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**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

**FISH AND GAME COUNCIL**

**2017 – 2018 Game Code**

**Proposed Amendments:** N.J.A.C. 7:25-5

Authorized By: Fish and Game Council, Dave Burke, Chair.

Authority: N.J.S.A. 13:1B-29 et seq., and 23:1-1 et seq.

Calendar Reference: See Summary below for explanation of exception to calendar requirement.

DEP Docket Number: 03-17-04.

Proposal Number: PRN 2017-054.

A **public hearing** concerning these proposed amendments will be held on Tuesday, April 18, 2017, at 6:30 P.M. at:

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Central Region Office, Conservation Center  
One Eldridge Road  
Robbinsville, NJ 08691

Submit comments by June 2, 2017, electronically at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/rules/comments>. The Fish and Game Council (Council) encourages electronic submittal of comments. In the alternative, comments may be submitted on paper to:

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New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

2017 Game Code Comments

Division of Fish and Wildlife

Mail Code 501-03

PO Box 420

Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420

This rule proposal may be viewed or downloaded from the Department of Environmental Protection's (Department) website at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/rules>.

The agency proposal follows:

### **Summary**

As the Council has provided for a 60-day comment period on this notice of proposal, this notice is excepted from the rulemaking calendar requirements pursuant to N.J.A.C. 1:30-3.3(a)5.

The proposed 2017-2018 Game Code ("Game Code" or "Code") at N.J.A.C. 7:25-5 states when, under what circumstances, in what locations, by what means, and in what amounts and numbers, game birds, game animals, and fur-bearing animals may be pursued, taken, killed, or had in possession.

Since the early 1900s, the Game Code has provided a system for the protection, propagation, increase, control, and conservation of game birds, game animals, and fur-bearing animals in this State and for their use and development for public recreation and food supply.

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Biennial revision of season opening and closing dates, bag limits, and other regulations based on scientific investigation and research ensures the greatest likelihood of success in reaching these goals.

The Council is proposing amendments to the Game Code as summarized below. In addition to the below-described changes, expired season dates are deleted and typographic corrections are proposed to the Code.

The proposed amendments include the following:

1. A definition of “apprentice license” is proposed. Amendments to N.J.S.A. 23:1-1 et seq., adopted in 2015, as P.L. 2015, c. 83, established the authority for the Department’s Division of Fish and Wildlife to issue apprentice licenses for firearm, and bow and arrow hunting. Prior to this legislation, hunting licenses were issued in several forms and required an applicant who had not previously held a license to first complete a course in gun or bow and arrow safety, as the case may be. The 2015 statutory amendments established, for resident firearm, nonresident firearm, resident bow and arrow, and nonresident bow and arrow licenses, a corresponding apprentice license for which an applicant would not be required to complete a safety course for the weapon to be used. The statutory amendments provide that apprentice licenses for firearm, and bow and arrow hunting may be issued by the Division of Fish and Wildlife, in its discretion, to a citizen of the United States above 14 years of age. The apprentice licenses only authorize a licensee to hunt when accompanied by a person above 21 years of age who holds a regular license for firearm or bow and arrow hunting, as the case may be, require that each apprentice be accompanied by such a regular license holder (that is, one

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licensed individual over the age of 21 could not accompany more than one apprentice licensee), and limit the number of times a person may be issued a given type of apprentice license to twice in the lifetime of the person.

The Council is proposing to institute an apprentice license program as allowed by P.L. 2015, c. 83. While the minimum age for an apprentice bow and arrow license will be set at the age of 14, the minimum age for an apprentice firearm license will be 18 years of age in order to comply with N.J.S.A. 2C:58-6.1(b)4, which states that no person under the age of 18 years shall possess, carry, fire, or use a firearm for the purpose of hunting, unless he or she has successfully completed a hunter's safety course. The accompanying firearm hunting license holder shall be subject to all penalties for violations committed by the holder of the apprentice firearm hunting license while under their direct supervision. The licenses expire on December 31 of the year of issue.

Thirty-nine states currently administer an apprentice license program to enhance hunter recruitment; four additional states have similar legislation. None of these states has experienced any safety issues regarding their apprentice license programs. Having the accompanying license holder held liable for any infractions committed by the apprentice ensures that appropriate oversight will occur, since no hunter wants to lose his or her hunting privileges.

For the reasons discussed in paragraphs 7 and 21 below, the Council has determined that it would not be appropriate to allow holders of apprentice licenses to participate in the black bear and special nighttime fox and coyote seasons. Cross-reference to this

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limitation on apprentice license holders is additionally incorporated into the proposed definition. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d)7.

2. The definition of “relaxing lock” is proposed to be modified. The existing definition unintentionally suggests that all pressure is released when a trapped animal stops pulling against the trap, which would render it ineffective. Accordingly, the definition is amended to make clear that a relaxing lock is one that ceases to increase hold pressure when the trapped animal stops pulling against the cable restraint. The Council is proposing to prohibit the use of cam-locks and spring-assisted locking systems because they do not meet the criteria of a relaxing lock. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d)22.
3. The Council is proposing to extend the youth pheasant hunt from one to six days. This would allow youth hunters additional opportunities to pursue pheasant prior to the opening of the regular season when they must compete with adult hunters. Currently, the youth hunt takes place on the Saturday before the regular pheasant season opens; this usually falls around the last Saturday in October. Many schools have in-service days during this week with school closed to students on these days, which would minimize conflicts with school attendance. Enough pheasants are stocked by the Division of Fish and Wildlife (Division) on the existing youth hunt day (Saturday), which would be the opening day of the proposed extended season, to carry over to into the remaining week to enable youth hunters to successfully pursue pheasant. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.2(f).
4. The Council is proposing a ban on the liberation of northern bobwhite quail by private individuals in certain Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). The northern bobwhite quail is a native species that has experienced a significant decline in numbers throughout its

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range, including in New Jersey. As a result, this species is the subject of restoration projects designed to improve quail habitat in order to reestablish the species in appropriate areas within the State. The release of pen-raised birds into the habitat of wild bobwhites can result in increased mortality, predation, and disease transmission to wild birds. The genetic quality of the wild population may also be compromised. Therefore, the Council is proposing a ban on the liberation of northern bobwhite quail in the eight WMAs in Cumberland and Ocean counties that are closest to the current restoration projects. If the Council determines that bobwhite restoration efforts are successful in these areas, this ban may be extended at a later date to additional WMAs to allow for the recovery effort to be maximized. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.3(a).

5. The existing boundary of the muzzleloader season for gray squirrel includes reference to the former intersection of the Garden State Parkway and Rt. 9 in Somers Point. With the removal of the former Rt. 9 bridge across the Great Egg Harbor Bay, the Garden State Parkway no longer intersects with Rt. 9 at Somers Point. Accordingly, the boundary for the muzzleloader season for gray squirrel is proposed to be changed to reflect the dismantling of the Rt. 9 bridge with the boundary to now run from the Parkway intersection with the southern bank of the Great Egg Harbor Bay along the southern bank to Rt. 9. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.5(a).
6. The Council is proposing to extend the hunting season for gray squirrel by one week to coincide with the closure of the rabbit season. Squirrels are abundant and ubiquitous and have historically been under-utilized. Although the Division does not have an estimate for a Statewide population, the increasing age of New Jersey forests and recent abundant mast

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crops indicate that squirrel populations are robust and can support an additional week of hunting pressure. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.5(a).

7. The Council is proposing to exclude holders of an apprentice license (see paragraph 1 above) from black bear hunting. The Division does not feel that the skills necessary to hunt black bear are commensurate with an introductory hunting experience, which is what the apprentice hunting license is intended to provide. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.6(a)1.
8. The due date for application forms for Special Farmer Black Bear Permits is proposed to be changed from October 15 to August 31 to reflect the October black bear hunting season, which was adopted in 2015. The due date for these permits was unintentionally not amended at that time. This change clarifies that farmers are eligible to acquire permits for the October season utilizing archery or muzzleloaders. This will allow farmers to acquire a permit for hunting black bear on their properties for the October black bear hunting season segment, in addition to the December segment. Language is also added to allow for changes to the process by which a farmer will acquire a Special Farmer Black Bear permit when the permits are added to the electronic licensing system. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.6(a)1iv(3).
9. The Council voted to open the fall turkey hunting season in all turkey hunting areas in 2015. The language for opening the fall turkey season Statewide was amended in two subsections in the 2015-2016 Game Code, but not in a third subsection. This subsection is proposed to be corrected to agree with the other sections. The language for a Statewide fall turkey season is correct in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.7(h)7 and (l), but is incorrect in N.J.A.C. 7:25-

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5.7(a), which still lists seven turkey hunt areas as being closed to turkey hunting in the fall.

See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.7(a).

10. The Council is proposing to separate N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.7(e) into 12 paragraphs to enable law enforcement to write multiple citations to violators of multiple turkey hunting infractions. Under the existing rule, a person in violation of multiple provisions under N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.7(e) receives only one citation. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.7(e).
11. In 2015, allowance for checking in legally harvested turkeys utilizing the Automated Harvest Report System (AHRS) was added to the Game Code in anticipation of switching from a live check station system to the AHRS. When this addition was made, the language pertaining to the tagging of turkeys in the field by hunters was inadvertently stricken. This amendment returns the language requiring immediate tagging, because regardless of whether a hunter registers via the AHRS or brings it to a live check station, the hunter will need to attach a completed transportation tag to legally transport the turkey. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.7(g).
12. The Council is proposing to increase trapping for mink, muskrat, and nutria on Wildlife Management Areas stocked with pheasants. Currently, the trapping season in these WMAs begins on January 1 and ends on March 15. The Council proposing to amend this season. The change will add 46 days to the trapping season for mink, muskrat, and nutria in WMAs in the Northern Zone and 31 days in the Southern Zone. Trapping is currently prohibited in the WMAs designated at N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.33(a)2 prior to the January 1 through March 15 season to minimize conflicts between trappers and hunters that use dogs. However, mink, muskrat, and nutria are semi-aquatic furbearing animals, which are caught through



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the use of smaller traps, that may preclude the accidental capture of dogs. Thus, the potential for conflict between trappers and hunters is minimized. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.8(b)1, 2, and 4.

13. The Council is proposing to increase the number of recreational trapping permits for river otter. The current Statewide quota is 115 permits. In 2015, constituent demand was almost three times (336 applicants) the permit quota. Population modeling from Missouri and Ohio indicate that a maximum of 15 percent of the otter population may be removed without negatively affecting the statewide population. New Jersey's annual harvest (approximately 45 otters) is only five percent of the estimated Statewide population. The proposed increase will bring the permit quota to 146, which will allow for increased trapping opportunity without adversely affecting the Statewide population. The proposed permit allocations are based on Statewide otter surveys. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.10(c).
14. The annual season for trapping raccoon, red fox, gray fox, Virginia opossum, striped skunk, long-tailed weasel, short-tailed weasel and coyote is specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.11 and varies depending upon whether trapping is to occur on specific State Wildlife Management Areas designated at N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.33(a)2 or on other lands (see N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.11(b) and (c)). The Council is proposing to amend N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.11(c) to allow for an earlier trapping season than currently allowed in the designated WMAs, provided only enclosed foothold traps and cage traps are utilized during the earlier, expanded portion of the season. Particularly, the current season in the designated WMAs, which allows trapping with any form of trap from January 1 to March 15, inclusive, is proposed to be expanded to run from

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November 15 to March 15, inclusive, with only cage traps and enclosed foothold traps allowed to be used during the period from November 15 to January 1.

As indicated in paragraph 4 above, northern bobwhite quail has experienced a significant decline in numbers, which has led to implementation of restoration projects designed to stabilize and increase the population of the species in the State. Among factors impacting the northern bobwhite quail population is predation. The 2015 Predator Abundance Survey documented the following predators of northern bobwhite quail in Cumberland County (in order of total visitations): raccoon (36), opossum (31), red fox (21), free-ranging domestic cat (20), skunk (17), coyote (9), and gray fox (1). Because increased trapping can lead to decreased predator abundance, partially eliminating the delayed open trapping season in WMAs, where pheasants and quail are liberated by the State will help facilitate better predator management in order to assist in northern bobwhite quail recovery. In northern New Jersey, predator abundance may also be suppressing ruffed grouse and wild turkey recruitment.

One of the concerns originally leading to implementation of a delayed trapping season in the designated WMAs was the potential for conflicts between trappers and small game hunters with hunting dogs. Most conflicts between trappers and hunters result from the potential restraint of hunting dogs in live capture cable restraints. Other trapping methods, including enclosed foothold and cage trapping, offer opportunities to capture predators with minimal or no danger to hunting dogs. Accordingly, allowing trapping on the designated State WMAs prior to January 1 utilizing only enclosed foothold and cage traps

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will help to reduce predator populations without introducing the potential for conflicts between trappers and hunters with dogs. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.11(b) and (c).

