
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 303 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY COLEMAN, FEBRUARY 25, 2025

REFERRED TO GAME AND FISHERIES, FEBRUARY 25, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated
2 Statutes, in preliminary provisions, further providing for
3 definitions; in hunting and furtaking, further providing for
4 unlawful devices and methods and for restrictions on
5 recreational spotlighting; in special licenses and permits,
6 providing for game or wildlife recovery permits; and imposing
7 penalties.

8 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
9 hereby enacts as follows:

10 Section 1. Section 102 of Title 34 of the Pennsylvania
11 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding definitions to read:

12 § 102. Definitions.

13 Subject to additional definitions contained in subsequent
14 provisions of this title which are applicable to specific
15 provisions of this title, the following words and phrases when
16 used in this title shall have the meanings given to them in this
17 section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

18 * * *

19 "Small unmanned aircraft." An unmanned aircraft weighing
20 less than 55 pounds, including the weight of anything attached
21 to or carried by the aircraft.

1 "Small unmanned aircraft system." A small unmanned aircraft
2 and the equipment necessary for the safe and efficient operation
3 of the aircraft.

4 * * *

5 "Unmanned aircraft." An aircraft or aerial vehicle that is
6 operated without the possibility of direct human intervention
7 from within or on the aircraft or vehicle.

8 * * *

9 Section 2. Section 2308(a)(7) of Title 34 is amended by
10 adding a subparagraph to read:

11 § 2308. Unlawful devices and methods.

12 (a) General rule.--Except as otherwise provided in this
13 title, it is unlawful for any person to hunt or aid, abet,
14 assist or conspire to hunt any game or wildlife through the use
15 of:

16 * * *

17 (7) A vehicle or conveyance of any kind or its
18 attachment propelled by other than manpower. Nothing in this
19 subsection shall pertain to any of the following:

20 * * *

21 (iii) A small unmanned aircraft system if the
22 operator has been issued a wildlife recovery permit
23 granted by the commission and the small unmanned aircraft
24 system is used solely by the permittee for the recovery
25 of harvested wildlife when no firearm or implement of
26 taking is possessed by any participant involved in the
27 recovery. This subparagraph shall not be construed to
28 authorize the hunting of any live game or wildlife
29 observed or located through the use of an unmanned
30 aircraft system if a period of less than 24 hours has

1 elapsed since the most recent observation or location
2 event through the use of a small unmanned aircraft.

3 * * *

4 Section 3. Section 2311(a) of Title 34 is amended and the
5 section is amended by adding a subsection to read:

6 § 2311. Restrictions on recreational spotlighting.

7 (a) Unlawful acts.--It is unlawful for any person to cast or
8 to assist any other person in casting the rays of a spotlight,
9 vehicle headlight or any other artificial light of any kind from
10 any vehicle, watercraft, airborne craft or any attachment to
11 such vehicles or crafts:

12 (1) Upon any building at any time.

13 (2) In any manner which frightens, excites or harasses
14 any livestock, poultry or other farm animal.

15 (3) To search for or locate for any purpose any game or
16 wildlife anywhere within this Commonwealth, other than
17 specified in paragraph (4), daily between the hours of 11
18 p.m. and sunrise on the following day.

19 (4) To search for or locate for any purpose any game or
20 wildlife anywhere within this Commonwealth at any time during
21 the antlered deer rifle season and during the antlerless deer
22 rifle season.

23 (5) Upon photoelectric cell lights.

24 [The provisions of this subsection shall not apply if it is
25 proven that the headlights of a vehicle or conveyance were being
26 used while traveling on a roadway in the usual way.]

27 (a.1) Exceptions.--The provisions of this section shall not
28 apply to the use of:

29 (1) The headlights of a vehicle or conveyance traveling
30 on a roadway in the normal manner associated with traveling

1 at night or during inclement weather.

2 (2) A spotlight mounted to a small unmanned aircraft
3 system if the operator has been granted a wildlife recovery
4 permit issued by the commission and the vehicle is used
5 solely for the recovery of harvested wildlife when no firearm
6 or implement of taking is possessed by any participant
7 involved in the recovery. This paragraph shall not be
8 construed to authorize the hunting of any live game or
9 wildlife observed or located through the use of an unmanned
10 aircraft if a period of less than 24 hours has elapsed since
11 the most recent observation or location event through the use
12 of a small unmanned aircraft.

13 * * *

14 Section 4. Chapter 29 of Title 34 is amended by adding a
15 subchapter to read:

16 SUBCHAPTER E

17 GAME OR WILDLIFE RECOVERY PERMITS

18 Sec.

19 2971. Purpose of subchapter.

20 2972. Definitions.

21 2973. Application process.

22 2974. Permits.

23 2975. Small unmanned aircraft operation.

24 2976. Field records.

25 2977. Enforcement.

26 § 2971. Purpose of subchapter.

27 The purpose of this subchapter is to provide for the issuance
28 of game and wildlife recovery permits to authorize eligible
29 applicants to assist in the recovery of game and wildlife
30 lawfully harvested by other individuals using small unmanned

1 aircraft systems.

2 § 2972. Definitions.

