirements for a tidal sport fishing license are substantially similar to and reciprocal with Maryland's recreational tidal fishing license.

Complimentary Fishing Licenses

DNR is authorized to issue an *annual* complimentary recreational tidal fishing license to (1) the President of the United States; (2) the governor of any state; and (3) any out-of-state fish and game official. DNR also may issue a *lifetime* complimentary recreational tidal fishing license to (1) a Maryland resident who certifies that the resident is a former prisoner of war or a 100% service-connected disabled American veteran and (2) a nonresident who certifies that the nonresident is a former prisoner of war or a 100% service-connected disabled American veteran if the nonresident's state of residence extends similar, reciprocal privileges to former prisoners of war or disabled veterans from Maryland. There are no fees for the complimentary recreational tidal fishing licenses, and the licenses are not transferable. No more than 20 complimentary recreational tidal fishing licenses for each state other than Maryland may be outstanding at any one time.

⁴ Chapter 62 of 2018 established the Recreational License Incentive Discount Program and authorized DNR to adopt regulations to implement the program.

Recreational Tidal Fishing License Exemptions

State law establishes exemptions from the recreational tidal fishing license requirement for certain tidal fishing activities undertaken by certain persons or under certain circumstances. Specifically, a person is exempt from the requirement to obtain a recreational tidal fishing license if the person:

- possesses a valid commercial fishing license;
- is fishing on a charter boat commercially licensed by DNR;
- is a Maryland resident serving in the U.S. Armed Forces while on leave in the State and possesses a copy of the person's official leave orders while fishing;
- is fishing on free fishing days established by DNR (the first two Saturdays in June and July 4);
- is fishing in free fishing areas established by DNR;
- is the owner or tenant of private real property and is fishing in tidal water bordering the property (this exemption extends to the owner's or tenant's spouse and immediate family members who reside on the land with the owner or tenant);
- is fishing under a special recreational boat license issued by DNR;
- is fishing from a fishing pier commercially licensed by DNR;⁵
- is fishing under a one-day license exemption issued to a nonprofit organization benefitting persons with disabilities;
- is fishing under an annual license exemption issued to a government entity or nonprofit organization benefitting current or former service members with disabilities; or
- is fishing under an annual license exemption issued to a government entity or nonprofit organization to provide fishing clinics or instruction to individuals who are (1) serving or have served in the U.S. Armed Forces; (2) participating in a physical or mental wellness outdoor event; (3) participating in a special needs outdoor event; (4) acting under the authority of a scientific collection permit; or (5) State residents who are underserved with respect to fishing opportunities.⁶

⁵ A person who does not hold a recreational tidal fish license and fishes in a free fishing area or under the private property exemption is required to register with DNR. There is no fee for registration.

⁶ Chapter 497 established the license exemption for a government entity or nonprofit organization that provides fishing clinics or instruction.

Special Recreational Boat License

DNR may issue a special recreational boat license (in the form of a decal that is attached to the boat) that authorizes any person in the licensed boat to fish for finfish in the tidal waters of the State without possessing any other fishing license.⁷ A recreational boat license may be used on a boat registered in any state but may not be used on a for-hire boat. The annual license fee is \$50.⁸

Individual and Boat Crabbing Licenses

In general, a person who catches crabs recreationally in the Chesapeake Bay or its tidal tributaries using trotlines, collapsible traps, net rings, seines, or eel pots (for catching bait) is required to obtain a recreational crabbing individual license. The annual fees are \$5 for a Maryland resident (\$2 if the resident holds a Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing license or a resident senior consolidated sport fishing license) and \$10 for a nonresident. A recreational crabbing individual license is not required to catch crabs using handlines or dip nets, or for a child under the age of 16 years to catch crabs using handlines, dip nets, collapsible traps, or net rings.⁹

DNR will issue a complimentary recreational crabbing individual license to a person who purchases a recreational crabbing boat license or a special recreational boat license. A recreational crabbing individual license is not required to catch crabs in the Atlantic Ocean or the Atlantic coastal bays.

A recreational crabbing boat license authorizes a person on the applicable boat to catch crabs in the Chesapeake Bay or its tidal tributaries using trotlines, collapsible traps, or net rings. The annual fee is \$15 for Maryland residents and nonresidents. A recreational crabbing boat license is not required to catch crabs in a boat in the Atlantic Ocean or the Atlantic coastal bays.

Consolidated Senior Sport Fishing License

DNR may issue a resident consolidated senior sport fishing license to a Maryland resident beginning in the calendar year in which the resident turns 65 years of age. The license authorizes the holder to (1) fish in nontidal waters of the State without holding a recreational nontidal fishing license; (2) fish in tidal waters of the State without holding a Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing license; and (3) fish for trout without holding a trout stamp in nontidal areas specified by DNR as otherwise requiring possession of a trout stamp. The annual fee is \$5.

⁷ A person who does not hold a recreational tidal fish license and fishes under a special recreational boat license is required to register with DNR. There is no fee for registration.

⁸ To maintain eligibility to purchase a recreational boat license, the license holder must provide to DNR all information requested under the Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License Pilot Program established under Chapters 409 and 410 of 2022. The Pilot Program terminates after June 30, 2027.

⁹ Chapters 537 and 538 of 2023 authorize an individual under the age of 16 years who is catching or attempting to catch crabs in the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries without a recreational crabbing license to use a collapsible trap, net ring, handline, or dip net.

Healing Hunting and Fishing Fund

The Healing Hunting and Fishing Fund, which is administered by the Chesapeake Bay Trust, provides grants to eligible sponsor organizations to fund recreational hunting or fishing opportunities, including providing specified licenses and stamps at no cost, along with other listed outdoor recreational activities and opportunities, for specified beneficiaries. Beneficiaries may include Gold Star recipients, disabled veterans or other veterans who could benefit from one of the opportunities provided, disabled members of the U.S. Armed Forces or other members of the U.S. Armed Forces who could benefit from the opportunities provided, and permanently disabled persons who require the use of a wheelchair. A person may make an electronic donation to the fund when purchasing specified recreational hunting and fishing licenses (or corresponding stamps) through DNR's electronic licensing system.

Commercial Fishing Licenses and Permits

A person is considered to be engaging in commercial fishing if the person is fishing for profit. The license year for commercial tidal fishing licenses is from September 1 of each year through August 31 of the following year. A commercial tidal fishing license holder may fish only during open season for the species targeted. DNR sets commercial open seasons for a wide variety of tidal finfish and shellfish, including striped bass (also known as rockfish), blue crabs, oysters, hard- and soft-shell clams, yellow perch, and sharks. Beginning on July 1, 2024, DNR will be required to issue, on request, most commercial fishing licenses and permits in a digital or electronic format.¹⁰

Tidal Fish License

In general, DNR issues a single commercial fishing license known as the tidal fish license. A tidal fish license authorizes the holder to engage in each authorization indicated on the license. The fee for a license depends on the authorizations obtained by the license holder for that license year. DNR sets targets for the number of each tidal fish authorization to be issued annually and maintains a waiting list of qualified applicants. **Exhibit 1.1** lists available tidal fish license authorizations and the corresponding annual fees.