15. The Council is proposing to change all uses of the word “snare” to “cable restraint.” This amendment is intended to make language consistent throughout the Game Code. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.12(f)1 and 6, 5.13(l)2, and 5.35(d).
16. Under the existing rule, trappers possessing a valid and proper rifle permit may use a .22-caliber rifle to dispatch legally trapped animals other than muskrats. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 23:3-3, persons above 10 years and under 14 years of age may obtain a gun license, but must be accompanied by a licensed hunter 21 years of age or older to hunt using the license. Language is added to the rules to reflect the applicability of that statutory provision to licensed trappers under 14 years of age utilizing a rifle under their permit to dispatch legally trapped animals. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.12(h) and 5.23(f)2.
17. The Council is proposing to change the required timeframe within which traps must be checked from “once in every 24 hours” to “once per calendar day” for semi-aquatic species in tidal waters only. Since tides fluctuate daily over a period of a little more than 24 hours, and traps are checked during low tides, the time when the traps are accessible changes, and a trapper may not be able to check traps within the 24-hour deadline. The existing language “once in every 24 hours” will still apply to all upland trapping. The proposed amendment will provide trappers flexibility to comply with the regulation. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.12(i).
18. The waters and shoreline of Barnegat Inlet, Ocean County, are proposed to be closed to waterfowl hunting. Significant numbers of sea ducks have been observed in the waters of

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Barnegat Inlet and have drawn an increased amount of hunting activity over the past several years. Barnegat Inlet is a relatively narrow inlet with significant commercial and recreational boating traffic during all seasons. Because waterfowlers cannot hunt in a boat under power, this can lead to a potentially dangerous situation in which drifting vessels that are hunting sea ducks may impede or collide with boat traffic under power within the inlet. Closing Barnegat Inlet to waterfowl hunting will result in a safer situation for boating traffic using the inlet. A map of the area will be included in the Hunting and Trapping Digest (Digest), which is posted on the Division website at [www.njfishandwildlife.com](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com) and sent out via listserv. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.13(l)21.

19. The description of the special sea duck zone is proposed to be amended. Currently, the special sea duck hunting area for New Jersey includes any waters of the Atlantic Ocean as well as any tidal waters of any bay which are separated by at least one mile of open water from any shore, island, or emergent vegetation. New Jersey additionally has three zones (North, Coastal, and South) within which 30 different species of waterfowl, including ducks, may be hunted. The portion of the special sea duck hunting area that is outside of the Atlantic Ocean overlaps with a portion of the Coastal duck zone. While the season in the special sea duck hunting area has previously begun earlier than the season in the other duck areas, the seasons in the special sea duck hunting area and in the Coastal duck zone always ended on the same date. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reduced the hunting season in length in the special sea duck area in 2016, creating more potential for confusion regarding seasons in the portion of the special sea duck hunting area that overlaps with the regular Coastal duck zone. To eliminate this potential

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confusion, the Council is proposing to constrain the special sea duck area to the Atlantic Ocean, which will allow more season date setting flexibility because the ocean (Special Sea Duck Zone) will be more clearly separate from the “regular duck” Coastal Zone. Having the Special Sea Duck Zone and the Regular Duck Zones (that is, Coastal Zone) separate and distinct geographically allows the Division to set hunting seasons with different dates within each of these two distinct zones. Further, the previously used “one mile from shore” clause was confusing and rarely used by duck hunters. This language will be replaced by a reference to the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) demarcation lines as designated at 33 CFR Part 80. These lines are readily found on NOAA Nautical Charts, and clearly show the boundary between ocean and inland water for all inlets, the Raritan Bay, and the Delaware Bay. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.13(o).

20. The Council proposes to specify dates during which Special Waterfowl Youth Hunting Days will be held and additionally define requirements that must be met for a youth hunter to participate in these special hunting days in proposed N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.13(r). The Special Waterfowl Youth Hunting Days will be held on the dates and in the manner specified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 50 CFR Part 20. Additionally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has historically permitted persons 15 years old or younger to participate in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Youth Waterfowl Hunter program. In 2016, states were given discretion over establishing an age range for youth hunters provided youth hunters are not over the age of 17. In New Jersey, a youth hunter is less than 16 years of age. The proposed new subsection allows for a consistent definition of youths

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across all special youth hunting opportunities in New Jersey (see, for example, N.J.A.C.

7:25-5.25(a)3) and enhances youth hunting opportunity. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.13(r).

21. The Council is proposing to exclude holders of an apprentice license (see paragraph 1 above) from coyote, red fox, and gray fox hunting during the special nighttime season. The Division does not feel that the skills necessary to hunt coyote, red fox, and gray fox are commensurate with an introductory hunting experience, which is what the apprentice hunting license is intended to provide. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.19(f)1.
22. The Council is proposing to prohibit the use of unmanned aircraft or drones to hunt, harass, scout, drive, or rally wildlife. The recreational and commercial use of unmanned aircraft or drones is becoming increasingly popular. However, unmanned aircraft or drones may have a negative effect on wildlife, and their use when hunting is in opposition to the tenet of fair chase. Activities that harass wildlife, or give hunters an unfair advantage over their prey are forbidden. This language follows examples set by numerous other state fish and wildlife agencies. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.22(a)2.
23. The Council is proposing to prohibit the use of “smart rifles or guns” for hunting in New Jersey. Computer-aided hunting devices negate the tenet of fair chase and give hunters an unfair advantage when hunting by allowing a computer to target the prey. This proposed prohibition follows examples set by numerous other state fish and wildlife agencies. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.23(a) and (a)1.
24. The language regarding use of .22 caliber rimfire for hunting raccoon and opossum and dispatching legally trapped animals other than muskrats is proposed to be amended to clarify that .22 caliber rifles can be used on properties other than WMAs. The rules

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currently state that “it shall be legal to use a .22 caliber rifle and .22 caliber short cartridge only for hunting raccoon or opossum with hounds and for killing legally trapped animals other than muskrats on State wildlife management areas.” This language can be misconstrued to mean that use of .22 caliber rimfire rifles and .22 caliber short ammunition is only permitted on wildlife management areas. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.23(d) and (f)2.

25. The Council is proposing to remove language pertaining to the transition to the Automated Harvest Report System (AHRS) in several deer-related sections of N.J.A.C. 7:25-5. The transition from a live deer check station system to the AHRS was completed in 2012. At N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.30(g), language is proposed to be added regarding the late check of deer, which was erroneously omitted when it was added to the other deer sections. The term “harvest report stub” has also been added to N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d)27 to clarify that the portion of the license or permit that is filled in and detached from the same is different nomenclature under the AHRS that under the live deer check system, and to differentiate from the transportation tag used for other species. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d)27; 5.25(b), (b)1, and (c); 5.26(b), (b)1, and (c); 5.27(b), (b)1, and (c); 5.28(c) and (c)3; 5.29(c) and (g); and 5.30(c), (c)1, and (g).
26. The Council is proposing to change all Game Code references for “D.S.T.” (daylight saving time) and “E.S.T.” (eastern standard time) to “local time.” Throughout the Code, there are currently references to specified time deadlines being either D.S.T. E.S.T., or “D.S.T. or E.S.T., whichever is in effect” to reflect that the specified deadline is meant to reflect the time in effect on the day in question, regardless of whether the season occurs

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during a period where either one or potentially both time systems are in effect. The definition of “local time” is added to N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d). See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d), 5.25(b), 5.26(b) and (b)1, 5.27(b), 5.28(c) and (d), 5.29(g), and 5.30(c) and (g).

27. The Council is proposing a change in the bag limit for certain deer hunting seasons for deer management zones (DMZ) in Regulation Set 2. Regulation sets contain DMZs with similar management strategies and the same season dates and bag limits. There are nine regulation sets, beginning with Regulation Set 0, which has the most conservative regulations, and ending with Regulation Set 8 with the most liberal regulations. The current bag limit in Regulation Set 2 is two deer, both of which may be antlerless if the hunter chooses; the proposed bag limit is one antlered and one antlerless deer for the Fall Bow, Permit Muzzleloader, and Permit Bow seasons. This proposed bag limit creates a more logical, stepped transition to Regulation Set 3, which has a two-deer bag limit. This change is not expected to change the harvest significantly, as few hunters in the last five years have harvested two antlerless deer in a given season in DMZs that are subject to Regulation Set 2. The bag limit for the remaining seasons is maintained at two antlered deer for Six-Day Firearm, one deer for Permit Shotgun, and one deer for each of the Youth Days. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.25(b), 5.28(c), and 5.30(c).

28. The bag limit for the DMZs in Regulation Set 5 is proposed to be reduced from one antlered and an unlimited number of antlerless deer to one antlered and five antlerless deer. Hunters in these zones have expressed concern about declining harvests and what they perceive to be a significant drop in the deer population. They requested that the bag limit be reduced to two deer. However, harvest data analysis shows that such a drastic



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reduction in the bag limit, and, therefore, the antlerless harvest, would be counter to management objectives in these zones, as listed in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(r). Accordingly, based upon field observation and available data, the Council is proposing a bag limit of one antlered deer and five antlerless deer. The bag limit for six-day firearm season remains at two bucks, and the one-deer bag limit for each of the Youth Days also remains unchanged. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.25(b), 5.26(b), 5.28(c), 5.29(c) and (q)2, and 5.30(c).

29. The bag limit in Regulation Set 6 is proposed to be reduced from one antlered and an unlimited number of antlerless deer to one antlered and nine antlerless deer. Hunters in the deer management zones in Regulation Set 6 have expressed concerns similar to those expressed in zones subject to Regulation Set 5 about declining harvests and what they perceive to be a significant drop in the deer population. They similarly requested that the bag limit be reduced to two deer. The Council determined, based upon analysis of harvest data, that such a drastic reduction in the antlerless harvest would be counter to management objectives in these zones. Based upon field observation and available data, the Council is proposing a bag limit of one antlered deer and nine antlerless deer for zones included within this Regulation Set. The bag limit for six-day firearm season remains at two bucks, and the one-deer bag limit for each of the Youth Days also remains unchanged. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.25(b), 5.26(b), 5.28(c), 5.29(c) and (q)2, and 5.30(c).

30. The Code currently allows for a Monday through Friday permit muzzleloader and Wednesday through Friday permit shotgun antlerless only hunting days immediately prior to the six-day firearm season specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a). The Council is proposing to eliminate this five-day season of permit shotgun and permit muzzleloader

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antlerless-only hunting in the DMZs in Regulation Sets 7 and 8. Hunters in the DMZs in Regulation Sets 7 and 8 have expressed concern about declining harvests and what they perceive to be a significant drop in the deer population, and also that these firearm days were affecting the deer behavior during the week of the six-day firearm season. Hunters assert that early firearms hunting before the six-day firearm season makes deer warier and more likely to resort to nocturnal behavior, thereby making it very difficult to harvest bucks during the traditional “buck week.” The Council believes that elimination of the five-day portion of these seasons will address any reduction in the deer population without the need to adjust the antlerless bag limit applicable during the remaining seasons. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.28(d)3 and 15 and 5.29(d)4 and 14.

31. The Council is proposing to eliminate the six days of permit shotgun and permit muzzleloader antlerless-only hunting that run concurrent with the six-day firearm season specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a) in the DMZs in Regulation Sets 6. As indicated in paragraph 29 above, hunters in the DMZs in Regulation Sets 6 have expressed concern about declining harvests and a perceived decline in the deer population. Based upon the analysis referenced in paragraph 29, the Council is proposing to eliminate these days of antlerless-only hunting. Farmers possessing a farmer shotgun permit and hunting on their own property will still be permitted to take antlerless deer during the week of the six-day firearm season in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(c). See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.28(c) and (d)4 and 6 and 5.29(c) and (d)5 and 7.
32. The permit bow season was closed on Christmas Day in DMZ 54 (Picatinny Arsenal) through amendment to the 2013 Game Code, which included DMZ 54 into a section with

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other zones that are closed on Christmas Day. The permit muzzleloader season remained open on Christmas Day. In accordance with a request from the managing authority for DMZ 54, Picatinny Arsenal, the permit muzzleloader season is proposed be closed on Christmas Day to maintain consistency throughout the Code. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.28(d)10.

33. The Earn-a-Buck (EAB) program requires deer hunters to harvest an antlerless deer before pursuing an antlered deer for harvest. The Council is proposing to amend the rules to authorize the Fish and Game Council to eliminate the requirement for the EAB requirement prior to the season opening, provided certain criteria are met and in consultation with the Director. In accordance with the proposed amendment, the Council may reinstate the EAB requirement after consultation with the Director. The proposed change would be applicable to Regulation Sets 4 through 8. The EAB program is additionally applicable to specific special zones including Federal facilities; the proposed amendment would not apply to those zones. Pursuant to the EAB requirement, hunters must harvest an antlerless deer before they can pursue and take a buck during the first two weeks of the Fall Bow season in the DMZs of certain regulation sets. In order for a zone to be considered for a change under the proposed amendments, the yearly antlered harvest must fall below 15 percent of the goal for that specific zone. A table listing antlered harvest goals and management strategies for each deer management zone is available at N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(r). This change will allow the Council to make a timelier response to unforeseen or undesirable population changes in order to better achieve deer management goals. Removing or reinstating the EAB regulation will allow for harvests that will better meet management objectives within

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a given DMZ, if need be, by manipulating the number of antlerless deer taken. Any such action regarding the EAB requirement of a particular DMZ will be made by publication of a notice of administrative change in the New Jersey Register, as well as by posting notice on the Division's website at [www.njfishandwildlife.com](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com), via listserv, and in the Digest. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.25(c)1.

34. The closing date of the muzzleloader rifle permit season in deer management zones in Regulation Set 0 is proposed to be changed to December 31. Providing a consistent closing date will result in a more predictable season for hunters. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.28(d)16.
35. The number of days for the permit shotgun season in Regulation Set 0 is proposed to be changed from one to three days. The season currently consists only of the Wednesday of the week after the six-day firearm season; the new season would be the Wednesday through Friday of that week. This change adds days afield with a nominal increase to harvest as the bag limit remains the same at one deer per hunter, thereby increasing opportunity without negatively impacting the deer herd in these zones. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(d)3.
36. The boundary between deer management zones 26 and 42 is proposed to be changed. As a result of the boundary change, approximately 16.8 square miles of range currently included in the northern section of Zone 42 is proposed to become part of Zone 26. Zone 26 is in Regulation Set 2, while Zone 42 is in Regulation Set 6, which has much more liberal season lengths and bag limits. An analysis of harvest for the impacted portion of Zone 42 for the last five years shows a harvest rate more in line with management

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objectives for the more conservative Zone 26, which has similar habitat type and land-use as in the area proposed to be transferred. No farmers will be impacted by this change to the more conservative deer harvest regulations. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(p)26 and 42.