3 The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter
4 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
5 context clearly indicates otherwise:

6 "Game or wildlife recovery activity." The act of aiding,
7 abetting, assisting or conspiring with another person, in any
8 manner, to recover previously harvested game or wildlife using a
9 small unmanned aircraft system.

10 "Game or wildlife recovery permit." A game or wildlife
11 recovery permit issued in accordance with this subchapter.

12 "Permittee." An individual issued a game or wildlife
13 recovery permit under this subchapter.

14 § 2973. Application process.

15 (a) Form.--The commission shall develop and make available
16 an application form for a game or wildlife recovery permit in
17 accordance with this subchapter.

18 (b) Application.--An individual may apply to the appropriate
19 regional office of the commission for a game or wildlife
20 recovery permit in the form and manner prescribed by the
21 commission.

22 (c) Contents.--An application for a game or wildlife
23 recovery permit must include:

24 (1) The name, address, telephone number, customer
25 identification number and date of birth of the applicant.

26 (2) A copy of the applicant's remote pilot certificate
27 issued under 14 CFR Pt. 107 (relating to small unmanned
28 aircraft systems).

29 (3) A copy of the financial liability insurance policy
30 for the small unmanned aircraft system of the applicant.

1 (4) The remote identification number associated with
2 each small unmanned aircraft system to be covered by the
3 permit.

4 (d) Fee.--The fee for a game or wildlife recovery permit
5 shall be:

6 (1) \$100 for residents and nonresidents when used for
7 commercial game or wildlife recovery activity.

8 (2) \$5 for individuals utilizing a small unmanned
9 aircraft system for personal game or wildlife recovery
10 activity.

11 § 2974. Permits.

12 (a) Permit required.--An individual must first obtain a game
13 or wildlife recovery permit before engaging in any game or
14 wildlife recovery activity.

15 (b) Additional permits.--The issuance of a game or wildlife
16 recovery permit to an individual does not diminish the
17 obligation of the individual to obtain other applicable Federal,
18 State or local permits.

19 (c) State game lands.--Notwithstanding 58 Pa. Code § 135.41
20 (relating to State game lands), a game or wildlife recovery
21 permit authorizes its holder to engage in game or wildlife
22 recovery activities on lands designated as State game lands
23 using a small unmanned aircraft system.

24 (d) Conditions.--The initial and continued validity of a
25 game or wildlife recovery permit is conditioned upon the
26 permittee's:

27 (1) Maintenance of a valid remote pilot certificate
28 issued under 14 CFR Pt. 107 (relating to small unmanned
29 aircraft systems).

30 (2) Maintenance of financial liability insurance

1 covering the operation of each unmanned aircraft system
2 associated with the permit.

3 (3) Maintenance and update of the remote identification
4 number associated with each unmanned aircraft system
5 associated with the permit.

6 § 2975. Small unmanned aircraft operation.

7 (a) Compliance with law.--A permittee shall operate a small
8 unmanned aircraft system used for a game or wildlife recovery
9 activity in compliance with all applicable Federal, State and
10 local law governing operation.

11 (b) Remote identification broadcast.--A permittee shall
12 cause a small unmanned aircraft system used in a game or
13 wildlife recovery activity conducted under the permittee's game
14 or wildlife recovery permit to continuously broadcast the
15 equipment identification number during the game or wildlife
16 recovery activity.

17 (c) Firearms and implements capable of harvest.--A permittee
18 shall ensure that the individuals participating in a game or
19 wildlife recovery activity conducted under the permittee's game
20 or wildlife recovery permit are not in possession of a firearm,
21 bow, crossbow or other implement capable of harvesting game or
22 wildlife during the game or wildlife recovery activity.

23 Enforcement of this subsection shall be based on the standard of
24 whether the permittee knew or should have known about the
25 possession of the firearm, bow, crossbow or other implement.

26 § 2976. Field records.

27 (a) Maintenance and inspection.--

28 (1) A permittee shall maintain and provide to the
29 commission legible, accurate and complete field records of
30 all game or wildlife recovery activities conducted under the

1 authority of the game or wildlife recovery permit of the
2 permittee.

3 (2) The field records must be maintained and made
4 available for inspection in accordance with section 2906
5 (relating to records).

6 (b) Form and contents.--The commission shall develop and
7 make available a form to be used for the submittal of the field
8 records described under paragraph (1), which must include the
9 following information for each commercial guiding activity:

10 (1) The name, address and customer identification number
11 for each client.

12 (2) The date of each game or wildlife recovery activity.

13 (3) The quantity and species of game or wildlife
14 recovered for each client. If the species recovered is an
15 antlered white-tailed deer or elk, the field records must
16 also provide the number of points for each antler.

17 (4) The name and permit number of any additional game or
18 wildlife recovery permittee that participates in the game or
19 wildlife recovery activity.

20 (c) Reports.--Field records must be submitted to the
21 commission annually in accordance with section 2907 (relating to
22 reports).

23 § 2977. Enforcement.

24 (a) Prosecution.--A violation of this subchapter shall be
25 prosecuted in accordance with section 2908 (relating to
26 violations).

27 (b) Permit.--The director may deny, revoke or suspend a game
28 or wildlife recovery permit of a permittee for a violation of
29 this subchapter or this title by the permittee or any
30 subpermittee, upon written notice to the permittee.

1 Section 5. This act shall take effect in 60 days.