¹⁰ Chapter 558 of 2023 requires DNR to make available and issue all licenses, stamps, permits, registrations, and certificates in a digital or electronic format, subject to specified exceptions.

Exhibit 1.1
Tidal Fish License Authorizations and Fees

<u>Authorization</u>	<u>Annual Fee</u>
Finfish (Hook and Line Only)	\$100
Finfish (All Other Equipment)	150
Blue Crabs (Up to 50 Pots and Other Specified Gear)	100
Blue Crabs (Over 50 Pots and Other Specified Gear)	150
Clams	100
Oysters (Other Than Dredge Boat)	100
Oysters (Dredge Boat)	250
Conch, Turtle, Lobster, and All Crabs of the Genus Cancer	100
Tidal Fishing Guide (Maryland Resident)	100
Tidal Fishing Guide (Nonresident)	200
Unlimited Tidal Fish (All Authorizations)	300

Source: Annotated Code of Maryland, § 4-701(d) of the Natural Resources Article

In addition to the annual fees charged for the tidal fish license authorizations, DNR charges additional fees and surcharges for specified activities, as shown in **Exhibit 1.2**.

Exhibit 1.2
Additional Tidal Fish License Fees and Surcharges

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Additional Fee/Surcharge</u>
Use of Between 301 and 600 Blue Crab Pots, Inclusive	\$100
Use of Between 601 and 900 Blue Crab Pots, Inclusive	\$150
Master Fishing Guide	\$100 Per Vessel (in Addition to the Annual Fishing Guide License Authorization Fee)
Annual Harvester Registration Fee (for Those Catching Fish for Sale under an Authorization)	\$215
Oyster Surcharge	\$300
Seafood Marketing Surcharge (Tidal Fish, Snakehead, or Blue or Flathead Catfish License Holder)	\$50
Seafood Marketing Surcharge (No Tidal Fish License Held)	\$250
Nonresident Surcharge	Greater of \$450 or the Difference Between the Amount Charged in Maryland vs. the Amount Charged in State of Residence for Like Fishing Activity
Assessment for Fish Tags/Hailing System on Persons Authorized to Catch Fish for Sale	Assessment Authorized

Source: Annotated Code of Maryland, § 4-701 of the Natural Resources Article

Seafood Dealer License

DNR issues a seafood dealer license for persons who buy, process, pack, resell, market, and otherwise deal in fish caught in Maryland tidal waters. The annual fees are (1) \$50 for a person who has an authorization to catch fish for sale and (2) \$250 for a person who does not have any of these authorizations.

Seafood Landing License

DNR issues a seafood landing license that authorizes an unlicensed person to sell fish that were caught in out-of-state tidal waters to buyers on shore in Maryland. The annual license fee is \$350.

Shrimp Fishery License

A person may not catch shrimp for commercial purposes in Maryland without obtaining a license from DNR. A participant in the commercial shrimp fishery must also obtain a Maryland shrimp permit to facilitate shrimp fishery data collection.¹¹

Permits for Certain Commercial Species

DNR also issues permits for catching specified commercial species for sale. For striped bass, the annual permit fees are (1) \$200 for a license holder operating under a finfish authorization and (2) \$150 for a licensee operating under an unlimited tidal fish authorization. The annual permit fees for yellow perch, horseshoe crab, black sea bass, summer flounder, and snapping turtle are \$25. In addition, DNR is authorized to establish permits and an annual permit fee not exceeding \$25 for other commercial species and has exercised this authority for spiny dogfish.

Permits for Commercial Use of Finfish Trotline

DNR may issue a finfish trotline permit to the holder of a commercial tidal fish license who has met specified reporting requirements. This free permit authorizes the commercial use of finfish trotlines.

Fishing Guide Licenses

Freshwater Fishing Guide Licenses

A person who accepts payment for providing services as a fishing guide must obtain a license from DNR. There are three types of freshwater fishing guide licenses available: (1) the

¹¹ Chapter 407 of 2022 clarified that DNR's authority to regulate the shrimp fishery and to establish and implement the pilot program authorized under Chapter 119 of 2021 gives DNR the flexibility to test and use certain gear in the nascent shrimp fishery that may be restricted or prohibited by other provisions of law.

limited fishing guide license, Type L (limited); (2) the freshwater fishing guide, Type NT (nontidal); and (3) the freshwater fishing guide, Type NTT (nontidal/tidal). Each type of fishing guide license authorizes fishing in different areas and provides different authority as discussed in the following. A fishing guide license holder must hold the appropriate underlying fishing licenses and trout stamp. Specific authorizations and prohibitions on the catch and possession of striped bass apply to anglers under the guidance of each type of fishing guide.

A Type L fishing guide license authorizes guide services in all waters of the State. A license holder may guide (1) anglers in up to three vessels that have no more than two occupants and are propelled by human power, including oars, paddles, and pedals; (2) up to 10 anglers on shore or on foot in the water; or (3) any number of anglers on shore or on foot in the water while participating in an educational or recreational program sponsored by a State or local governmental entity. The annual license fees are \$50 for a Maryland resident and \$100 for a nonresident.

A Type NT fishing guide license authorizes guide services only in nontidal waters of the State. Except in Deep Creek Lake, a vessel operated by a Type NT license holder may hold a maximum of four persons, including the license holder. The annual license fees are \$20 for a Maryland resident and \$50 for a nonresident.

A Type NTT fishing guide license authorizes guide services in all nontidal waters and specified tidal waters of the State. Except in Deep Creek Lake, a vessel operated by a Type NTT license holder may hold a maximum of four persons, including the license holder. The annual license fees are \$50 for a Maryland resident and \$100 for a nonresident. The number of Type NTT licenses issued annually is limited to 120 for residents and 30 for nonresidents.

Tidal Fishing Guide License

DNR issues the commercial fishing guide license authorizing fishing guide services in tidal waters of the State as an authorization under the tidal fish license. The annual fees for tidal fishing guide authorizations are \$100 for a Maryland resident and \$200 for a nonresident.