37. The Council is proposing changes to the buck goals and/or deer range for several deer management zones. The Zone 6 buck goal is proposed to be changed from 3 to 2.5 bucks per square mile to better reflect the management goals of a suburban zone where fewer deer are desired. Zones 21, 23, 24, 30, 31, and 34 buck goals are proposed to be changed from 3 to 2 for Zones 21 and 23, from 2 to 1 for Zone 24, from 5 to 3.44 for Zone 30 and from 3 to 2.07 for both Zones 31 and 34 to better reflect the low productivity of these zones' habitat. Zone 26 buck goal is proposed to be changed from 3.5 to 2 in response to the zone being moved into the more restrictive Regulation Set in 2015. Zones 28 and 47 buck goals are proposed to be changed from 4 to 2.76 and 1.5 to 1.03, respectively. When Zones 28 and 47 were made subject to the antler point restriction program in 2011, the Department's intention was to reduce buck goals to the aforementioned levels. However, the reduction was inadvertently omitted at that time. Zone 43 buck goal is proposed to be changed from 5 to 3.5 to better reflect management goals. Zone 68 buck goal is proposed to be changed from 3 to 1 to reflect the management goals of the managing agency (Franklin Parker Preserve and Four Mile Spring Preserve) of this special area deer management zone. The deer range, which is a measure of the square miles of deer habitat within each DMZ, is updated for Zones 6, 23, 24, 25, 26, 36, 42, 49, 51, 53, 58, 66, 68, and 70 based upon reevaluation of land use in each of those zones. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(r).

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38. An additional column with the calculated buck goal for the entire deer management zone is proposed to be added to the table of Buck Goals and Management Strategies by Deer Management Zone in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(r) for informational purposes. The calculated buck goal for the entire zone is reached by multiplying the buck goal per square mile by the deer range for each deer management zone. See N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(r).
39. Increases in quotas for permits for the white-tailed deer bow permit season are proposed for two deer management zones. Zone 50's quota is proposed to be changed from 1,320 to 2,000 permits, and Zone 51's quota is proposed to be changed from 740 to 900 permits. Permits for both zones have either nearly sold out or sold out during the past three deer seasons. Because harvests are controlled by season lengths and bag limits, permit quotas are set high enough to exceed demand in all deer management zones except special areas; having enough permits to meet hunter demand will assist in reaching management objectives. See N.J.A.C. 7:25- 5.30(k).

The remaining changes have been made for clarification, correction of typographical errors, change of format without change in text, and for change in calendar year.

### **Social Impact**

Most proposed amendments are minor and will have little positive or negative social impact.

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The inclusion of apprentice hunting license holders will enable more people interested or curious about hunting to participate without committing the time to take a hunter education class, and give them the opportunity to determine if they wish to pursue the sport.

The expansion of trapping opportunities and the increase in otter permits will provide increased opportunity for trappers who choose to participate.

The changes to deer hunting regulations will provide additional opportunities for hunters in those DMZs where the deer population exceeds management goals, while reducing the potential for deer-human conflict. Conversely, adjustments reducing bag limits in other zones will help ensure that local populations are not overhunted in other areas of the State, safeguarding the continued health of the population throughout the State.

The positive social impact anticipated from the proposed amendments includes improved conservation and management of the species covered by the proposed amendments, as well as the enhancement of the wildlife resources for recreational activities.

### **Economic Impact**

There may be a small but positive economic impact on local retailers serving the hunting population as a result of the change to add a youth pheasant season, increase trapping opportunities, extend seasons, and open new WMAs for pheasant hunting.

The Council anticipates that instituting a deer management strategy of population reduction or stabilization on 83 percent of the deer management zones will mitigate economic losses associated with the damage by deer depredating landscape plantings or gardens and agricultural crops, and deer-vehicle collisions.

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Although fees associated with the new apprentice license will increase revenue, the Department anticipates the number of apprentice licenses sold annually will be small, and thus, will not significantly affect the overall budget associated with the management of wildlife by the Division. As the fees associated with the new apprentice licenses are not different from fees for similar existing hunting licenses, the proposed amendments are not expected to result in any increase in expenditures by people wishing to engage in hunting in New Jersey.

The overall value to the State's economy from hunting and other activities related to wildlife is summarized in a 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (Survey). The Survey estimated that the total expenditure by hunters in the State of New Jersey was just under \$116 million. Additionally, the Survey showed expenditures for wildlife watching activities in New Jersey totaled over \$860 million, not including expenditures related to backyard birding. An unknown portion of these monies flows to out-of-State suppliers and distributors of equipment and services. Although the proportion of money being spent out-of-State is unknown, the overall impact on the New Jersey economy and revenue generated from such economic activity is still significant, and the Department believes is in excess of the costs to the Department and to participants.

Proposed amendments to separate N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.7(e) into 12 paragraphs to allow enhanced enforcement against violators of multiple turkey hunting infractions will have no individual economic impact for those hunters who comply with the Code and their hunting permits and, therefore, are not subject to the penalties associated with violations. For violators, however, there is a likely negative economic impact resulting from their violation.



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These proposed amendments to the Game Code are designed to conserve and manage the species covered by the Code and enhance recreational activities, and the money spent on hunting and wildlife watching will help ensure that the economic benefits to the State will continue.

### **Environmental Impact**

The proposed amendments will have a positive environmental impact as they are designed to implement the management and control of wildlife species based on the State's ongoing research efforts. The proposed amendments to the Game Code will improve the conservation, management, and enhancement of the State's wildlife resources and habitats by the Division based on studies of the current population, distribution, and habitat status of game species in New Jersey. The proposed amendments to the season length and bag limits for deer have been designed to maintain a high level of antlerless deer harvest and will help maintain deer populations at levels more compatible with natural habitats and land uses such as for agriculture.

### **Federal Standards Statement**

Executive Order No. 27 (1994) and N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq., require State agencies that adopt, readopt, or amend State rules that exceed any Federal standards or requirements to include in the rulemaking document a Federal standards analysis.

The USFWS regulates hunting in National Wildlife Refuge areas in New Jersey pursuant to the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, 16 U.S.C. § 668dd (1966), and its corresponding regulations at 50 CFR 32.49. The proposed amendments to the Game Code do not

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contain any standards or requirements that exceed Federal regulations involving National Wildlife Refuge areas.

The USFWS regulates falconry in 50 CFR 21.29, which are the regulations to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The proposed amendments to the Game Code do not contain any standards or requirements that exceed Federal regulations involving falconry.

The Federal waterfowl hunting regulations at 50 CFR 20 and 21 and Conservation Order regulations at 50 CFR 20 are promulgated annually by the USFWS and allow states to select the dates, times, manner, and means for the hunting of waterfowl.

Therefore, the proposed amendments to the Game Code do not contain any standards or requirements that exceed any standards or requirements imposed by Federal law.

### **Jobs Impact**

The proposed amendments will not have any effect on the number of jobs in the State. The amendments will help ensure continued recreational and economic benefits to the citizens of the State and continue to provide for the regulated use and proper management of the State's wildlife resources. The Council does not anticipate that the minor changes proposed will impact the number of jobs in businesses serving this recreational industry, such as sporting goods stores and eateries.

### **Agriculture Industry Impact**

The proposed amendments regarding deer seasons should continue to decrease the economic losses incurred by the agricultural community. The proposed hunting seasons will continue to ensure that wildlife populations are maintained at acceptable levels.

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### **Regulatory Flexibility Analysis**

In accordance with the New Jersey Regulatory Flexibility Act, N.J.S.A. 52:14B-16 et seq., the Council has reviewed the proposed amendments for reporting, recordkeeping, and other compliance requirements on small businesses.

Generally, the proposed 2017-2018 Game Code imposes minimal reporting and compliance requirements on sportsmen engaged in recreational hunting. These requirements are not, therefore, imposed upon small businesses, as the term is defined under the Regulatory Flexibility Act, N.J.S.A. 52:14B-16 et seq.

However, the Game Code also regulates the activity of trappers, who may engage in such activity for their economic benefit. Such trappers may be considered small businesses. As there is no significant mandatory increased regulatory burden on trappers due to the proposed amendments and given the Council's objective to protect game resources and foster recreational opportunities related to game, no differentiation in requirements to exempt small businesses is provided.

### **Housing Affordability Impact Analysis**

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:14B-4, as amended effective July 17, 2008, by P.L. 2008, c. 46, the Council has evaluated this rulemaking to determine the impact, if any, on the affordability of housing. The proposed amendments do not involve the creation or construction of any type of housing units. The proposed amendments apply solely to hunting and trapping. Accordingly, the proposed amendments have no impact on housing affordability or the average costs of housing.

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### **Smart Growth Development Impact Analysis**

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:14B-4, as amended effective July 17, 2008, by P.L. 2008, c. 46, the Council has evaluated the proposed amendments to determine the nature and extent of the proposed amendments on the impacts on housing affordability and on housing production within Planning Areas 1 or 2, or within designated centers, under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The proposed amendments apply solely to hunting and trapping and, therefore, will have no impact on housing affordability or on housing production within Planning Areas 1 or 2, or within designated centers, under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

**Full text** of the proposal follows (additions indicated in boldface **thus**; deletions indicated in boldface brackets [thus]):

#### SUBCHAPTER 5. [2015-2016] **2017-2018** GAME CODE

##### 7:25-5.1 General provisions

(a) – (c) (No change.)

(d) The following words and terms, when used in this subchapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

1. – 6. (No change.)

**7. “Apprentice license” means a resident or non-resident firearm or bow and arrow license issued to a person who is at least 18 years of age for firearms and at least 14**

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**years of age for bow and arrow without meeting the requirement of a hunter safety education course. The apprentice license holder shall only hunt with an accompanying firearm or bow and arrow licensed hunter at least 21 years of age. A person may not serve as an accompanying firearm hunting license holder to more than one holder of an apprentice firearm hunting license at a time. A holder of an apprentice license may hunt in any open season, as defined by license type, except as provided at N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.6 and 5.19. The apprentice license shall be void after December 31 of the year of its issuance and may be issued to a person only twice during the person's lifetime.**

Recodify existing 7.-17. as **8.-18.** (No change in text.)

**19. "Local time" means the time applicable in the State, reflecting either daylight saving or eastern standard time, on the date the rule is to be applied.**

Recodify existing 18.-21. as **20.-23.** (No change in text.)

[22.] **24.** "Relaxing lock" means that component of a live capture cable restraint intended to create and maintain a loop; and that [allows the loop to release constriction pressure on the captured animal when the cable is not taut (for example, when the animal stops pulling).] **stops tightening when the captured animal stops pulling against the cable restraint. Cam-locks and spring-assisted locking systems are prohibited for the purposes of this definition.**

Recodify existing 23.-24 as **25.-26.** (No change in text.)

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[25.] **27.** "Transportation tag" or "**harvest report stub**" means the tag portion of the hunting license or special permit [which] **that** is removed and affixed to the animal immediately upon kill or removal from the trap. It is also a tag supplied by the Division with the beaver and otter trapping license.

Recodify existing 26.-27 as **28.-29.** (No change in text.)

(e) – (i) (No change.)

7:25-5.2 Pheasant-Chinese ringneck (*Phasianus colchicus torquatus*), English or blackneck (*P. c. colchicus*), Mongolian (*P. mongolicus*), Japanese green (*Phasianus versicolor*); including mutants and crosses of above

(a) – (e) (No change.)

(f) Nothing contained in this section shall preclude properly licensed and permitted youth hunters from hunting pheasants [on] **from and including** the Saturday before the opening of the pheasant season **to the Friday before the opening of the pheasant season** on selected wildlife management areas or portions thereof, if such activity is authorized by the Division. Youth hunters must be under the direct supervision of a non-hunting adult (21 years or older), who must possess a proper and valid firearm license. Direct supervision means the youth hunter and the supervising adult are together at the same location. The youth hunter shall not hunt independently of the supervising adult. Hunting hours, application procedures, permit quotas and the form of the permit shall be determined by the Division.

(g) – (h) (No change.)

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7:25-5.3 Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), white-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus townsendii*), European hare (*Lepus europeus*), chukar partridge (*Alectoris graeca*), Hungarian partridge (*Perdix perdix*), and bobwhite quail (*Colinus virginianus*)

(a) The annual season for hunting cottontail rabbit, black-tailed jackrabbit, white-tailed jackrabbit, and European hare with shotgun, bow and arrow, or air gun shall begin the last Saturday in September and conclude the Saturday after the third Monday of the following February, inclusive; except the season shall be closed during the six-day firearm deer season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a) and on the Wednesday immediately following the six-day firearm deer season. The annual season for hunting chukar partridge and Hungarian partridge with shotgun or bow and arrow shall begin on the Saturday following the first Monday in November and conclude the third Monday of the following February, inclusive; except the season shall be closed during the six-day firearm deer season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a) and on the Wednesday immediately following the six-day firearm deer season. The annual season for hunting quail with shotgun or bow and arrow at Greenwood Forest WMA and Peaslee WMA shall begin on the Saturday following the first Monday in November and conclude the following January 31, inclusive; except the season shall be closed during the six-day firearm deer season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a) and on the Wednesday immediately following the six-day firearm deer season. Hunting for quail in all other portions of the State is prohibited at all times except on properly licensed semi-wild and commercial preserves in accordance with (e) below.

