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HOUSE BILL

**57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025**

INTRODUCED BY

DISCUSSION DRAFT

AN ACT

RELATING TO THE STATE GAME COMMISSION; REFORMING THE STATE GAME  
COMMISSION APPOINTMENT PROCESS; SETTING TERM LIMITS FOR  
COMMISSIONERS; ADDING REQUIREMENTS FOR APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL  
OF COMMISSIONERS; CREATING THE STATE WILDLIFE COMMISSION  
NOMINATING COMMITTEE; RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH  
AS THE DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE; RENAMING THE STATE GAME  
COMMISSION AS THE STATE WILDLIFE COMMISSION; AMENDING STATUTORY  
POLICY; EXPANDING THE MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE; ADDING  
DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS; AMENDING  
LICENSING FEES; PROVIDING FOR FEE ADJUSTMENTS TO ACCOUNT FOR  
INFLATION; PROVIDING DISCOUNTS FOR RESIDENTS WHO RECEIVE  
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS; PROVIDING  
TRANSFERS; REPEALING SECTION 17-2-2 NMSA 1978 (BEING LAWS 1937,  
CHAPTER 23, SECTION 1).

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1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

2 SECTION 1. Section 17-1-1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1921,  
3 Chapter 35, Section 1, as amended) is amended to read:

4 "17-1-1. DECLARATION OF POLICY.--It is the purpose of  
5 [~~this act~~] Chapter 17 NMSA 1978 and the policy of the state [~~of~~  
6 ~~New Mexico to provide an adequate and flexible system for the~~  
7 ~~protection of the game and fish of New Mexico and for their use~~  
8 ~~and development for public recreation and food supply and to~~  
9 ~~provide for their propagation, planting, protection, regulation~~  
10 ~~and conservation to the extent necessary to provide and~~  
11 ~~maintain an adequate supply of game and fish within the state~~  
12 ~~of New Mexico]~~ to provide for the conservation and management  
13 of the state's wildlife as a public trust resource with  
14 ecological, economic and intrinsic value, as well as for the  
15 benefit, use, food supply and nonconsumptive enjoyment of all."

16 SECTION 2. Section 17-2A-1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1996,  
17 Chapter 89, Section 3) is recompiled as Section 17-1-1.1 NMSA  
18 1978 and is amended to read:

19 "17-1-1.1. DEFINITIONS.--For the purposes of Chapter 17  
20 NMSA 1978:

21 A. "commission" or "state game commission" means  
22 the state wildlife commission;

23 B. "department" or "department of game and fish"  
24 means the department of wildlife;

25 C. "director", "warden", "state warden", "state

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1 game warden" or "state game and fish warden" means the director  
2 of the department of wildlife;

3 [A-] D. "hunt code" means a description used to  
4 identify and define the species, weapon type and time frame  
5 authorized for a specific hunt;

6 [B-] E. "outfitter" or "guide" means a person who  
7 advertises or holds [~~himself~~] themselves out to the public for  
8 hire or is employed or accepts compensation for providing,  
9 within the unit where a hunt occurs, facilities, equipment or  
10 services for hunting activities; provided, however, that  
11 "outfitter" or "guide" does not include a person who only  
12 cooks, cuts wood or performs other comparable or incidental  
13 duties not directly related to hunting activities; and

14 [G-] F. "unit" means a geographically bound area in  
15 the state that is used to manage game species."

16 SECTION 3. Section 17-1-2 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1921,  
17 Chapter 35, Section 2, as amended) is amended to read:

18 "17-1-2. STATE [~~GAME~~] WILDLIFE COMMISSION--APPOINTMENT--  
19 TERM.--

20 A. To carry out the purpose of Chapter 17 NMSA 1978  
21 and all other acts for like purpose, there is created a "state  
22 [~~game~~] wildlife commission" of seven voting members, [~~not more~~  
23 ~~than four of whom shall be of the same political party at the~~  
24 ~~time of their appointment. The members of the commission shall~~  
25 ~~be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the~~

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1 ~~senate. The term of office for each member of the commission~~  
2 ~~shall be four years. At the time of making the first~~  
3 ~~appointments, the governor shall designate the commissioners'~~  
4 ~~terms as being one, two, three or four years so that the term~~  
5 ~~of no more than two commissioners shall expire each year.~~

6 ~~In making appointments to the state game commission, one~~  
7 ~~member shall be appointed from each of the following districts:~~

8 ~~A. district one: Curry, De Baca, Roosevelt,~~  
9 ~~Chaves, Lincoln, Otero, Eddy and Lea counties;~~

10 ~~B. district two: Catron, Socorro, Grant, Hidalgo,~~  
11 ~~Luna, Sierra and Dona Ana counties;~~