Master Fishing Guide License

DNR may issue an annual master fishing guide license to a person who on April 1, 1997, held a valid fishing guide license and either (1) owned two or more vessels used to carry passengers for fishing; (2) owned or operated a federally licensed vessel of 50 tons or more that was used to carry passengers for fishing; or (3) owned or operated a marina from which 10 or more vessels operated to carry passengers for fishing. A master fishing guide license holder may employ other persons to guide fishing parties on vessels owned by the license holder. In addition, a master fishing guide who holds the license through ownership or operation of a marina may allow persons who do not have a fishing guide license but do hold a U.S. Coast Guard captain's license to operate a vessel to carry persons for fishing from the marina; in this situation, the number of persons who may be hired depends on the number of vessels operating out of the marina. The annual license fee for a master fishing guide license is \$100 per vessel (in addition to the annual fishing guide license authorization fee).

Special Charter Boat License

DNR may issue a special charter boat license (in the form of a decal that is attached to the boat) that allows individuals on either a single vessel operated by a fishing guide with a freshwater or tidal fishing guide license or on a vessel under the guidance of a fishing guide with a commercial fishing guide license to fish in tidal waters of the State without possessing any other fishing license. The annual fees for the special charter boat license are (1) \$240 for six-passenger capacity or less and (2) \$290 for a capacity of seven or more passengers.

Specialty Commercial Licenses and Permit

Commercial Northern Snakehead License

DNR may issue a commercial northern snakehead license authorizing the holder to catch for sale northern snakeheads in the tidal waters of the State using a bow and arrow attached to a retrieval line or a hook and line. A license holder may not fish with a bow and arrow within 100 yards of (1) another person or vessel; (2) a swimming area; (3) a diver down flag; or (4) an occupied offshore stationary blind. The annual license fee is \$15, and the license is valid between September 1 and August 31. An applicant for the license does not need to hold or obtain a tidal fish license.

Commercial Blue and Flathead Catfish Finfish Trotline License

Chapters 104 and 105 of 2023 reestablished a commercial blue and flathead catfish finfish trotline license.¹² The license authorizes the holder to catch for sale blue and flathead catfish in the tidal waters of the State using a finfish trotline. Neither an applicant for the license nor a license holder must hold or obtain a tidal fish license. The annual license fee is \$15. The license is valid between September 1 and August 31.

Special Commercial Fishing Pier License

DNR may issue a special commercial fishing pier license for use on a commercial pier in the tidal waters of the State. Any person on a licensed pier may fish from the pier without possessing any other fishing license. The annual license fee for the special commercial fishing pier license is \$290.

Maryland Provisional Chesapeake Bay Charter Boat Permit

DNR may issue a Maryland Provisional Chesapeake Bay Charter Boat Permit to a person who (1) is licensed to operate a charter boat in Virginia and (2) provides documentation of fishing activity in Virginia in 2001 and 2002. The permit authorizes the holder to operate charter fishing

¹² Chapter 80 of 2019 established a temporary commercial blue and flathead catfish finfish trotline license authorizing the holder to catch for sale blue and flathead catfish in the tidal waters of the State using a finfish trotline. The license terminated on June 30, 2022.

trips in Maryland out of Virginia. The permit is not transferable. Unlike the holder of a special charter boat license, a permit holder is not required to hold a Maryland fishing guide license.

Chapter 2. Hunting Licenses, Permits, and Stamps

Background

The Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Wildlife and Heritage Service (WHS), in cooperation with DNR's Natural Resources Police (NRP), is responsible for administering and enforcing the State's hunting laws and programs. These responsibilities include setting harvest limits (also known as bag limits); establishing seasons; and managing the sale of hunting licenses, permits, and stamps.

Land management divisions within DNR, including WHS, the Maryland Park Service, and the Maryland Forest Service, have certain authority over access to hunting on public lands within their jurisdiction. For example, WHS oversees the management of Wildlife Management Areas in the State. The Park Service is responsible for setting hunting restrictions for Natural Resource Management Areas and Natural Environment Areas. Similarly, the Forest Service has authority over access to hunting in State forests.

DNR also oversees the State Wildlife Management and Protection Fund. Proceeds generated from license, permit, stamp, and application fees under State laws governing wildlife must be credited to the fund and used for the scientific investigation, protection, propagation, and management of wildlife. DNR also receives federal funds for the management and protection of wildlife based on the number of hunting licenses purchased in the State. During fiscal 2023, DNR received \$70 in federal funds for every hunting license purchased, accounting for approximately \$8.0 million in revenues.

Hunting Licenses

General Hunting Licenses

With certain exceptions, a person must have a Maryland resident or nonresident hunting license to hunt or attempt to hunt all legal game birds and mammals during the appropriate season in the State.¹³ In general, a person must obtain a certificate of competency in firearms and hunter safety before obtaining a hunting license by successfully completing the Maryland hunter

¹³ Subject to certain specifications, the following individuals do not need a hunting license or any deer-related stamps to hunt in the State: (1) a farmland owner or tenant and the owner's or tenant's specified kindred when hunting on the owner's or tenant's farmland; (2) a Maryland resident serving in the U.S. Armed Forces while on leave and possessing a copy of the person's leave orders; (3) a person serving in the U.S. Armed Forces who has a service-connected disability; (4) a retired former member of the U.S. Armed Forces when hunting on active farmland owned by specified kindred of the member; (5) specified nonresident owners of farmland in the State under specified circumstances; and (6) any unarmed person participating in an organized foxhunt (§ 10-301(c) of the Natural Resources Article).

education course. Additionally, a person must obtain written permission from a landowner (or the landowner's agent) before hunting on the landowner's property.

Resident and Nonresident Hunting Licenses – Standard

Resident and nonresident hunting licenses enable a holder to hunt game birds and mammals during any appropriate season without the purchase of additional stamps, unless the holder is hunting migratory game birds, wild waterfowl, sika deer, or any deer during bow and arrow season or muzzle loader season (in which cases specified stamps are required). The purchase of a resident or nonresident hunting license does not authorize the purchaser to hunt furbearers or black bears. Each hunting license is valid from the date of issuance through July 31 the following year. The annual fee for a resident hunting license is \$35, while the annual fee for a nonresident hunting license is \$160.¹⁴

Resident and Nonresident Hunting Licenses – Junior

Resident and nonresident junior hunting licenses enable a holder younger than age 16 to hunt all legal game birds and mammals during any appropriate season without the purchase of additional stamps, unless the purchaser is hunting migratory game birds, wild waterfowl, sika deer, or any deer during bow and arrow season or muzzle loader season (in which cases specified stamps are required). The purchase of a resident or nonresident junior hunting license does not authorize the purchaser to hunt furbearers or black bears. Each hunting license is valid from the date of issuance through July 31 the following year. The annual fee for a resident junior hunting license is \$15, but a resident junior hunter may receive a one-time free annual hunting license on successful completion of a hunter education course and submission of a specified application. The annual fee for a nonresident junior hunting license is \$80.