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1. **No person shall at any time liberate quail for any purposes, including dog training, and hunting, in the following State wildlife management areas:**
  - i. **Buckshutem WMA, Cumberland County;**
  - ii. **Dix WMA, Cumberland County;**
  - iii. **Egg Island WMA, Cumberland County;**
  - iv. **Fortescue WMA, Cumberland County;**
  - v. **Millville WMA, Cumberland County;**
  - vi. **New Sweden WMA, Cumberland County;**
  - vii. **Nantuxent WMA, Cumberland County; and**
  - viii. **Stafford Forge WMA, Ocean County.**

(b) – (f) (No change.)

7:25-5.5 Eastern gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

- (a) The annual season for hunting eastern gray squirrel with shotgun, bow and arrow, or air gun shall begin on the last Saturday in September and conclude the **Saturday following the** third Monday of the following February, inclusive; except the season shall be closed during the six-day firearm deer season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a) and on the Wednesday immediately following the six-day firearm deer season. Within the areas described as portions of Passaic, Mercer, Hunterdon, Warren, Morris, and Sussex Counties lying within a continuous line beginning at the intersection of Rt. 513 and the New York State line; then south along Rt. 513 to its intersection with Rt. 511; then south along Rt. 511 to its intersection with Rt. 46; then west along Rt. 46 to its intersection with



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Rt. 80; then west along Rt. 80 to its intersection with Rt. 15; then north along Rt. 15 to its intersection with the Morris-Sussex County line; then south along the Morris-Sussex County line to the Warren County line; then southwest along the Morris-Warren County line to the Hunterdon County line; then southeast along the Morris-Hunterdon County line to the Somerset County line; then south along the Somerset-Hunterdon County line to its intersection with the Mercer County line; then west and south along the Hunterdon-Mercer County line to its intersection with Rt. 31; then south along Rt. 31 to its intersection with Rt. 546; then west along Rt. 546 to the Delaware River; then north along the east bank of the Delaware River to the New York State Line; then east along the New York State Line to the point of beginning at Lakeside; and in that portion of Salem, Gloucester, Camden, Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean, Atlantic, Cape May, and Cumberland counties lying within a continuous line beginning at the intersection of Rt. 295 and the Delaware River; then east along Rt. 295 to its intersection with the New Jersey Turnpike; then east along the New Jersey Turnpike to its intersection with Rt. 40; then east along Rt. 40 to its intersection with Rt. 47; then north along Rt. 47 to its intersection with Rt. 536; then east along Rt. 536 to its intersection with Rt. 206; then north along Rt. 206 to its intersection with the New Jersey Turnpike; then northeast along the New Jersey Turnpike to its intersection with Rt. 571; then southeast along Rt. 571 to its intersection with the Garden State Parkway; then south along the Garden State Parkway to its intersection with **the southern bank of the Great Egg Harbor Bay in Cape May County; then west along the southern bank of the Great Egg Harbor Bay to its intersection with North Shore Road (Rt. 9) [at Somers Point];** then south along

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Rt. 9 to its intersection with Rt. 83; then west along Rt. 83 to its intersection with Rt. 47; then north along Rt. 47 to its intersection with Dennis Creek; then south along the west bank of Dennis Creek to its intersection with Delaware Bay; then northwest along the east shore of Delaware Bay and the Delaware River to the point of beginning; persons holding a valid and proper rifle permit in addition to their current firearm hunting license may hunt for squirrels between the last Saturday in September and the Friday following the first Monday in November, inclusive; and between the first Saturday in January and the **Saturday following the** third Monday in February, inclusive, using a .36 caliber or smaller muzzleloading rifle loaded with a single projectile.

(b) – (e) (No change.)

7:25-5.6 Black bear (*Ursus americanus*), bobcat (*Felis rufus*)

(a) There is a closed season for bobcat. It shall be illegal to intentionally take, kill, or attempt to take or kill a bobcat in the State of New Jersey at any time. Trappers shall report any bobcat incidentally caught within 24 hours of discovery to 1-877-WarnDEP (1-877-927-6337). Bobcat, including any part thereof, legally harvested in other U.S. states or Canadian provinces may be possessed provided they are affixed with a Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) tag from the state or province of harvest. It shall be illegal to use dogs to pursue or run black bears. There is a season for black bears in accordance with the approved Comprehensive Black Bear Management Policy (CBBMP) (see section Appendix, incorporated herein by reference). The season for black bears shall consist of two segments. Segment A shall be a period of six

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consecutive days beginning on the second Monday in October. Segment B shall be concurrent with the six-day firearm deer season as enumerated in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a). During each segment, black bear may only be harvested by the means specified in (a)4 below. Legal hunting hours for black bears shall be 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset. Following the commencement of the season, the Director shall close the season if the harvest rate reaches 30 percent. The Director will announce such closure, which will become effective 24 hours from the daily legal closing time of the day on which the Division determines that the harvest rate reaches 30 percent, based upon data obtained and reviewed by the Division at the close of each day of the season. Harvest rate equals the number of harvested bears that were tagged in the current calendar year within bear management zones (BMZs) open to hunting divided by the number of bears that were tagged in the current calendar year that are available for harvest (total number of bears tagged in the current year within BMZs open to hunting minus known mortality of such tagged bears and number of such tagged bears known to have left the BMZs that are open to hunting). Season closure will be announced by news release, radio, the Division's website ([www.njfishandwildlife.com](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com)) and other media.

1. Special black bear hunting permit requirement: All black bear hunters must have a current and valid firearm or archery hunting license and a current and valid special "black bear hunting permit" which will be issued by the Division. **Apprentice licenses are not valid for the taking of black bear.** A total of 11,000 special black bear hunting permits, allocated by bear management zone (BMZ), will be available to properly licensed hunters. Black bear hunting permits and special farmer black bear permits are not transferable and must be in the

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possession of the hunter while hunting black bears. Hunters are limited to hunting in no more than two BMZs per season. Hunters are limited to purchasing up to two **black bear hunting permits per year, as per (a)1iii below**, one for each BMZ hunted, until the end of Segment A. Juvenile hunters aged 10 through 13 years of age must have a black bear hunting permit and be under the direct supervision of a properly licensed adult (21 years of age or older) while bear hunting. The adult must also possess a black bear hunting permit. Direct supervision means the juvenile hunter and the supervising adult are together at the same location. The juvenile hunter may not hunt independently of the adult.

i. Black bear hunting permits will be issued on an individual basis to holders of valid and current firearm and/or archery hunting licenses. **Apprentice licenses are not valid for the taking of black bear.** Black bear hunting permits and special farmer black bear permits are valid only in the BMZ and year designated on the permit, and are not transferable.

ii.– iii. (No change.)

iv. Special Farmer Black Bear Permits shall be applied for as follows:

(1) – (2) (No change.)

(3) The application shall be filled in to include Conservation ID Number or name, age, address, and any other information requested thereon. Properly completed application forms will be accepted in the Trenton office no later than [October 15] **August 31**. There is no fee required and all qualified applicants will receive a Special Farmer Black Bear Permit delivered by mail. **Information and instructions on whether permits are to be mailed or claimed will be posted on the Division's website at [www.njfishandwildlife.com](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com) and in the Hunting and Trapping Digest.**

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(4) (No change.)

2. – 6. (No change.)

(b) – (c) (No change.)

7:25-5.7 Wild turkey (*Meleagris gallapavo*)

(a) The duration of the Fall Either Sex Wild Turkey Hunting Season[s] for Turkey Hunting Areas 1[, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 20, 21 and] **through** 22 shall include a hunting period "N" of seven consecutive days excluding Sunday beginning on the Saturday before the last Monday in October and ending on the following Saturday. [There shall be no Fall Turkey Hunting in Turkey Hunting Areas 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16.] The hunting periods for all Spring Wild Turkey Gobbler Seasons shall be as set forth in (a)1 through 6 below as follows:

1. – 6. (No change.)

(b) – (d) (No change.)

(e) **The methods and restrictions for wild turkey hunting are as follows:**

1. Hunting methods shall be restricted to calling or stand hunting during the spring gobbler season.
2. No person shall stalk or attempt to approach a wild turkey for the purpose of taking or attempting to take the bird.
3. All persons must have a turkey calling device in their possession while turkey hunting.
4. No person shall use an electronic calling device for calling turkeys at any time during the open season.

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5. Persons may not drive or chase wild turkeys for the purpose of putting them in range of hunters, except that fall hunters may rush turkeys for the purpose of causing the flock to scatter.

6. No group of hunters larger than five individuals may hunt turkeys at any time.

7. The use of dogs is prohibited in the spring gobbler season.

8. No live or electronically operated decoys may be used.

9. Fluorescent hunters orange is not required on outer clothing for turkey hunting.

10. No shot size larger than No. 4 fine shot or smaller than No. 7 1/2 fine shot may be used for turkey hunting.

11. No shotgun larger than 10 gauge or smaller than 20 gauge may be used for turkey hunting.

12. A person hunting turkeys shall not have in possession or control, a firearm or other weapon within 300 feet of a baited area during the turkey hunting seasons. A baited area is defined as the collection, deposit, concentration or unnatural gathering of feed including, but not limited to, corn, wheat, oats, or other substance that may constitute a lure or enticement to turkeys.

(f) (No change.)

(g) Special permits consist of a back display which includes a wild turkey harvest tag.

The back portion of the permit will be conspicuously displayed on the outer clothing in addition to the valid firearm or archery license. [After harvesting a wild turkey, the hunter must register his or her turkey via the AHRS or an alternate system as designated by the Division only.] **Any wild turkey killed must be tagged immediately with a**

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**completed wild turkey transportation tag and registered at a turkey check station, or registered via the AHRS. A completed wild turkey transportation tag allows for transportation of the wild turkey. Personnel at the checking station will issue a "possession tag."** Hunters registering their wild turkey via the AHRS will receive a "confirmation number" that can be written on the harvest tag. Any permit holder killing a wild turkey must **transport this wild turkey to an authorized checking station or register the turkey via the AHRS** by 3:00 P.M. on the day killed on the youth turkey hunting day, Hunting Periods A, B, and C, and the first three Saturdays of Hunting Period E or by 9:00 P.M. during Hunting Period D and the last Saturday of Hunting Period E during the spring gobbler hunting season or by 7:00 P.M. on the day killed during the fall turkey season to secure the legal **"possession tag" or** "confirmation number." The possession of a wild turkey after 3:00 P.M. on the date killed on the youth turkey hunting day, Hunting Periods A, B, and C, and the first three Saturdays of Hunting Period E or after 9:00 P.M. during Hunting Period D and the last Saturday of Hunting Period E during the spring gobbler season or after 7:00 P.M. on the date killed during the fall season without a legal **"possession tag" or** "confirmation number" shall be deemed illegal possession.

(h) – (o) (No change.)

7:25-5.8 Mink (*Mustela vison*), muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), and nutria (*Myocaster coypus*) trapping only

(a) (No change.)

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(b) The annual mink, muskrat, and [nutria-trapping] **nutria trapping** season is as follows:

1. Northern Zone: 6:00 A.M. on November 15 through the following March 15, inclusive[, except on State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas, enumerated in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.33(a)2].

2. Southern Zone: 6:00 A.M. on December 1 through the following March 15, inclusive[, except on State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas, enumerated in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.33(a)2].

3. (No change.)

[4. On State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas, enumerated in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.33(a)2, the season duration will be: 6:00 A.M. on January 1--March 15, inclusive.]

(c) – (e) (No change.)

7:25-5.10 River otter (*Lontra canadensis*) trapping

(a) – (b) (No change.)

(c) Special Permit: A special permit obtained from the Division of Fish and Wildlife shall be required to trap otter. If the number of applications received exceeds the quotas listed, a random drawing will be held to determine permit holders. Beaver permit holders will be given first opportunity for otter permits in their respective zones. Applications shall be submitted via the Division's ELS or, in the event of ELS operating difficulties, by providing the same information at ELS locations through such alternate system as may be designated by the Division during the period October



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1-31, annually. Unclaimed otter permits may be issued over-the-counter. Only one application per person may be submitted for trapping otter and applicants shall provide their Conservation ID Number, or name, age, address, and any other information requested thereon. Permits will be allotted on a zone basis as follows:

Zone 1-[2]4, Zone 2-[3]4, Zone 3-[2]3, Zone 4-[2]3, Zone 5-[3]5, Zone 6-[4]5, Zone 7-[3]4, Zone 8-[7]8, Zone 9-[4]6, Zone 10-2, Zone 11-[5]6, Zone 12-2, Zone 13-7, Zone 14-6, Zone 15-15, Zone 16-[4]5, Zone 17-2, Zone 18-[5]6, Zone 19-3, Zone 20-[3]7, Zone 21-1, Zone 22-1, Zone 23-1, Zone 24-3, Zone 25-[3]6, Zone 26-3, Zone 27-2, Zone 28-[5]11, Zone 29-[3]6, and Zone 30-9. Total: [115] 146. Successful applicants must trap with a valid, current trapping license.

(d) – (i) (No change.)

7:25-5.11 Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), long-tailed weasel (*Mustela frenata*), short-tailed weasel (*Mustela erminea*), fisher (*Martes pennanti*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*) trapping only

(a) (No change.)

(b) The annual **season for trapping** raccoon, red fox, gray fox, Virginia opossum, striped skunk, long-tailed weasel, short-tailed weasel and coyote [trapping season] **with cage traps, enclosed foothold traps and live capture cable restraints** shall begin at 6:00 A.M. on November 15 and conclude the following March 15, inclusive, except on State

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Fish and Wildlife Management Areas, enumerated in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.33(a)2. There is no open season for fisher.