12 ~~C. district three: San Juan, McKinley, Cibola,~~  
13 ~~Valencia, Sandoval, Los Alamos and Rio Arriba counties;~~

14 ~~D. district four: Santa Fe, Taos, Colfax, Union,~~  
15 ~~Mora, Harding, Quay, San Miguel, Guadalupe and Torrance~~  
16 ~~counties; and~~

17 ~~E. district five: Bernalillo county. The~~  
18 ~~remaining two members shall be appointed at-large. At least~~  
19 ~~one member of the commission shall manage and operate a farm or~~  
20 ~~ranch that contains at least two species of wildlife on that~~  
21 ~~part which is deeded land requiring licensing prior to legal~~  
22 ~~pursuit under the provisions of Section 17-3-2 NMSA 1978. At~~  
23 ~~least one member shall have a demonstrated history of~~  
24 ~~involvement in wildlife and habitat protection issues and whose~~  
25 ~~activities or occupation are not in conflict with wildlife and~~

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1 ~~habitat advocacy. The state game commission as provided in~~  
2 ~~Chapter 17 NMSA 1978 shall have the same authority, powers and~~  
3 ~~duties as now vested in the state game commission by law and~~  
4 ~~each member of the state game commission shall serve until his~~  
5 ~~successor has been appointed and qualified] all of whom shall~~  
6 be New Mexico residents. The governor shall appoint the  
7 members of the commission with the advice and consent of the  
8 senate from a list of qualified nominees submitted to the  
9 governor by the state wildlife commission nominating committee.

10 B. Three at-large members of the commission shall  
11 possess knowledge of wildlife issues in the state and hold  
12 positions one, two and three, with no more than one member  
13 residing in any one county and with no more than two members  
14 affiliated with the same political party.

15 C. Four members of the commission shall hold  
16 positions four, five, six and seven, with no more than one  
17 member residing in any one county and with no more than two  
18 members affiliated with the same political party, as follows:

19 (1) position four, a rancher or farmer who  
20 owns or manages a New Mexico ranch or farm, on which at least  
21 two species of animals for which game hunting is licensed under  
22 the provisions of Section 17-3-2 NMSA 1978 are frequently  
23 present;

24 (2) position five, a conservationist who for  
25 the previous four years has been an employee, a member of the

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1 board or a member of an established advisory committee of a  
2 nonprofit wildlife or habitat conservation organization, the  
3 primary focus of which is not game species;

4 (3) position six, a hunter or angler who has  
5 held a New Mexico hunting or fishing license each of the  
6 previous four years; and

7 (4) position seven, a scientist who holds at  
8 least a master's degree in wildlife biology, conservation  
9 biology, fisheries science or management, wildlife science or  
10 management or a comparable wildlife field.

11 D. Except for the initial appointments as provided  
12 in Section 12 of this 2025 act, the term of office for each  
13 member of the commission shall be six years.

14 E. A commissioner shall serve for no more than two  
15 terms after January 1, 2027. A partial term shall be counted  
16 as one full term, unless the partial term is less than one full  
17 year.

18 F. When a commissioner dies, resigns or no longer  
19 meets the qualifications required for the commissioner's  
20 original appointment, or misses three consecutive meetings,  
21 that position on the commission becomes vacant. The governor  
22 shall appoint a successor for the remainder of the term from a  
23 list of qualified nominees submitted to the governor by the  
24 state wildlife commission nominating committee.

25 G. Except when the position of commissioner becomes

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1 vacant pursuant to Subsection F of this section, a commissioner  
2 shall not be removed except for incompetence, neglect of duty  
3 or malfeasance in office; provided that no removal shall be  
4 made without notice of hearing and an opportunity to be heard  
5 having first been given to the commissioner. The state ethics  
6 commission may bring an action for the removal of a  
7 commissioner upon the state ethics commission's information or  
8 upon the complaint of a person with knowledge of a  
9 commissioner's alleged incompetence, neglect of duty or  
10 malfeasance in office. The state ethics commission may also  
11 bring an action to enforce the provisions of Subsection F of  
12 this section or determine whether a position of the commission  
13 has become vacant pursuant to Subsection F of this section.  
14 The supreme court is given exclusive original jurisdiction over  
15 proceedings to remove commissioners under such rules as it may  
16 promulgate, and its decision in connection with such matters  
17 shall be final.

18 H. A person shall not be eligible to be appointed  
19 as a commissioner if the person changed party affiliation  
20 during the previous four years; provided that a person who  
21 changed party affiliation for the purpose of voting in a  
22 primary election pursuant to Section 1-4-5.7 NMSA 1978 and then  
23 changed party affiliation back to the status of that person's  
24 party affiliation immediately prior to the change within ninety  
25 days shall not be considered to have changed party affiliation

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1 for the purposes of this subsection.