Resident Hunting Licenses – Senior

Resident senior hunting licenses enable a holder who is at least age 65 to hunt all legal game birds and mammals during any appropriate season without the purchase of additional stamps, unless the purchaser is hunting migratory game birds, wild waterfowl, sika deer, or any deer during bow and arrow season or muzzle loader season (in which cases specified stamps are required). The purchase of a resident senior hunting license does not authorize the purchaser to hunt furbearers or black bears. Each hunting license is valid from the date of issuance through July 31 the following year. A resident senior hunting license may be purchased beginning in the calendar year in which the purchaser reaches age 65. The annual fee for a resident senior hunting license is \$5.

¹⁴ Chapters 543 and 544 of 2023 authorized a nonresident who attends a college or university in the State to obtain a resident hunting license, if the nonresident provides DNR with proof of enrollment.

Nonresident Three-day Hunting License

Nonresident three-day hunting licenses (also known as nonresident three-day waterfowl and small game licenses) enable a holder to hunt all legal game during the appropriate season except deer, black bear, and turkey. Additional stamps are needed to hunt migratory game birds and wild waterfowl, and a specific permit is needed to hunt furbearers. The license is valid for three consecutive legal hunting days in a single season that are specified on the license. The fee for a nonresident three-day waterfowl and small game license is \$65.

Apprentice Hunting License

An apprentice hunting license allows the holder to hunt all legal game birds and mammals during the appropriate season without the purchase of additional stamps, unless the purchaser is hunting migratory game birds, wild waterfowl, sika deer, or any deer during bow and arrow season or muzzle loader season (in which cases specified stamps are required). In general, DNR may not issue this license to a person who has previously been issued any hunting license in Maryland. However, DNR may reissue this license to a previous holder who is under the age of 17 years and who retakes a DNR approved online or electronic course of instruction in competency in firearms and hunter safety. Generally, a person hunting under an apprentice hunting license must be accompanied and directly supervised by an adult with a valid Maryland resident (nonapprentice) hunting license. The fee for an apprentice hunting license is \$15 for residents and \$40 for nonresidents.

Waterfowl Licenses

A person must have a waterfowl hunting guide license or waterfowl outfitter license to receive monetary compensation for outfitting or guiding a hunter to hunt wild waterfowl in the State.

Waterfowl Hunting Guide License

A waterfowl hunting guide is a person who is an employee of a waterfowl outfitter and furnishes personal guiding services, including accompanying hunters while in the field, calling wild waterfowl, directing the times and zones of shooting by hunters, directing the species and number of wild waterfowl taken by hunters, dispatching wounded wild waterfowl, and retrieving downed wild waterfowl. Waterfowl hunting guide licenses enable an employee of a waterfowl outfitter to provide personal guiding services that assist a person to hunt wild waterfowl in the State in exchange for the waterfowl outfitter receiving monetary compensation. The license is valid from the date of issuance through July 31 the following year. The annual fee for a waterfowl hunting guide license is \$50. A nonresident may provide waterfowl hunting guide services for hunting snow geese in Maryland without obtaining a waterfowl hunting guide license if the nonresident has a waterfowl hunting guide license in the nonresident's home state, that state has a law allowing a Maryland resident with a Maryland waterfowl hunting guide license to provide services for hunting snow geese in that state, and the nonresident purchases a Maryland migratory game bird stamp.

Waterfowl Outfitter License

A waterfowl outfitter license enables the holder to outfit or guide a hunter to hunt wild waterfowl in the State in exchange for receiving monetary compensation. The license is valid from the date of issuance through July 31 the following year. The annual fee for a waterfowl outfitter license is \$300.

Waterfowl Processing Operation License

A person operating a waterfowl processing operation charges a fee or receives other consideration in exchange for picking or plucking feathers from waterfowl that are killed by a hunter. A person must have a waterfowl processing operation license to operate a waterfowl processing operation in the State. A waterfowl processing operation license is valid from the date of issuance through June 30 the following year. DNR is prohibited from charging a fee for the license.¹⁵

Stationary Offshore Blind Site License

A stationary offshore blind site is an offshore structure built on pilings or stakes that is used for hunting wild waterfowl. A stationary offshore blind site must be licensed for a person to hunt wild waterfowl from the site. A stationary offshore blind site license enables any person, regardless of their state of residence, who owns riparian property in the State to license their shoreline to (1) establish offshore stationary blinds or blind sites or (2) prevent the shoreline from being licensed at a later date by another person. When a portion of shoreline is licensed, no other person may receive a license for the same portion of shoreline, regardless of whether the original license holder establishes a stationary blind or blind site. A stationary offshore blind site license is valid for a period of one or three years and expires on June 30 one or three years after the date of issuance. The fee is \$20 for a one-year license and \$60 for a three-year license.

Offshore Blind Site License

An offshore blind site is a specific location in the water where a person may hunt wild waterfowl from a boat that is tied to or anchored at a stake. An offshore blind site must be licensed for a person to hunt wild waterfowl from the site. Subject to certain exceptions, an offshore blind site license enables any Maryland resident who possesses a current or prior year hunting license to license riparian shoreline for the purpose of establishing an offshore blind site.¹⁶ Stationary offshore blind site licenses have priority over offshore blind site licenses, and a person who does

¹⁵ Section 10-425(a)(2) of the Natural Resources Article.

¹⁶ Generally, any Maryland resident may apply for a stationary offshore blind site or an offshore blind site license, regardless of whether the person owns riparian property in the State. However, in Kent and Queen Anne's counties and on the nontidal waters of the Potomac River and the tributaries to the nontidal portion of the Potomac River, only riparian property owners may license a stationary offshore blind site or an offshore blind site (§ 10-608(g) of the Natural Resources Article).

not own riparian property may license up to two offshore blind sites per day.¹⁷ An offshore blind site license is valid from the date of issuance through June 30 the following year. The fee is \$20 for a one-year offshore blind site license and \$60 for a three-year license.

Specialty Hunting Licenses

Patron's Hunting License

A patron's hunting license enables the holder to hunt any game birds or mammals during any open season and in any manner authorized in the State without obtaining any other license or stamp, except the federal migratory wild waterfowl stamp and the Maryland migratory game bird stamp. A patron's license is valid for one year, and the annual fee is \$500.¹⁸

Senior Consolidated Hunting License

Before August 1, 2002, DNR made available the senior consolidated hunting license (or senior lifetime consolidated license) to residents beginning in the year that the resident attains the age of 65 years. The senior consolidated license enables the holder to hunt any game birds or mammals during any open season and in any manner authorized in the State without obtaining any other license or stamp, except the federal migratory wild waterfowl stamp and the Maryland migratory game bird stamp. Although Chapter 177 of 2002 repealed DNR's authority to issue the senior consolidated hunting license, licenses issued before August 1, 2002, were grandfathered and remain in effect until the death of the license holder. The fee for a senior consolidated lifetime hunting license was \$12.50.