(c) The annual **season for trapping** raccoon, red fox, gray fox, Virginia opossum, striped skunk, long-tailed weasel, short-tailed weasel and coyote [trapping season] **with cage traps, and enclosed foothold traps** on State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.33(a)2 shall begin at **6:00 A.M. on November 15 and conclude the following March 15, inclusive. The annual season for trapping these species with live capture cable restraints on State Wildlife Management Areas specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.33(a)2 shall begin at 6:00 A.M.** on January 1 and conclude March 15, inclusive. There is no open season for fisher.

(d) – (h) (No change.)

#### 7:25-5.12 General trapping

(a) – (e) (No change.)

(f) Live capture cable restraints shall be subject to the following requirements.

1. No person shall set, use or maintain any type of [snare] **cable restraint** unless they have first satisfactorily completed a division-approved [snare]**cable restraint** training course and carry on their person appropriate certification thereof.

2. – 5. (No change.)

6. All natural baits consisting of fish, bird or mammal carcasses or flesh used in trapping with live capture cable restraints must be covered or concealed from view

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except when placed or located at a distance of 30 feet or greater from any set [snare]

**cable restraint.**

(g) (No change.)

(h) Legally licensed trappers possessing a valid and proper rifle permit may carry and use a .22 caliber rifle and .22 caliber short rimfire cartridges only, to kill legally trapped animals other than muskrats. Legally licensed trappers may also carry and use an air gun, no smaller than .177 caliber, to kill legally trapped animals other than muskrats. **Legally licensed trappers under 14 years of age using a rifle or air gun in accordance with a valid and proper rifle permit to dispatch legally trapped animals shall be accompanied by and under the direct supervision of a properly licensed adult who is at least 21 years of age.**

(i) All traps set or in use must be checked, tended, and maintained at least once [in every 24 hours] **per calendar day.**

(j) (No change.)

#### 7:25-5.13 Migratory birds

(a) – (k) (No change.)

(l) A person shall not take or attempt to take migratory game birds:

1. (No change.)

2. With a trap, net, [snare] **cable restraint**, rifle, pistol, shotgun larger than 10 gauge, fish hook, poison, drug, or explosive;

3. – 20. (No change.)

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**21. In the waters or shoreline of Barnegat Inlet. For the purpose of this section, Barnegat Inlet is defined as the shoreline and waters westward from the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) Demarcation Line as designated at 33 CFR 80.501; to the north end of Broadway in Barnegat Light (39.763133 N; 074.108317 W); then northwest to Red Buoy 14 in the channel (39.763783 N; 074.109283 W); then northeast to the westernmost section of rock jetty at Island Beach State Park (39.771617 N; 074.103017 W).**

(m) – (n) (No change.)

(o) The special sea duck hunting area for New Jersey is defined as [any waters of the Atlantic Ocean and, in addition, any tidal waters of any bay which are separated by at least one mile of open water from any shore, island, or emergent vegetation] **all coastal waters seaward from the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) Demarcation Lines shown on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Nautical Charts and further as designated at 33 CFR 80.165, 80.501, 80.502, and 80.503.**

(p) – (q) (No change.)

**(r) Special Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days will be held on the dates and in the manner prescribed at 50 CFR Part 20 for the current hunting season. Youth hunters must possess a current and valid youth firearms license or be less than 16 years of age on the season date and qualified to hunt without a license under the farmer license exemption. All youth hunters must be under**

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**the direct supervision of a licensed, non-hunting adult 21 years of age or older. Direct supervision means the youth hunter and the supervising adult are together at the same location. The youth hunter may not hunt independently of the supervising adult.**

[(r)] (s) (No change in text.)

7:25-5.19 Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*) hunting

(a) – (e) (No change.)

(f) The hours for the hunting of coyote, red fox, and gray fox during the special eastern coyote, red fox and gray fox hunting season listed in (e) above are 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset. The hours for the hunting of coyote during the special coyote season as noted in (h) and (i) below which allows coyote hunting at night are 1/2 hour after sunset to 1/2 hour before sunrise with 10 or 12 gauge shotguns only.

**1. Apprentice licenses are not valid for the taking of coyote, red fox, and gray fox.**

(g) – (k) (No change.)

7:25-5.22 Wild animals; possession, killing

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(a) No person shall have in possession, kill, attempt to take, hunt for, pursue, shoot, shoot at, trap, or attempt to trap any wild mammal or wild birds unless an open season for the taking of such birds or mammals has been declared by the New Jersey Fish and Game Laws or Code and then only during the respective open seasons fixed by the New Jersey Fish and Game Laws or Code, except as provided in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.15(a), (b), and (c).

1. (No change.)

**2. No person shall hunt from or shoot at any wild animal or bird from any airborne conveyance, including an unmanned aircraft or drone.**

**Except when authorized through a permit issued pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.32, no person shall disturb wildlife utilizing any unmanned aircraft or drone for the purpose of:**

- i. Hunting, concentrating, driving, rallying, or stirring up any migratory game bird to put them in the range of hunters; or**
- ii. Herding any wild animal or bird for the purpose of scouting, hunting, or trapping.**

(b) – (i) (No change.)

7:25-5.23 Firearms and missiles, etc.

(a) Except when legally engaged in deer or black bear hunting during the prescribed firearm seasons, respectively, no person shall have in his or her possession in the woods, fields, marshlands, or on the water any shell or cartridge

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with missiles of any kind larger than No. 4 fine shot. This shall not apply to persons properly licensed for hunting during the cottontail rabbit, black-tailed jackrabbit, white-tailed jackrabbit, European hare, and eastern gray squirrel seasons, exclusively, who may use an air gun, as defined in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d)1. Air guns may use wadcutter, domed or pointed, or hollow point pellets; spherical BBs are not permitted. This shall not apply to persons properly licensed and permitted for hunting during the special eastern coyote, red fox, and gray fox hunting season, exclusively, who may use [10 to 20 gauge] **10 to 20-gauge** shotgun ammunition loaded with shot sizes no smaller than "BB" (.18 caliber) and no larger than #3 Buckshot (.25 caliber). Pellets must be lead or tungsten-nickel-iron hybrid pellets. This shall not preclude farmers or their agents from using shot not larger than No. 4 buckshot to control woodchuck causing damage or a properly licensed person from hunting woodchuck with a rifle during the woodchuck season. For hunting woodchuck, center-fire rifles of .25 caliber or smaller or rim-fire rifles may be used. Center-fire rifles larger than .25 caliber may also be used provided that the bullets used do not exceed 80 grains in weight. All center-fire rifle ammunition used in hunting woodchucks must be hollow point, soft point, or expanding lead core bullets. All rim-fire rifle ammunition used in hunting woodchuck must be hollow point or soft point type not exceeding 50 grains in weight. Also excepted is the use of a muzzleloading rifle, .36 caliber or smaller, loaded with a single projectile during the prescribed portion of the squirrel season in designated areas. Waterfowl hunters may possess and use

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shotgun shells loaded with T (.200") steel fine shot or smaller or other non-toxic shot authorized by Federal regulations no larger than T (.200") shot and properly licensed persons hunting for raccoon or opossum with hounds or engaged in trapping for furbearing animals may possess and use a .22 caliber rifle or air gun, as defined in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d)1, for raccoon, or opossum or legally trapped furbearing animals other than muskrat. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this subsection shall not preclude agents and/or permittees operating under an approved Special Deer Management Permit (N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.32) from shooting deer with a rifle or a rifle equipped with a silencer or suppressor if that permit so specifically provides. Rifles for this purpose shall be restricted as specifically provided in that permit to include only .22, .223, .270, and .45 caliber or other calibers approved by the Division. Only highly frangible bullets shall be employed in .223 and .270 caliber rifles. Bullets employed in .22 and .45 caliber rifles shall be restricted to those designed to provide maximum expansion and limited penetration. As a part of a Special Deer Management Permit, use of .22 rim-fire ammunition is restricted to euthanasia of captive deer only. **All firearms used to take or attempt to take any wild animal or bird shall be fired only by human-controlled, manually-operated mechanical triggers. No person shall use a smart rifle or gun to take or attempt to take wild animals.**

1. **“Smart rifle or gun” means any firearm that is equipped with one or more of the following: a target tracking system; an electronically-**



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**controlled, electronically-assisted, or computer-linked trigger; or a ballistics computer.**

(b) – (c) (No change.)

(d) It shall be legal to use a .22 caliber rifle and .22 caliber short cartridge [only] for hunting raccoon and opossum with hounds and for killing legally trapped animals other than muskrats on State wildlife management areas. Legally licensed trappers may also carry and use an air gun, not smaller than .177 caliber, to kill legally trapped animals other than muskrats.

(e) (No change.)

(f) Except as specifically provided in (a) above or in this subsection for waterfowl hunters, hunting in semi-wild and commercial preserves, trappers, woodchuck hunters, raccoon and opossum hunters, hare and rabbit hunters, squirrel hunters, fox and coyote hunters, muzzleloader deer hunters, and muzzleloader bear hunters, it shall be illegal to use a firearm of any kind other than a shotgun. Nothing in this subsection shall prohibit the use of a shotgun not smaller than 20 gauge nor larger than 10 gauge with a rifled bore for deer and black bear hunting only. Persons hunting black bear shall use a shotgun not smaller than 20 gauge or larger than 10 gauge with lead, lead alloy or copper slug only. Persons hunting deer shall use a shotgun not smaller than 20 gauge or larger than 10 gauge with the lead, lead alloy, or copper slug only; or a shotgun not smaller than 20 gauge nor larger than 10 gauge with the buckshot shell. It shall be illegal to have in possession while deer hunting any firearm missile except the 20,

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16, 12, or 10 gauge lead, lead alloy, or copper slug; or, if hunting deer the 12, 10, 16, or 20 gauge buckshot shell. Shotgun shells containing a single spherical projectile may not be possessed or used in deer or black bear hunting. (This does not preclude a person legally engaged in hunting on semi-wild or commercial preserves for the species under license or a person legally engaged in hunting woodcock from being possessed solely of shotgun(s) and nothing larger than No. 4 fine shot, nor a person engaged in hunting waterfowl only from being possessed solely of shotgun and nothing larger than T (.200 inch) steel shot or other bismuth non-toxic shot authorized by Federal regulations during the shotgun deer seasons). A legally licensed trapper possessing a valid rifle permit may possess and use a .22 rifle and short rim-fire cartridge only while tending his or her trap line. Farmers or their agents may use shot not larger than No. 4 buckshot to control coyote or woodchuck causing damage.

1. (No change.)

2. Properly licensed persons 10 years of age and older engaged in hunting with a muzzleloader rifle must have in possession a proper and valid rifle permit. Properly licensed persons 10 years of age or older, hunting during the muzzleloader rifle permit deer season with a smoothbore muzzleloader, must also have in possession a proper and valid rifle permit. Rifle permits for 10 to 17 year olds will be valid for muzzleloader deer hunting, muzzleloader squirrel hunting, muzzleloader woodchuck hunting, [and] muzzleloader bear hunting, **and**

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**dispatching legally trapped animals other than muskrats with a .22 caliber rifle.**

3. – 5. (No change.)

(g) – (v) (No change.)

7:25-5.25 White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) fall bow season

(a) (No change.)

(b) Bag Limit: Only one antlered deer may be taken Statewide during the fall bow season. Hunters must use an antlered deer transportation tag from their bow and arrow or all around sportsman license, which is designated for use during the fall bow season, when registering an antlered deer. The standard bag limit is two deer, either one antlered and one antlerless or two antlerless in zones in Regulation Sets 1[, 2, or] **and 3. The standard bag limit is two deer, one antlered and one antlerless, in zones in Regulation Set 2. In zones in Regulation Set 5, the bag limit is one antlered deer and five antlerless deer. In zones in Regulation Set 6, the bag limit is one antlered deer and nine antlerless deer.** In zones in Regulation Sets 4, [5, 6,] 7, and 8 and zones 37, 39, 53, 54, and 68, the bag limit is one antlered deer and an unlimited number of antlerless deer. In zones in Regulation Set 0, the bag limit is one antlered or one antlerless deer. In Regulation Sets 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 and in Zones 39, 53, and 68, an antlerless deer must be taken before an antlered deer from the second Saturday in September through the first Friday in October except for youth hunters, as defined in

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N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.1(d)15. All deer must be legally registered either at a deer check station or via the automated harvest report system. Only one deer may be taken at a time until the season limit is reached except in zones in Regulation Sets 6, 7, and 8, and in Zones 37, 39, 53, 54, 66, and 68, where the limit is two deer at a time until the season concludes. Properly licensed hunters who harvest their first antlerless deer during the bow season subject to the provisions of this section [will be given a "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tag" (supplemental tag), upon registration of their deer at a designated deer check station, or] will be assigned a confirmation number via an automated harvest report system as designated by the Division. This [tag or] confirmation number will be valid for the taking of additional antlerless deer, as applicable by zone bag limit specified above. [No supplemental tags will be issued for antlered deer.] The [supplemental tag or] confirmation number may be used in any zone that is open for the season subject to the limitations of this section. [Properly licensed hunters that harvest a second deer may obtain a "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tag" upon registration of their second deer at a designated check station. Supplemental tags for the taking of a third or subsequent deer are valid only in zones that have a bag limit of an unlimited number of antlerless deer listed above.] After taking a second deer in any zone in Regulation Sets 0, 1, 2, or 3, hunters may not hunt deer during the fall bow season in the zones in Regulation Sets 0, 1, 2, or 3. [One additional supplemental tag, valid only in zones with an unlimited antlerless deer bag limit, will be issued upon registration of each subsequent deer until the season

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concludes.] All [supplemental tags or] confirmation numbers are valid on the date of issuance in all zones that are open for this season. Deer shall be tagged immediately with completely filled in "transportation tag" and shall be transported to a deer checking station before 8:00 P.M. [D.S.T. or E.S.T., whichever is in effect,] **local time** on the day killed to secure a legal possession tag. The legal possession tag must be securely affixed or locked on the deer before the deer is transported or removed from the authorized deer checking station. Hunters are responsible for legal possession tags being securely affixed or locked before leaving the deer check station. The supplemental tag shall be valid on the day of issuance and all registration requirements apply. If the deer check station system is no longer in use, then with the exception of the confirmation number, the possession tag on the license shall be filled out immediately upon killing. Additionally, every deer is to have a tag affixed to the carcass bearing the hunter's CID, date of harvest, zone of harvest, antler points if applicable, and confirmation number if registered. This tag shall remain attached until such time as the deer is processed for consumption. The deer shall be registered via an automated harvest report system, as designated by the Division, in lieu of a deer check station prior to the attempt to take an additional deer, and no later than 8:00 P.M. [D.S.T. or E.S.T., whichever is in effect,] **local time** of the day of harvest. Hunters must record the confirmation number given via this system, which replaces the legal possession tag. [If an automated harvest report system is implemented, notice will

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be published in the New Jersey Register, on the Division's website, and in the Hunting Digest which summarizes hunting season dates and regulations.]