Regulated Shooting Ground Special Hunting License

A regulated shooting ground is a State-licensed tract of land or water on which an operator may raise, release, and hunt certain captive-raised game birds in accordance with specified conditions.¹⁹ Generally, a person may not hunt these game birds on a regulated shooting ground without a regulated shooting ground special hunting license or a Maryland resident or nonresident hunting license.²⁰ A regulated shooting ground special hunting license enables a person who does not have a resident or nonresident hunting license to hunt certain game birds on a regulated shooting ground. A regulated shooting ground special hunting license is valid from the date of

¹⁷ A riparian property owner who is licensing their own property does not have a limit on the number of blind sites that may be licensed in a single day (§ 10-608(e) of the Natural Resources Article).

¹⁸ Although §10-301.2 of the Natural Resources Article establishes a patron's hunting license, DNR advises that, in practice, there is no "patron's license" sold in the State.

¹⁹ A person hunting from a shoreline located within the regulated shooting area may place decoys, retrieve downed birds, and shoot crippled birds on adjacent waters and must follow the bag and possession limit for properly marked captive-raised mallard ducks (COMAR 08.03.13.05).

²⁰ A person holding a resident or nonresident hunting license is not required to obtain a regulated shooting ground special hunting license to hunt on the regulated shooting ground (§ 10-906(d) of the Natural Resources Article).

issuance through June 30 the following year. The annual fee for a regulated shooting ground special hunting license is \$6.

Commemorative, Complimentary, and Discounted Hunting Licenses

Commemorative Lifetime Hunting License

From June 1, 2010, through December 31, 2011, DNR was required to issue a limited number of commemorative lifetime hunting licenses to certain nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizations that received commemorative lifetime hunting licenses were authorized, in cooperation with DNR, to market and sell the licenses. Proceeds from commemorative lifetime hunting licenses were allocated to NRP for conservation law enforcement purposes.

Complimentary Hunting Licenses

A complimentary hunting license provides the license holder with the same privileges as a standard hunting license. DNR may issue a complimentary hunting license to the President of the United States, the governor of any state, or an official or an enforcement officer of the game and fish management agency of another state that reciprocally offers complimentary hunting licenses to Maryland counterparts.

DNR may also issue a lifetime complimentary hunting license to (1) a Maryland resident who is certified as a former prisoner of war or as a 100% service-connected disabled American veteran and (2) an out-of-state person who is certified as a former prisoner of war or as a 100% service-connected disabled American veteran if the person's state of residence extends similar privileges to former prisoners of war or disabled veterans of this State. A recipient of a lifetime complimentary hunting license is subject to statutory competency in firearms and hunter safety requirements.

Discounted Hunting Licenses

Maryland residents who are Purple Heart award recipients are entitled to a 50% discount on hunting licenses, stamps, and permits. There is also a Recreational License Incentive Discount Program that authorizes DNR to incentivize individuals to obtain hunting licenses and other licenses by offering a discount of no more than 50% to certain individuals, though the program has yet to be implemented.

Healing Hunting and Fishing Fund

The Healing Hunting and Fishing Fund, which is administered by the Chesapeake Bay Trust, provides grants to eligible sponsor organizations to fund recreational hunting or fishing opportunities, including providing specified licenses and stamps at no cost, along with other listed outdoor recreational activities and opportunities for specified beneficiaries. Beneficiaries may include Gold Star recipients, disabled veterans or other veterans who could benefit from one of the

opportunities provided, disabled members of the U.S. Armed Forces or other members of the U.S. Armed Forces who could benefit from the opportunities provided, and permanently disabled persons who require the use of a wheelchair. A person may make an electronic donation to the fund when purchasing specified recreational hunting and fishing licenses (or corresponding stamps) through DNR's electronic licensing system.

Hunting Permits

General Hunting Permits

Furbearer Permit – Individual and Group

A furbearer means any coyote, raccoon, bobcat, opossum, beaver, mink, muskrat, otter, fox, skunk, fisher, and long-tailed weasel. With certain exceptions, a Maryland resident or nonresident must have a furbearer permit to hunt, chase, or trap any furbearer in the State or participate in the unarmed chasing of foxes and raccoons in the State.²¹ Generally, any person who traps or attempts to trap furbearers in the State under the authority of a furbearer permit must first obtain a certificate of trapper education.²²

An individual furbearer permit enables the purchaser to hunt, chase, or trap any furbearer in the State or participate in the unarmed chasing of foxes and raccoons. An individual furbearer permit is valid from the date of issuance through July 31 the following year, and the annual fee is \$5. Nonresidents must also obtain a nonresident trapping license to trap furbearers in Maryland. The fee for a nonresident trapping license is \$50.²³

A group furbearer permit enables an association or group established for the purpose of chasing or hunting furbearers to organize and offer hunting or chasing of furbearers to the association or group's members or guests. A group furbearer permit is valid for the period from August 1 of each year through July 31 the following year, and the annual fee is \$50. The group hunting or chasing must occur within the open season for the species being pursued. A group

²¹ A furbearer permit is not required to hunt or trap a furbearing animal if (1) a person possesses a valid wildlife control cooperators permit and is engaging in the control of furbearing mammals in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permit; (2) a landowner possesses a landowner wildlife damage control permit; (3) a landowner is destroying a muskrat that is damaging an embankment or impoundment; (4) a landowner is hunting or trapping a coyote, fox, or skunk that is damaging or destroying the personal or real property of the landowner on their land; (5) an owner of a marsh or the owner's employees are hunting a raccoon that destroys a muskrat or its home in a marsh area of the State; or (6) a landowner or the landowner's agent is setting or using traps or similar devices at any time to trap raccoons or opossums that are damaging property (COMAR 08.03.06.06). A furbearer permit is also not required for a person hunting under an apprentice hunting license.

²² A trapper education certificate is not required for a person hunting under an apprentice hunting license or if the person held a furbearer permit before August 1, 2007.

²³ Section 10-502 of the Natural Resources Article sets the nonresident trapping license at the higher of \$25.50 or the fee charged by the nonresident's home state for a similar license. Chapters 543 and 544, however, set the annual fee at \$50. This report references the later-enacted \$50 annual fee established under Chapters 543 and 544 and reflected in the 2023-2024 *Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping* published by DNR.

furbearer permit is only available to a group that is hunting or chasing a furbearer (including foxes), not trapping. Any unarmed participant in a chase is exempt from the requirement to obtain a hunting license.

Management and Control Permits

Deer Management Permit

DNR establishes the open season to hunt forest and upland game birds and mammals by regulation each year. DNR may adopt regulations to enlarge, extend, restrict, or prohibit hunting wildlife. Currently, there are three seasons to hunt deer in Maryland: (1) deer bow hunting season; (2) deer firearms season; and (3) deer muzzle loader season.²⁴

Maryland landowners or agricultural lessees who are experiencing severe economic loss to commercially grown crops (including row crops, truck crops, pasture, nursery stock, orchards, and certain tree plantings) or significant ecological damage to certain native plant communities due to deer may apply to receive a deer management permit.²⁵ Deer management permits are issued by WHS. The permit allows permit holders or their agents, known as “designated shooters,” to remove deer from the designated property outside the established deer hunting seasons and deer bag limits, subject to permit conditions imposed by DNR, including on any Sunday throughout the year.²⁶ Both a permit holder and all designated shooters are required to carry a copy of the permit signed by both the permit holder and designated shooter while attempting to take a deer under the terms of the permit.²⁷ A deer management permit is valid for a period not to exceed one year and is free.

DNR may authorize an individual who hunts deer under a deer management permit to use specified firearms to hunt deer on (1) private property in Baltimore, Calvert, Charles, Harford, and St. Mary’s counties in the locations and under the conditions set forth in the permit and (2) on State agricultural crop land leased by a permit holder in the locations and under the conditions set forth in the permit.

²⁴ DNR established a 3-day primitive deer hunt beginning in the 2020-2021 deer bow hunting and muzzle loader seasons, during which a deer hunter may only use a primitive weapon to hunt deer. A primitive weapon is defined as (1) a vertical bow that does not use any mechanical devices that aid in drawing the bow or holding a drawn bow or (2) a flintlock or percussion cap sidelock muzzle loading firearm (COMAR 08.03.01.01).

²⁵ COMAR 08.03.04.02.

²⁶ Subject to certain exceptions, during the deer hunting season, permit holders and their agents shooting deer under the authority of a deer management permit must possess a current, valid Maryland hunting license. Outside of deer hunting season, permit holders and their agents must be eligible to hold a hunting license (*Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service, Deer Management Permit General Conditions*).

²⁷ The permit prohibits wanton waste, and an individual who intentionally wounds or kills a deer under the authority of a deer management permit is required to make a reasonable effort to take possession of the wounded or dead deer (COMAR 08.03.04.02).

Deer Cooperator Permit

Deer cooperators are businesses that provide deer control assistance through nonlethal and lethal deer management techniques in areas where hunting is limited or prohibited. A deer cooperator permit enables the holder to conduct deer removal handling operations. A deer cooperator permit is valid for one year from the date of issuance, and the annual fee is \$100.

Wildlife Damage Control Permit

The primary obligation of a wildlife damage control operator when performing wildlife damage control services is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public and conserve the State's diverse wildlife populations. A wildlife damage control permit enables the holder to reduce, eliminate, or prevent damage caused by wildlife to persons or property in accordance with the regulations for the species or species groups authorized on the permit. A wildlife damage control permit also enables the purchaser to provide care and treatment of sick or injured wildlife for rehabilitation and release back into the wild. There are four classes of wildlife damage control permits: (1) landowner; (2) commercial operator – business; (3) commercial operator – assistant; and (4) public agency operator. The landowner permit is issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).²⁸ The commercial permits and public agency operator permit are issued by WHS.²⁹

Landowner: In general, a landowner who wants to control specified wildlife on the landowner's property must obtain a landowner wildlife damage control permit from USDA. Based on its evaluation of whether a permit will resolve the problem, USDA may issue a permit specifying (1) the species to be controlled; (2) the procedures for controlling the wildlife; (3) how the wildlife is to be disposed; and (4) the effective dates for the permit. Landowner permits expire after two months but, if necessary, may be extended for an additional two months.

Commercial Operator – Business: A commercial-business wildlife damage control permit enables the holder to charge a fee or receive compensation for providing wildlife damage control services in the State. The permit is valid for up to one year and expires on December 31 of the year that it is issued. The annual fee for the commercial-business wildlife damage control permit is \$50.

²⁸ A landowner wildlife damage control permit is not required to control (1) game mammals or birds during legal hunting seasons with legal devices; (2) deer under the authority of a deer management permit; (3) Canada geese under the authority of a Canada goose depredation permit; (4) blackbirds and crows under certain circumstances; (5) nutria; (6) woodchucks; (7) feral pigeons; (8) European starlings; (9) house sparrows; or (10) mice, moles, rats, or voles if the species or species group causes damage or destroys the personal or real property of the landowner (COMAR 08.03.15.03).

²⁹ A commercial or public agency wildlife damage control permit is not required to (1) control deer under the authority of a deer cooperator permit; (2) control mice, moles, rats, or voles if the species is not listed as a threatened or endangered species; (3) transport sick, injured, or orphaned wildlife to specified locations; (4) remove dead animals from areas within the State if the person is under contract with a governmental agency to provide removal services; (5) respond to rabid animal complaints or other public health emergencies; or (6) control European starlings, feral pigeons, and house sparrows under certain circumstances (COMAR 08.03.15.04).

Commercial Operator – Assistant: A commercial-assistant wildlife damage control permit enables an employee or assistant of a commercial-business wildlife damage control operator to provide wildlife damage control services when the employee or assistant is working without the direct supervision of the commercial-business wildlife damage control operator.³⁰ The permit is valid for up to one year and expires on December 31 of the year that it is issued. The annual fee for the commercial-assistant wildlife damage control permit is \$25.

Public Agency Operator: A public agency wildlife damage control permit enables a government agency to provide wildlife damage control services in the State. The permit is valid for one year and expires on December 31 of the year that it is issued. There is no cost for a public agency wildlife damage control permit if the applicant (1) is a governmental agency or a verified government contractor and (2) provides wildlife damage control services at no cost to the complainant.

Resident Canada Goose Depredation Permit

A resident Canada goose is a Canada goose that either nests within Maryland or resides in the State during the months of April, May, June, July, and August. An agricultural producer must have a resident Canada goose depredation permit to use lethal means to control resident Canada geese outside of the Canada goose hunting season that is established annually by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.³¹ A resident Canada goose depredation permit, which is managed by DNR in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, enables an agricultural producer to control resident Canada geese at agricultural facilities through harassment and lethal means depending on the time of the year.³² An agricultural producer can use egg oiling, destruction of nests, and harassment to discourage Canada geese from an agricultural property throughout the year. From April 1 through August 31, an agricultural producer and their employees and agents may hunt the birds under the permit. There are recording and reporting requirements associated with the permit, and a permit holder must meet all reporting requirements in a timely manner to qualify for a new permit.³³ Further, all management actions must occur on the premises of the depredation area. The permit is valid from the date of issuance through August 31 the following year and is free.