1. The possession of a deer after 8:00 P.M. on the date killed without a legal [possession tag] **confirmation number** shall be deemed illegal possession under the deer check station system. Possession of a deer after 8:00 P.M. on the date killed without a legal confirmation number shall be deemed illegal under the AHRS. [Any legally killed deer which is recovered too late to be brought to the deer check station by closing time must be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters. Said deer must be brought to a checking station on the next open day to receive a legal "possession tag." If the season has concluded, said deer must be taken to a regular deer checking station on the following weekday to receive a legal possession tag.] It is unlawful to attempt to take or continue to hunt for more than the number of deer permitted. Should the hunter be unable to access the AHRS by the designated time, the deer shall be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters and registered via the AHRS the next day. Within 48 hours of registering a deer with the AHRS and upon request from the Division, a hunter shall be required to produce the head of the deer harvested or produce records relating to the location of the head.

2. – 3. (No change.)

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(c) This season shall be open only to holders of a valid and current bow and arrow hunting license or all around sportsman license that contains an attached fall bow and arrow deer ["transportation tag" or] harvest report stub [or a proper and valid supplemental tag]. If the anticipated harvest of deer has not been accomplished during this season, additional days of bow and arrow deer hunting may be authorized by the Director, in consultation with the Council. Such authorization and dates thereof shall be announced by press and radio.

**1. If the yearly antlered harvest in any deer management zone in the deer management zones in Regulation Sets 4 through 8 is below the stated buck goal specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.29(r) by 15 percent, the Council may, upon consultation with the Director, suspend the requirement to take an antlerless deer before an antlered deer in any deer management zone as is determined to be appropriate to provide for harvest which will meet the stated goals. The Council, upon consultation with the Director, may also reinstate the requirement, as needed, if the antlered harvest exceeds the buck goal by 15 percent. Such actions will be made by publication of a notice of administrative change in the New Jersey Register, as well as by posting notice on the Division's website at [www.njfishandwildlife.com](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com), and in the Hunting and Trapping Digest.**

(d) (No change.)

7:25-5.26 White-tailed deer winter bow season

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(a) (No change.)

(b) Bag Limit: Hunters must use the antlered buck transportation tag from their bow and arrow or all around sportsman license, which is designated for use during the winter bow season, when registering an antlered deer. The standard bag limit is two deer, one antlered and one antlerless, or two antlerless in zones in Regulation Sets 1, 2, and 3, and Zone 53. **In zones in Regulation Set 5, the bag limit is one antlered deer and five antlerless deer. In zones in Regulation Set 6, the bag limit is one antlered deer and nine antlerless deer.** In zones in Regulation Sets 4, [5, 6,] 7, and 8 and in Zones 37, 39, 64, 66, and 68, the bag limit is one antlered deer and an unlimited number of antlerless deer. In zones in Regulation Set 0, the bag limit is one antlered deer or one antlerless deer. Only one deer may be taken at a time until the season limit is reached except in zones in Regulation Sets 6, 7, and 8, and in Zones 37, 39, 53, 54, 61, 64, 66, 67, and 68, where the limit is two deer at a time until the season concludes. All deer must be legally registered [either at a deer check station or] via the automated harvest report system. [Properly licensed hunters who take their first deer during the winter bow season will be given a "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tag" (supplemental tag), upon registration of their first deer at a designated deer check station if that deer is antlerless only. This tag will be valid for the taking of one additional antlerless deer. No supplemental tags will be issued for antlered deer. The supplemental tag may be used in any zone that is open for the winter bow



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season subject to the limitations of this section. Properly licensed hunters that take a second antlerless deer may obtain a "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tag" upon registration of their second antlerless deer at a designated check station. Supplemental tags for the taking of a third and subsequent antlerless deer will only be valid in the zones listed above having an unlimited bag limit for antlerless deer.] After taking a second deer in any zone in Regulation Sets 0, 1, 2, and 3, hunters may not hunt deer during the winter bow season in the zones in Regulation Sets 0, 1, 2, and 3. [One additional supplemental tag, valid only in zones with an unlimited antlerless deer bag limit, will be issued upon registration of each subsequent deer at a designated check station until the season concludes. Supplemental tags and antlerless transportation tags attached to the regular license are only valid for taking antlerless deer. All supplemental tags are valid on the date of issuance in all zones that are open for the winter bow season. For deer harvested when the deer check station system is in use, upon harvesting a deer, hunters must immediately detach, completely fill out, and attach the "transportation tag" to the deer, and then take the deer to a deer checking station before 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on the day killed to secure a legal possession tag. The legal possession tag must be securely affixed or locked on the deer before the deer is transported or removed from the authorized deer checking station. Hunters are responsible for legal possession tags being securely affixed or locked before leaving the deer check station. For deer harvested when the deer check station

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system is no longer in use, u]Upon harvesting a deer, hunters must immediately fill out with the exception of the confirmation number the "transportation tag" on the license. Additionally, every deer is to have a tag affixed to the carcass bearing the hunter's CID, date of harvest, zone of harvest, antler points if applicable, and confirmation number if registered. This tag shall remain attached until such time as the deer is processed for consumption. Hunters must register their deer via an AHRS, as designated by the Division, [in lieu of a deer check station,] prior to the attempt to take an additional deer and no later than 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** of the day of harvest. Hunters must record the confirmation number given via this system, which replaces the legal possession tag. [If an automated harvest report system is implemented, notice will be published in the New Jersey Register, on the Division's website, and in the Hunting Digest.]

1. [The possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on the date killed without a legal possession tag shall be deemed illegal possession under the deer check station system.] Possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** on the date killed without a legal confirmation number shall be deemed illegal possession under the AHRS. [Any legally killed deer which is recovered too late to be brought to the deer check station by closing time must be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters. Said deer must be brought to a checking station on the next open day to receive a legal "possession tag." If the season has

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concluded, said deer must be taken to a regular deer checking station on the following weekday to receive a legal possession tag.] It is unlawful to attempt to take or continue to hunt for more than the number of deer permitted. Should the hunter be unable to access the AHRS by the designated time, the deer shall be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters and the harvest registered via the AHRS the next day. Within 48 hours of registering a deer with the AHRS and upon request from the Division, a hunter shall be required to produce the head of the deer harvested or produce records relating to the location of the head.

2. (No change.)

(c) This season will be open only to holders of a valid and current bow and arrow hunting license or all around sportsman license which contains an attached winter bow season ["transportation tag" or a proper and valid supplemental tag] **harvest report stub**. If the anticipated harvest of deer has not been accomplished during this season, additional days of special winter bow and arrow deer hunting may be authorized by the Director, in consultation with the Council. Such authorization and dates thereof shall be announced by press and radio.

(d) (No change.)

7:25-5.27 White-tailed deer six-day firearm season

(a) (No change.)

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(b) Bag Limit: Two antlered deer, with one antler at least three inches long. All deer must be legally registered [either at a deer check station or] via the [automated deer check system. If an automated harvest report system is implemented, notice will be published in the New Jersey Register, on the Division's website, and in the Hunting Digest. Deer shall be tagged immediately with the "transportation tag" appropriate for the season, completely filled in and shall be transported to a checking station before 7:00 P.M. on the day killed to secure a legal possession tag. The legal possession tag must be securely affixed or locked on the deer before the deer is transported or removed from the authorized deer checking station. Hunters are responsible for legal possession tags being securely affixed or locked before leaving the deer check station. The possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on the date killed without a legal possession seal shall be deemed illegal possession under the deer check station system] **AHRS**. The possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. **local time** on the date killed without a legal [registration] **confirmation** number shall be deemed illegal possession under the AHRS. [Upon completion of the registration of the first deer at a deer check station, one valid and proper "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tag" will be issued which will allow that person to continue hunting and take one additional deer with one antler at least three inches long during the current, six-day firearm season. The supplemental tag shall be valid on the day of issuance and all registration requirements apply.] Immediately upon harvest,

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the ["transportation tag"] **harvest report stub** on the license appropriate for the season shall be completely filled in with the exception of the confirmation number. Additionally, every deer is to have a tag affixed to the carcass bearing the hunter's CID, date of harvest, zone of harvest, antler points if applicable, and confirmation number if registered. This tag shall remain attached until such time as the deer is processed for consumption. The deer shall be registered via an AHRS as designated by the Division[, if the deer check station system is no longer in use,] prior to the attempt to take an additional deer and no later than 7:00 P.M. **local time** of the day of harvest. Hunters must record the confirmation number given via the automated system, which replaces the legal possession tag. Hunters who take two antlered deer during the six-day firearm season are prohibited from taking an antlered buck during the regular permit shotgun season. [Any legally killed deer which is recovered too late to be brought to a check station by closing time shall be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters. This deer must be brought to a checking station on the next open day to receive a legal "possession tag." If the season has concluded, this deer must be taken to a regular deer checking station on the following weekday to receive a legal "possession tag."] It is unlawful to attempt to take or to continue to hunt for more than the number of deer permitted. Should the hunter be unable to access the AHRS by the designated time on the day of harvest, the deer shall be immediately reported

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by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters, and the harvest registered via the AHRS the next day. Within 48 hours of registering a deer with the AHRS and upon request from the Division, a hunter shall be required to produce the head of the deer harvested or produce records relating to the location of the head.

[1. New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tags will be valid on the day of issuance in all zones under the deer check station system.]

**1. (Reserved.)**

2. – 3. (No change.)

(c) This season shall be open only to holders of a valid and current firearm hunting or all around sportsman license which contains an attached six-day firearm season [transportation tag or a proper and valid supplemental tag] **harvest report stub**. If the anticipated harvest of deer has not been accomplished during this season, additional days of deer hunting may be authorized by the Director, in consultation with the Council. Such authorization and dates thereof shall be announced by press and radio.

7:25-5.28 White-tailed deer muzzleloader rifle permit season

(a) – (b) (No change.)

(c) Bag Limit: Only one antlered deer may be taken Statewide during the muzzleloader rifle permit season, regardless of the number of permits obtained. Two deer, one antlered and one antlerless or two antlerless, may be

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taken in zones in Regulation Sets 1, [2,] 3, and 4, and in Zone 37. **The standard bag limit is two deer, one antlered and one antlerless, in zones in Regulation Set 2.** One deer, antlered or antlerless, may be taken in zones in Regulation Set 0. **In zones in Regulation Set 5, the bag limit is one antlered deer and five antlerless deer. In zones in Regulation Set 6, the bag limit is one antlered deer and nine antlerless deer.** One antlered and an unlimited number of antlerless deer may be taken in zones in Regulation Sets [5, 6,] 7[,] and 8, and in Zones 39, 53, 57, 58, 61, 66, 67, 68, and 70, except as noted below and in (c)1 and 2 below. Only one deer may be taken at a time until the season limit is reached except in zones in Regulation Sets 7 and 8, and in Zones 39, 54, 57, 58, 61, 66, and 68 where the limit is two deer at a time until the season concludes. [In zones in Regulation Sets 5, 6, 7, and 8, and in Zones 53, 54, 57, 58, 61, 66, 67, 68, and 70, supplemental tags for the taking of a third and subsequent deer will be issued upon registration of deer at official deer checking stations until the season concludes.] In zones in Regulation Set 7, and in Zone 58, only antlerless deer may be taken on applicable muzzleloader season permits during the Wednesday through Friday before the six-day firearm season, and the dates concurrent with the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a). In [zones in Regulation Set 6, and in] Zones 57 and 68, only antlerless deer may be taken during the dates concurrent with the six-day firearm season, as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a). In zones in Regulation Set 8, only antlerless deer may be taken during

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the Monday through Wednesday and Friday of Thanksgiving week and the Wednesday through Friday before the six-day firearm season, and the dates concurrent with the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a). All [supplemental tags and] confirmation numbers are valid on the date of issuance and only in the zone for which the special season permit was issued. [All deer must be legally registered either at a deer check station or via the automated deer check system. If an automated harvest report system is implemented, notice will be published in the New Jersey Register, on the Division's webpage, and in the Hunting Digest. Deer shall be tagged immediately with the muzzleloader rifle permit season permit, transportation tag completely filled in, and shall be transported to a deer checking station before 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on the day killed to secure a legal possession tag. The legal possession tag must be securely affixed or locked before the deer is transported or removed from the authorized deer checking station. Hunters are responsible for legal possession tags being securely affixed or locked on the deer before leaving the deer check station.] Immediately upon harvest, the muzzleloader rifle permit season permit [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** must be completely filled in with the exception of the confirmation number and every deer is to have a tag affixed to the carcass bearing the hunter's CID, date of harvest, zone of harvest, antler points if applicable, and confirmation number if registered. This tag shall remain attached until such time as the deer is processed for consumption. The deer shall be registered via



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an AHRS[, as designated by the Division, if the deer check station system is no longer in use, in lieu of a deer check station,] prior to the attempt to take an additional deer, except as in (c) above and no later than 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** of the day of harvest. Hunters must record the confirmation number given via the AHRS, which replaces the legal possession tag. Hunters must use an antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** from their antlered muzzleloader permit which is designated for use during the permit muzzleloader season, when registering an antlered deer. The antlered muzzleloader permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** which is valid only for the harvest of one antlered deer must be purchased in addition to an antlerless muzzleloader permit. The antlered muzzleloader permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** may be used in any zone for which the hunter has already purchased an antlerless permit. The antlered muzzleloader permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** must be purchased prior to the season opener or at the time of the purchase of the initial antlerless muzzleloader permit if the season has already begun. [The possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on the date killed without a legal possession seal shall be deemed illegal possession under the deer check station system.] The possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** on the date killed without a legal confirmation number shall be deemed illegal possession under the AHRS. [Except as noted in (c)1 through 3 below upon completion of registration of

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first deer, one valid and proper "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tag" (supplemental tag) will be issued under the deer check station system which will allow this person to continue hunting and take one additional antlerless deer during the current muzzleloader rifle permit season.]