³⁰ In emergency situations, employees or assistants of a commercial-business wildlife damage control operator who do not have commercial-assistant wildlife damage control permits may work without the direct supervision of the commercial-business wildlife damage control operator.

³¹ An “agricultural producer” means an agricultural lease holder, farm manager, landowner, or sharecropper who is actively engaged in commercial agriculture (COMAR 08.03.07.10).

³² An “agricultural facility” means any parcel or parcels of land from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been produced and sold, during the last 12-month period (COMAR 08.03.07.10).

³³ Each permit holder must keep a log of the activity taken under the permit and the corresponding date. The log must be kept for three years and be made available to wildlife enforcement officers on request. Additionally, each permit holder must submit an annual report to WHS.

Regulated Shooting Ground Permits

A regulated shooting ground (also known as a regulated shooting area) is a tract of land, including any waters, on which a permit holder may raise, release, hunt, and allow other persons to hunt for a fee, certain animals as specified in the permit. A person must have a regulated shooting ground permit to operate a regulated shooting ground. A regulated shooting ground permit enables the holder to raise, release, hunt, and allow other persons to hunt for a fee, captive-raised pheasant, bobwhite quail, chukar partridge, Hungarian partridge, turkeys, and mallard ducks on the permitted regulated shooting ground as specified on the permit and in regulation. The permit is valid from the date of issuance through June 30 each year. The annual fee for the regulated shooting ground permit is \$150.

Specialty Hunting Permits and Passes

Universal Disability Pass

A person with a hunting license who has a disability that impairs mobility may obtain a universal disability pass that allows the person to hunt from a stopped vehicle in designated areas. The universal disability pass is a free lifetime pass that does not require renewal.

Snow Goose Conservation Order Hunting Season Permit

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service establishes the light goose conservation season each year. “Light goose” includes the greater snow goose, lesser snow goose, and Ross’s goose. A person must have a snow goose conservation order hunting season permit to hunt light geese during the light goose conservation season, in addition to any other required licenses or stamps.³⁴ The annual fee for the permit is \$5, and the permit is valid for one year.

Black Bear Hunting Permit

A black bear hunting permit enables the purchaser to hunt black bears in the State, subject to certain restrictions and requirements.³⁵ Only one black bear may be harvested by a permit holder for the season. The black bear hunting permit is only available through the Maryland Black Bear Lottery process, and each applicant must pay a \$15 nonrefundable application fee. The permit is valid for the black bear hunting season.³⁶

³⁴ A person who is exempt from purchasing a hunting license is still required to obtain a snow goose conservation order hunting season permit before hunting light geese during the light goose conservation season.

³⁵ Restrictions and requirements for hunting black bears include prohibiting the use of hunting dogs, scent attractants, and electronic calls; field dressing requirements; and reporting requirements (COMAR 08.03.04.20).

³⁶ The 2023 black bear season was from October 23 through October 28. Black bear hunting season is open in Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington counties.

Retriever Dog Training Permit

A retriever dog training permit enables the holder to possess and release captive-raised quail, chukar partridge, pheasant, and mallard ducks to train a retriever dog during closed seasons.³⁷ The annual fee for the permit is \$5, and the permit is valid from the date of issuance through July 31 the following year.

Falconry Permit

Falconry is the sport of hunting game birds and mammals or other wildlife by using a trained raptor. A person must have a falconry permit to take, possess, or transport raptors for falconry or hunting.³⁸ A falconry permit enables the purchaser to take, possess, train, fly, and hunt with falcons, hawks, or owls. There are three classes of permits: (1) apprentice; (2) general; and (3) master. The annual fee for each class of permit is \$10, and each class of permit is valid for one year.

Migratory Game Bird Harvest Information Program Permit

The Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) is used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and DNR to generate reliable estimates of hunting activity and the number of all migratory game birds harvested throughout the country. A person must have a HIP permit to hunt all migratory game birds in the State. A HIP permit, in addition to certain stamp requirements, enables the purchaser to hunt wetland game birds, dove, or woodcock in Maryland during hunting seasons established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.³⁹ The HIP permit is free and is issued with the Maryland migratory game bird stamp.

Hunting Stamps

In addition to a hunting license, a stamp is required for a hunter to use certain types of equipment or hunt certain kinds of game. The stamp allows DNR to more closely manage the equipment used or game hunted under the stamp.

³⁷ A retriever dog training permit is not required to shoot game birds during an open season or on a licensed shooting preserve.

³⁸ A nonresident falconry permit will be recognized as valid in the State if the falconer's resident state is recognized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a participating state, and the falconer's resident state allows reciprocity for Maryland falconers (COMAR 08.03.09.07B.(7)).

³⁹ A person who is exempt from purchasing a hunting license is still required to obtain a HIP permit before hunting any wetland game birds, dove, or woodcock (COMAR 08.03.10.12).

Bow and Arrow (Archery) and Muzzle Loader Stamps – Resident and Nonresident

In addition to a hunting license, deer archery hunters must purchase an archery stamp to hunt deer with archery equipment, which includes crossbows during deer archery season and long bows or recurve bows during the primitive deer hunt days. Muzzle loader hunters must purchase a muzzle loader stamp to hunt during deer muzzle loader season (also known as deer black powder season) or during primitive deer hunt days when using a flintlock or sidelock percussion muzzleloader. Further, archery hunters must also purchase a muzzle loader stamp to hunt deer with archery equipment during deer muzzle loader season. When archery and muzzleloader seasons overlap, a license holder may not possess archery equipment and muzzleloaders at the same time.

The cost for an archery stamp is \$6 for a Maryland resident and \$25 for a nonresident. A resident junior hunter may receive a one-time free archery stamp on successful completion of a hunter education course and submission of a specified application. Similarly, the cost for a muzzle loader stamp is \$6 for a resident and \$25 for a nonresident. A resident junior hunter may also receive a one-time free muzzle loader stamp on successful completion of a hunter education course and submission of a specified application.

Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp – Resident and Nonresident

DNR establishes bag limits (the number and type of deer that a hunter may take) by season and region. For all regions and seasons (archery, muzzle loader, and firearms), the bag limit is two antlered white-tailed deer total for all seasons combined (any combination of archery, muzzle loader, and firearms), with no more than one antlered white-tailed deer in any season. A bonus antlered deer stamp, or bonus deer stamp, is required for any license holder to take a third antlered white-tailed deer during one season of their choice (archery, muzzle loader, or firearms), except during the October muzzle loader season. Hunting license holders may purchase the bonus antlered deer stamp to take an additional antlered white-tailed deer in Region B (generally the eastern portion of the State) or take an antlered white-tailed deer in Region A if the license holder has already harvested an antlered white-tailed deer in Region B during the same weapon season. In no case may a license holder take more than two antlered white-tailed deer or more than three white-tailed antlered deer with the use of a bonus antlered deer stamp, for the license year. For a Maryland resident, the stamp costs \$10; for a nonresident, the cost is \$25.