The [supplemental tag or] confirmation number shall be valid on the day of issuance and all registration requirements apply. [No supplemental tags shall be issued for antlered deer.]

1. -2. (No change.)

3. [Any legally killed deer which is recovered too late to be brought to the deer check station by closing time must be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters. Said deer must be brought to a checking station on the next open day to receive a legal "possession tag." If the season has concluded, said deer must be taken to a regular deer checking station on the following weekday to receive a legal possession tag.] It is unlawful to attempt to take or continue to hunt for more than the number of deer permitted. Should the hunter be unable to access the AHRS by the designated time on the day of harvest, the deer shall be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters, and registered via the AHRS the next day. Within 48 hours of registering a deer with the AHRS and upon request from the Division, a hunter shall be required to produce the head

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of the deer harvested or produce records relating to the location of the head.

(d) Duration of the muzzleloader rifle permit season is as set forth in (d)1 through 15 below. There is no season in the following Zones 56 and 64. Legal hunting hours shall be 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset [E.S.T] **local time.**

1. – 2. (No change.)
3. The [Monday through Friday preceding the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a), the] week of the six-day firearm season, the Monday and Tuesday following the six-day firearm season, and the Saturday following the six-day firearm season through December 31, exclusive of Christmas Day, and January 1 through the second Saturday in February in zones in Regulation Set 7.
4. The Monday and Tuesday of the week preceding the six-day firearm season **as specified in** N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a), and the week of the six-day firearm season, and the Monday and Tuesday of the week following the six-day firearm season, and the Saturday following the six-day firearm season through December 31 exclusive of Christmas Day, and January 1 through January 31 [in zones in Regulation Set 6, and] in Zone 68.
5. (No change.)
6. [(Reserved.)] **The Monday and Tuesday of the week preceding the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a), and the Monday**

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**and Tuesday of the week following the six-day firearm season, and the Saturday following the six-day firearm season through December 31 exclusive of Christmas Day, and January 1 through January 31 in zones in Regulation Set 6.**

7. - 9. (No change.)

10. [November 30 and December 1 and 14--31, 2015, and January 1--9, 2016; November 28 and 29, and December 12--31, 2016, and January 2--7, 2017;] November 27 and 28 and December [11--31] **11-24, 26-31**, 2017, and January 1--6, 2018; November 26 and 27 and December [10-31] **10--24, 26--31**, 2018, and January 1-5, 2019, in Zone 54.

11. – 14. (No change.)

15. The Monday through Wednesday and the Friday of Thanksgiving week, [the Monday through Friday preceding the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27] the week of the six-day firearm season, the Monday and Tuesday following the six-day firearm season, and the Saturday following the six-day firearm season through December 31, exclusive of Christmas Day, and January 1 through the second Saturday in February in zones in Regulation Set 8.

16. The Monday and Tuesday the week preceding the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a), and [December 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, and 30, 2015; November 28 and 29 and December 17, 19, 20, 21, 24,

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26, 27, 28, and 29, 2016;] November 27 and 28 and December 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, [26, 27, 28, and 29] **26-31**, 2017; November 26 and 27 and December 15, 17, 18, 19, 24, [26, 27, 28, and 29] **26-31**, 2018; December 2, 3, 21, 23, 24, [26, 27, 28, 30, and 31] **26-31**, 2019[, and January 1, 2020,] in zones in Regulation Set 0.

17. (No change.)

(e) – (n) (No change.)

7:25-5.29 White-tailed deer shotgun permit season

(a) – (b) (No change.)

(c) Bag limit: A properly licensed hunter who did not take two antlered deer during the current year, six-day firearm season may take one antlered deer during the shotgun permit season. Only one antlered deer may be taken Statewide during the shotgun permit season, regardless of the number of permits obtained. One deer, either antlered or antlerless, may be taken in zones in Regulation Sets 0, 1, and 2. Two deer, either one antlered and one antlerless or two antlerless, may be taken in zones in Regulation Sets 3 and 4, and in Zone 37. **In zones in Regulation Set 5, the bag limit is one antlered deer and five antlerless deer. In zones in Regulation Set 6, the bag limit is one antlered deer and nine antlerless deer.** One antlered deer and an unlimited number of antlerless deer may be taken in zones in Regulation Sets [5, 6,] 7[, and 8, and in Zones 39, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58, 61, 64, 66, 68, and 70. In

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zones in Regulation Set 7, and in Zone 58, only antlerless deer may be taken on the Wednesday through Friday preceding the six-day firearm season and on the dates concurrent with the six-day firearm season, as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a). In [zones in Regulation Set 6, and in] Zones 57, 64, and 68, only antlerless deer may be taken during the dates concurrent with the six-day firearm season, as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a). In zones in Regulation Set 8, only antlerless deer may be taken during the Monday through Wednesday and Friday of Thanksgiving week, and the Wednesday through Friday of the week preceding the six-day firearm season, and during the dates concurrent with the six-day firearm season, as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a). Only one deer may be taken at a time until the season limit is reached except in zones in Regulation Sets 6, 7, and 8, and in Zones 39, 54, 56, 57, 58, 61, 64, 66, and 68, where the limit is two deer at a time per permit until the season concludes. [New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tags or confirmation] **Confirmation** numbers are valid on the day of issuance in all zones. All deer tagging and registration provisions apply. Hunters must use an antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** from their antlered shotgun permit which is designated for use during the permit shotgun season, when registering an antlered deer. The antlered shotgun permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub**, which is valid only for the harvest of one antlered deer, must be purchased in addition to an antlerless shotgun permit. The antlered shotgun permit with antlered deer [transportation

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tag] **harvest report stub** may be used in any zone for which the hunter has already purchased an antlerless permit. The antlered shotgun permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** must be purchased prior to the season opener or at the time of the purchase of the initial antlerless shotgun permit if the season has already begun. The season bag limits apply to both regular and farmer deer permits; however, all farmer shotgun permits are valid for taking antlerless deer only, when used during the six-day firearm buck season and on any other days authorized through the last day of the six-day firearm buck season.

1. (No change.)

(d) Duration of the permit shotgun deer season is as set forth in (d)1 through 19 below. There is no season in Zone 67. Legal hunting hours shall be from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset on the following dates:

1. – 2. (No change.)

3. The Wednesday **through Friday** of the week following the six-day firearm season **as specified in** N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a) in zones in Regulation Set 0.

4. The [Wednesday through Friday preceding the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a), the] week of the six-day firearm season, the Wednesday through Friday of the week following the six-day firearm season, and the first Saturday in January through the second Saturday in February in zones in Regulation Set 7.

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5. The week of the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a), and the Wednesday through Friday of the week following the six-day firearm season, and the first Saturday in January through January 31 in zones in [Regulation Set 6, and in] Zones 57 and 68.

6. (No change.)

7. [(Reserved.)] **The Wednesday through Friday of the week following the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a), and the first Saturday in January through January 31 in zones in Regulation Set 6.**

8. – 13. (No change.)

14. The Monday through Wednesday and Friday of Thanksgiving week, [the Wednesday through Friday preceding the six-day firearm season as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.27(a),] the week of the six-day firearm season, the Wednesday through Friday of the week following the six-day firearm season, and the first Saturday in January through the second Saturday in February in zones in Regulation Set 8.

15. – 19. (No change.)

(e) – (f) (No change.)

(g) Permits for shotgun permit season consist of a back display, which includes a ["deer transportation tag," or proper and valid supplemental tag] **harvest report stub**. The back display portion of the permit will be conspicuously displayed on the outer clothing in the case of the farmer shotgun permit season permit. All deer must be legally registered [either at a



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deer check station or] via the automated harvest report system. [If an automated harvest report system is implemented, notice will be published in the New Jersey Register, on the Division's website, and in the Hunting Digest. Upon harvesting a deer during this season, the "deer transportation tag" portion of the permit must be detached, completely filled out, and affixed to the deer immediately upon killing.] Under the AHRS, the [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** on the permit must be filled out, with the exception of the confirmation number, immediately upon killing, and every deer is to have a tag affixed to the carcass bearing the hunter's CID, date of harvest, zone of harvest, antler points if applicable, and confirmation number if registered. This tag shall remain attached until such time as the deer is processed for consumption. This filled in ["deer transportation tag"] **harvest report stub** allows legal transportation of the deer of either sex to [an authorized checking station or to] a location where the hunter may register his or her deer via an automated harvest report system as designated by the Division only. [Personnel at the checking station will issue a "possession tag." Any permit holder killing a deer during this season must transport this deer to an authorized checking station by 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on date killed to secure the legal "possession tag." The possession of a deer of either sex after 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on the date killed without a legal "possession tag" shall be deemed illegal possession under the deer check station system.] Possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** on the date killed without a legal

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confirmation number shall be deemed illegal under the AHRS. [The legal possession tag must be securely affixed or locked on the deer before the deer is transported or removed from the authorized deer checking station. Hunters are responsible for legal possession tags being securely affixed or locked before leaving the deer check station. Any legally killed deer which is recovered too late to be brought to the check station by closing time must be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters. Said deer must be brought to a checking station on the next open day to receive a legal "possession tag." If the season has been concluded, said deer must be taken to a regular deer checking station on the following weekday to receive a legal "possession tag." For deer management zones where the shotgun permit season is more than one day and the bag limit is two deer, a valid and proper "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tag" will be issued upon registration of the first deer under the deer check station system.] Hunters must register their deer via an automated harvest report system [as designated by the Division if the deer check station system is no longer in use, in lieu of a deer check station] prior to the attempt to take an additional deer, except as in (c) above, and no later than 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** of the day of harvest. The hunter must record the confirmation number given by the AHRS[, which replaces the legal possession tag]. Should the hunter be unable to access the AHRS by the designated time on the day of harvest, the deer shall be

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immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters, and registered via the AHRS the next day. Within 48 hours of registering a deer with the AHRS and upon request from the Division, a hunter shall be required to produce the head of the deer harvested or produce records relating to the location of the head. This [permit or] confirmation number will allow this person to continue hunting and take one additional antlerless deer during the shotgun permit season, provided the season is open the following day(s) or on any additional days that shotgun permit season hunting is authorized. [For deer management zones where the shotgun permit season is three days or more and the bag limit is three deer or more, additional "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tags" will be issued, under the deer check station system, upon registration of the second, third, or applicable antlerless deer until the bag limit is reached. This permit] **The confirmation number** will allow this hunter to continue hunting and take one additional antlerless deer during the shotgun permit season, provided the season is open or on any additional days that shotgun permit season hunting is authorized. Permittees will be able to continue hunting on the designated season dates after registration of deer and issuance of [appropriate tags or registration] **confirmation** numbers. [Supplemental tags will only be issued for and valid for antlerless deer, and no supplemental tags will be issued for antlered deer.] Hunters must use an antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** from their antlered shotgun permit,

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which is designated for use during the permit shotgun season, when registering an antlered deer. The antlered shotgun permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** which is valid only for the harvest of one antlered deer, must be purchased in addition to an antlerless shotgun permit. The antlered shotgun permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** may be used in any zone for which the hunter has already purchased an antlerless permit. The antlered shotgun permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** must be purchased prior to the season open or at the time of the purchase of the initial antlerless shotgun permit if the season has already begun.

(h) – (o) (No change.)

(p) Deer Management Zones are located as follows:

1. – 25. (No change.)

26. Zone No. 26: That portion of Atlantic County lying within a continuous line beginning at the intersection of Rts. 40 and 54 near Buena; then southeast on Rt. 40 to its intersection with Rt. 50; then north on Rt. 50 to its intersection with Rt. 322; then east on Rt. 322 to its intersection with Cologne Avenue; then north on Cologne Avenue to its intersection with Duerer Street; then east on Duerer Street to its intersection with [Rt. 575; then northeast on Rt. 575 to its intersection with the Garden State Parkway; then north along the Garden State Parkway to its intersection with the Mullica River and the Atlantic-Burlington County line] **Jimmie Leeds Rd.; then east on Jimmie Leeds Rd.**

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**to its intersection with Great Creek Rd.; then east on Great Creek Rd. to its intersection with Rt. 9; then north on Rt. 9 to its intersection with the Garden State Parkway; then to its intersection on the south shore of the Mullica River;** then [northwest] west along the south bank of the Mullica River to its intersection with Rt. 542 at Pleasant Mills; then west on Rt. 542 to its intersection with Nescochague Creek at Pleasant Mills; then north along the west bank of Nescochague Creek to its intersection with Great Swamp Branch; then westward along Great Swamp Branch to its intersection with Rt. 206 (just past the intersection of Rt. 206 and Middle Rd.); then south on Rt. 206 to its intersection with Rt. 30 (White Horse Pike), near Hammonton; then south on Rt. 30 to its intersection with Weymouth Road (Rts. 640-559); then south on Weymouth Road to its intersection with the Atlantic City Expressway; then northwest along the Atlantic City Expressway to its intersection with Eighth Street; then southwest along Eighth Street to its intersection with Rt. 322 (Black Horse Pike); then northwest along Rt. 332 to its intersection with Rt. 54; then southwest along Rt. 54 to its intersection with Rt. 40 at Buena, the point of beginning. The Atlantic County Park System (Zone 61) is excluded from Zone 26.