Migratory Game Bird Stamp

A Maryland migratory game bird stamp, in addition to a hunting license, is required to hunt all migratory game birds (coots, doves, rails, snipe, waterfowl, and woodcock). The HIP permit, discussed under the Migratory Game Bird Harvest Information Program Permit section of this report, is issued in conjunction with this stamp. The fee is \$15.⁴⁰ Additionally, a federal migratory bird hunting and conservation stamp, also referred to as a “Federal Duck Stamp,” is required to

⁴⁰ DNR may sell expired migratory game bird stamps below face value to the general public for a period of three years, after which time the department must shred any unsold expired stamps.

hunt waterfowl and coots. The fee for the federal stamp is either \$25 or \$27, depending on where the stamp is purchased.

Sika Deer Stamp – Resident and Nonresident

A sika deer stamp, in addition to a hunting license and any weapon specific stamp, is required to hunt sika deer.⁴¹ For a Maryland resident, the stamp costs \$10; for a nonresident, the cost is \$25.

⁴¹ Chapters 543 and 544 created the sika deer stamp and required a person to obtain the stamp before hunting sika deer.

Appendix 1 Sunday Hunting in Maryland

Sunday Hunting Generally

Hunting game birds or mammals on Sundays is generally prohibited in the State, with specified exceptions.

Game Birds and Mammals on Private Property or Public Land

DNR may allow Sunday hunting for any game bird or mammal, except migratory game birds, in Allegany, Cecil, Garrett, St. Mary's, and Washington counties during the open season for these animals on private property and public land designated for Sunday hunting by DNR.

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting in Frederick County from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January of the following year on private property and public land designated for Sunday hunting by DNR.

DNR may allow Sunday hunting for any game bird or mammal, except migratory game birds, in Dorchester County during the open season for these animals on private property. DNR also may allow Sunday turkey hunting in Dorchester County during the spring turkey hunting season on public land designated for hunting by DNR. In general, Sunday hunting may only occur from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. However, the time restriction does not apply (1) on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive; or (2) on each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

DNR may allow Sunday hunting for any game bird or mammal, except migratory game birds, in Calvert, Caroline, Charles, and Queen Anne's counties during the open season for these animals on private property. In general, Sunday hunting may only occur from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. However, the time restriction does not apply (1) on each Sunday of the deer firearms season; (2) on the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November during the deer bow hunting season; and (3) on each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

DNR may allow Sunday hunting for any game bird or mammal, except migratory game birds, in Somerset County during the open season for these animals on private property and public land leased to a hunt club. In general, Sunday hunting may only occur from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. However, the time restriction does not apply (1) on each Sunday of the deer firearms season and (2) on the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November during the deer bow hunting season.

DNR may allow Sunday hunting for any game bird or mammal, except migratory game birds, in Wicomico County during the open season for these animals on private property and public land designated for hunting by DNR. In general, Sunday hunting may only occur from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. However, the time restriction does not apply (1) on the first Sunday of the deer firearms season and (2) on the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November during the deer bow hunting season.⁴²

DNR may allow Sunday hunting for any game bird or mammal, except migratory game birds, in Worcester County during the open season for these animals on private property and public land designated for hunting by DNR. In general, Sunday hunting may only occur from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. However, the time restriction does not apply (1) on each Sunday of the deer firearms season and (2) on the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November during the deer bow hunting season.⁴³

Deer on Private Property

All Seasons

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting on private property in Carroll County in all deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January of the following year.

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting on private property in Kent County on each Sunday in all deer hunting seasons. In general, Sunday hunting may only occur from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. However, the time restriction does not apply (1) to a participant in the junior deer hunt; (2) on one Sunday in the deer firearms season as designated by DNR; and (3) on each Sunday during the deer bow hunting season and the deer muzzle loader season.

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting on private property in Montgomery County on each Sunday in all deer hunting seasons. In general, Sunday hunting may only occur from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. However, the time restriction does not apply (1) to a participant in the junior deer hunt; and (2) on one Sunday in the deer firearms season and the deer bow hunting season as designated by DNR.

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting on private property in Talbot County on each Sunday in all deer hunting seasons. In general, Sunday hunting may only occur from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. However, the time restriction does not apply (1) to a participant in the junior deer hunt; (2) on one Sunday in the deer firearms season as designated by DNR; and (3) on

⁴² Chapter 611 of 2023 expanded Sunday hunting in Wicomico County, subject to specific time restrictions for the expanded Sunday hunting opportunities.

⁴³ Chapter 536 of 2023 expanded Sunday hunting in Worcester County, subject to specific time restrictions for the expanded Sunday hunting opportunities.

the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November during the deer bow hunting season.

Firearms Season

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting on private property in Harford County on each Sunday of the deer firearms season.

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting on private property in Anne Arundel County on the first Sunday of the deer firearms season.

Bow Season

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting on private property in Harford County on the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow season.

DNR may allow Sunday deer hunting on private property in Anne Arundel County on the first Sunday in November of the deer bow season.

Turkey on Private Property

DNR may allow Sunday turkey hunting on private property in Carroll, Kent, and, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m., Talbot counties on Sundays during the spring turkey hunting season.

Miscellaneous

Junior Hunt

DNR may allow a person who is age 16 or younger and is participating in a junior hunt to hunt on a Sunday.

Traditional Sunday Hunting

DNR may allow the following persons to hunt game birds and mammals on a Sunday: (1) a person using State-certified raptors to hunt game birds or mammals during open season for these animals; (2) an unarmed person participating in an organized fox chase; and (3) a person using a regulated shooting ground to hunt pen-reared game birds or tower-released flighted mallard ducks.

Deer Management Permit Holders

DNR may allow a person with a deer management permit to shoot deer on any Sunday throughout the year in accordance with the terms of the permit.

Express Prohibitions

In general, a person may not hunt on a Sunday in Baltimore City or Baltimore, Howard, or Prince George's counties. This prohibition in these counties does not apply to the previously described acts of traditional Sunday hunting. In addition, a person with a deer management permit may shoot deer under the permit on a Sunday in these counties.

A person may not hunt migratory game birds on a Sunday.

A person may not hunt on public land within the State Park system on a Sunday.