27. – 41. (No change.)

42. Zone No. 42: That portion of Atlantic County lying within a continuous line beginning at the intersection of the south bank of the Mullica River and the Garden State Parkway; [then south along the Garden State Parkway to its

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intersection with Rt. 575; then southwest along Rt. 575 to its intersection with Duerer Street;] **then south along Rt. 9 to its intersection with Great Creek Rd.; then west on Great Creek Rd. to its intersection with Jimmie Leeds Rd.; then west on Jimmie Leeds Rd. to its intersection with Duerer St.;** then west on Duerer Street to its intersection with Cologne Avenue; then south on Cologne Avenue to its intersection with Rt. 322; then west on Rt. 322 to its intersection with Rt. 50; then south on Rt. 50 to its intersection with the Great Egg Harbor River at Mays Landing; then south along the east bank of the Great Egg Harbor River to the Atlantic-Cape May County line in Great Egg Harbor Bay; then eastward along the Atlantic-Cape May County line to its intersection with the Atlantic Ocean at the Great Egg Harbor Inlet; then northeast along the Atlantic Ocean to Great Bay; then west along the south shore of Great Bay to the confluence of the Mullica River; then west along the south bank of the Mullica River to its intersection with the Garden State Parkway, the point of beginning. The Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge (Zones 56 and 57), the Atlantic County Park System (Zone 61) and the lands (excluding Laurel Memorial Park Cemetery), roads, right of ways and easements within the contiguous boundary of the Federal Aviation Administration William J. Hughes Technical Center (Zone 66) are excluded from Zone 42.

43. – 69. (No change.)



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(r) The following is for informational purposes only and is a summary of the desired antlered deer harvest and overall management strategies applicable to each deer management zones as specified in N.J.A.C. 7:25-5.25 through 5.30.

Buck Goals and Management Strategies by Deer Management Zone

Zone	Buck Goal*	Deer Range	Strategy	Total Goal**
1	4	75	Stabilize	<b>300</b>
2	5	149	[Decrease] <b>Stabilize</b>	<b>745</b>
3	2	153	Stabilize	<b>306</b>
4	4.5	71	Stabilize	<b>320</b>
5	6	215	Stabilize	<b>1,290</b>
6	[3] <b>2.5</b>	[176] <b>153</b>	[Stabilize] <b>Decrease</b>	<b>383</b>
7	6	103	Stabilize	<b>618</b>
8	6	203	Decrease	<b>1,218</b>
9	4.5	52	Stabilize	<b>234</b>
10	7	110	Decrease	<b>770</b>
11	7	68	Decrease	<b>476</b>
12	7	152	Decrease	<b>1,064</b>
13	2	109	Decrease	<b>218</b>
14	3	165	Decrease	<b>495</b>



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15	4	86	Decrease	<b>344</b>
16	4	91	Decrease	<b>364</b>
17	3.5	90	Decrease	<b>315</b>
18	3	70	Increase	<b>210</b>
19	4	159	Stabilize	<b>568</b>
20	not designated			
21	[3] <b>2</b>	192	Increase	<b>384</b>
22	3.5	34	Increase	<b>119</b>
23	[3] <b>2</b>	[178] <b>190</b>	Increase	<b>380</b>
24	[2] <b>1</b>	[169] <b>162</b>	Increase	<b>162</b>
25	3	[164] <b>159</b>	Stabilize	<b>477</b>
26	[3.5] <b>2</b>	[195] <b>212</b>	Increase	<b>424</b>
27	3.5	103	Stabilize	<b>361</b>
28	[4] <b>2.76</b>	125	Stabilize	<b>345</b>
29	5	64	Stabilize	<b>330</b>
30	[5] <b>3.44</b>	43	Stabilize	<b>148</b>
31	[3] <b>2.07</b>	40	Stabilize	<b>83</b>
34	[3] <b>2.07</b>	97	Increase	<b>201</b>
35	3	171	Stabilize	<b>513</b>
36	0	[124] <b>127</b>	Decrease	<b>0</b>
37	5	20	Stabilize	<b>100</b>

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38	2	12	Increase	<b>24</b>
39	3	15	Decrease	<b>45</b>
40	not designated			
41	7	39	Decrease	<b>273</b>
42	1	[90] <b>73</b>	Decrease	<b>73</b>
43	[5] <b>3.5</b>	27	Increase	<b>95</b>
44	not designated			
45	3.5	65	Increase	<b>228</b>
46	3.5	79	Increase	<b>277</b>
47	[1.5] <b>1.03</b>	54	Decrease	<b>56</b>
48	4	86	Stabilize	<b>344</b>
49	0	[65] <b>68</b>	Decrease	<b>0</b>
50	1	137	Decrease	<b>137</b>
51	1	[162] <b>153</b>	Decrease	<b>153</b>
52	not designated			
53	2	[8] <b>7.5</b>	Decrease	<b>15</b>
54	3	10	Stabilize	<b>30</b>
55	5	5.6	Decrease	<b>28</b>
56	3	1	Stabilize	<b>3</b>
57	3	1	Stabilize	<b>3</b>
58	3	[3] <b>2.5</b>	Stabilize	<b>8</b>

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59	not designated			
60	not designated			
61	2	5	Stabilize	<b>10</b>
62	not designated			
63	5	21	Stabilize	<b>105</b>
64	3	3	Decrease	<b>9</b>
65	5	17	Stabilize	<b>85</b>
66	2	[3] <b>3.3</b>	Decrease	<b>7</b>
67	4	15	Decrease	<b>60</b>
68	[3] <b>1</b>	[17] <b>16.3</b>	Decrease	<b>16</b>
70	3	[1.5] <b>1</b>	Stabilize	<b>3</b>

\* per square mile.

**\*\* buck goal per square mile multiplied by deer range.**

7:25-5.30 White-tailed deer bow permit season

(a)– (b) No change.

(c) Bag Limit: Only one antlered deer may be taken Statewide during the bow permit season, regardless of the number of permits obtained. **The standard bag limit is two deer, one antlered and one antlerless, in zones in Regulation Set 2.** Two deer, one antlered and one antlerless or two antlerless, may be taken in zones in Regulation Set[s 2 and] 3. **In zones in Regulation Set 5, the bag limit is one antlered deer and five antlerless deer. In zones in Regulation Set 6, the bag limit is one antlered deer and nine antlerless deer.** One antlered and an unlimited number

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of antlerless deer may be taken in zones in Regulation Sets 4, [5, 6,] 7, and 8, and in Zones 37, 39, 53, 54, 57, 58, 61, 66, 68, and 70, except as noted in (c)1 and 2 below. One antlered and one antlerless deer may be taken in zones in Regulation Set 1. One antlered or one antlerless deer may be taken in zones in Regulation Set 0. Only one deer may be taken at a time until the season limit is reached except in zones in Regulation Sets 6, 7, and 8, and in Zones 37, 39, 53, 54, 57, 58, 61, 66, 68, and 70 where the limit is two deer at a time per permit until the season concludes. [All supplemental tags are valid on the date of issuance and only in the zone for which the special season permit was issued.] All deer registration requirements apply. All deer must be legally registered [either at a deer check station or] via the automated harvest report system. [If the deer check station system is in use, deer shall be tagged immediately with the bow and arrow permit "transportation tag," completely filled in, and shall be transported to a checking station before 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on the day killed to secure a legal possession tag.] Within 48 hours of registering a deer with the AHRS and upon request from the Division, a hunter shall be required to produce the head of the deer harvested or produce records relating to the location of the head. [If the deer check station system is no longer in use, deer] **Deer** shall be tagged immediately with the bow permit season permit [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** completely filled in, and every deer is to have a tag affixed to the carcass bearing the hunter's CID, date of harvest, zone of harvest, antler points if applicable, and confirmation number if registered. This tag shall remain attached until such time as the deer is processed for consumption. The deer shall be registered via an AHRS, as designated by the Division, prior to the attempt to take an additional deer, except as in (c) above and no later than 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** of the day of harvest. Hunters must record the confirmation number given via the AHRS, which replaces the legal

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possession tag. [The legal possession tag must be securely affixed or locked before the deer is transported or removed from the authorized deer checking station. Hunters are responsible for legal possession tags being securely affixed or locked on the deer before leaving the deer check station. The possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on the date killed without a legal possession seal shall be deemed illegal possession under the deer check station system.] Possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** on the date killed without a legal confirmation number shall be deemed illegal [under the AHRS]. [Upon completion of the registration of the first deer, one valid and proper "New Jersey Supplemental Deer Transportation Tag" (supplemental tag) will be issued by the deer check station which will allow the person to continue hunting and take one additional antlerless deer during bow permit season, provided the season is open. The supplemental tag shall be valid on the day of issuance and all registration requirements apply. Supplemental tags will only be issued for antlerless deer; no supplemental tags will be issued for antlered deer.]

[1. In zones in Regulation Sets 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, and in Zones 37, 39, 53, 54, 57, 58, 61, 66, 68, and 70, supplemental tags for the taking of a third and subsequent deer will be issued upon registration of deer at official deer checking stations until the season concludes. A supplemental tag may be used to take an antlerless deer, subject to the above provisions and is only valid in that deer management zone for which the special season permit was originally issued. The supplemental tag is valid on the date of issuance. All tagging and registration requirements apply.]

**1. (Reserved.)**

2. – 3. (No change.)

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(d) – (f) (No change.)

(g) Permits consist of back display which includes a deer [transportation tag or proper and valid "supplemental tag."] **harvest report stub**. The back display portion of the permit will be conspicuously displayed on the outer clothing in the case of the farmer bow and arrow permit season permit. The ["Deer Transportation Tag"] **harvest report stub** portion of the permit must be completely filled out and affixed to the deer immediately upon killing. This completely filled in deer transportation tag allows legal transportation of the deer of either sex to [an authorized checking station or to] a location where the hunter may register his or her deer via an automated harvest report system [as designated by the Division only]. Hunters must use an antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** from their antlered bow permit, which is designated for use during the permit bow season, when registering an antlered deer. The antlered bow permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub**, which is valid only for the harvest of one antlered deer, must be purchased in addition to an antlerless bow permit. The antlered bow permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** may be used in any zone for which the hunter has already purchased an antlerless permit. The antlered bow permit with antlered deer [transportation tag] **harvest report stub** must be purchased prior to the season open or at the time of the purchase of the initial antlerless bow permit if the season has already begun. [Personnel at the checking station will issue a "possession tag." Any permit holder killing a deer of either sex during this season must transport this deer to an authorized checking station by 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on date killed to secure the legal "possession tag." The legal possession tag must be securely affixed or locked before the deer is transported or removed from the authorized deer checking station. Hunters are responsible for legal possession tags being securely affixed or

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locked before leaving the deer check station. The possession of a deer of either sex after 7:00 P.M. E.S.T. on date killed without a legal "possession tag" shall be deemed illegal possession under the deer check station system.] Possession of a deer after 7:00 P.M. [E.S.T.] **local time** on the date killed without a legal confirmation number shall be deemed illegal under the AHRS. [Any legally killed deer which is recovered too late to be brought to the check station by closing time must be immediately reported by telephone to the nearest Division of Fish and Wildlife law enforcement regional headquarters. Such deer must be brought to a checking station on the next open day to receive a legal "possession tag." If the season has been concluded, such deer must be taken to a regular deer checking station on the following weekday to receive a legal "possession tag."]

(h) – (j) (No change.)

(k) The Deer Management Zone Map is on file at the Office of Administrative Law and is available from that agency or the Division. The Bow Permit Season Quotas are as follows:

BOW PERMIT SEASON PERMIT QUOTAS

Deer Mgt. Zone No.	Season Dates Code	Permit Quota	Portions of Counties Involved
...			
50	2	[1,320] <b>2,000</b>	Middlesex, Monmouth
51	2	[740] <b>900</b>	Monmouth, Ocean
...			

(l)-(n) (No change.)

7:25-5.33 Pheasants and quail stamp designated areas

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[(a) Designated wildlife management areas and Federal property where the special "pheasant and quail" stamp is required.]

**(a) A person, attempting to hunt for, pursue, kill, take or attempt to take with a firearm or bow and arrow, or possess any pheasant or quail on any Division-stocked Wildlife Management Area or Federal property must be in possession of a valid “pheasant and quail” stamp.**

1. – 4. (No change.)

7:25-5.35 Special wildlife salvage permit

(a) – (c) (No change.)

(d) Upon proof that a holder of the special salvage permit has killed, injured, destroyed or attempted to kill, injure or destroy with any weapon, trap, [snare] **cable restraint** or other device of any kind any wild animal, except as provided by N.J.S.A. Title 23 or the proper Game Code, or has in possession any species of wildlife other than those named in this permit or other wildlife possession permit, the special permit shall become void and the permit holder shall be subject to the penalties provided by law.

(e) (No change.)