2 I. The following persons shall serve as advisory,  
3 nonvoting members of the commission:

4 (1) the director of the New Mexico outdoor  
5 recreation division of the economic development department or  
6 the director's designee;

7 (2) the director of the New Mexico department  
8 of agriculture or the director's designee;

9 (3) the commissioner of public lands or the  
10 commissioner's designee; and

11 (4) the secretary of Indian affairs or the  
12 secretary's designee."

13 SECTION 4. A new Section 17-1-2.1 NMSA 1978 is enacted to  
14 read:

15 "17-1-2.1. [NEW MATERIAL] STATE WILDLIFE COMMISSION  
16 NOMINATING COMMITTEE.--

17 A. The "state wildlife commission nominating  
18 committee" is created and consists of seven members, all of  
19 whom shall be New Mexico residents, as follows:

20 (1) four members appointed as follows: one by  
21 the speaker of the house of representatives, one by the  
22 minority floor leader of the house of representatives, one by  
23 the president pro tempore of the senate and one by the minority  
24 floor leader of the senate;

25 (2) two members as follows: the chair of the

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1 university of New Mexico's department of biology or the chair's  
2 designee and the chair of New Mexico state university's  
3 department of fish, wildlife and conservation ecology or the  
4 chair's designee; and

5 (3) one member appointed by the governor who  
6 shall represent an Indian nation, tribe or pueblo.

7 B. A committee member shall serve without  
8 compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in  
9 pursuit of the member's duties on the committee pursuant to the  
10 Per Diem and Mileage Act.

11 C. The committee and individual members shall be  
12 subject to the Governmental Conduct Act, the Gift Act, the  
13 Inspection of Public Records Act, the Financial Disclosure Act  
14 and the Open Meetings Act.

15 D. The committee shall select one member to be  
16 chair and one member to be secretary. Administrative support  
17 shall be provided to the committee by the staff of the  
18 department.

19 E. An appointed committee member may be removed by  
20 the person who holds the office that appointed that committee  
21 member. A committee member shall serve until the committee  
22 member's resignation or removal by the appointing authority.

23 F. The committee shall meet at least ninety days  
24 prior to the date on which the term of a state wildlife  
25 commissioner ends and as often as necessary thereafter in order

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1 to submit a list to the governor, at least thirty days prior to  
2 the beginning of the new term, of a minimum of three qualified  
3 nominees for each position of the commission. The list shall  
4 be developed to provide geographical and political party  
5 diversity as appropriate to conform the makeup of the  
6 commission to the geographical and political party requirements  
7 of this section.

8 G. Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in a state  
9 wildlife commissioner position, the committee shall meet within  
10 thirty days of the date of the beginning of the vacancy and as  
11 often as necessary thereafter in order to submit a list to the  
12 governor, within sixty days of the first meeting after the  
13 vacancy occurs, of no fewer than three qualified nominees for  
14 appointment to the commission to fill the remainder of the term  
15 of each commissioner position that is vacant. The list shall  
16 be developed to provide geographical and political party  
17 diversity as appropriate to conform the makeup of the  
18 commission to the geographical and political party requirements  
19 of this section.

20 H. The committee shall actively solicit, accept and  
21 evaluate applications from qualified individuals for a position  
22 on the commission and may require an applicant to submit any  
23 information that the committee deems relevant to the  
24 consideration of the individual's application.

25 I. The committee shall select nominees for

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1 submission to the governor who, in the committee's judgment,  
2 are best qualified to serve as a member of the commission. A  
3 person shall not be eligible for nomination to the commission  
4 while serving on the committee.

5 J. A majority vote of committee members at a  
6 meeting at which a quorum is present in favor of a person is  
7 required for that person to be included on the list of  
8 qualified nominees submitted to the governor.

9 K. The committee shall allow for public comment at  
10 a committee meeting during which the committee is considering a  
11 list of qualified nominees for appointment to the commission  
12 before the committee votes on the nominees."

13 SECTION 5. Section 17-1-26 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1931,  
14 Chapter 117, Section 2, as amended) is amended to read:

15 "17-1-26. RULEMAKING POWER.--

16 A. The [~~state game~~] commission is [~~hereby~~]  
17 authorized and directed to make [~~such~~] rules [~~and regulations~~  
18 ~~and establish such service~~] as it may deem necessary to carry  
19 out [~~all~~] the provisions and purposes of [~~this act, and all~~  
20 ~~other acts relating to game and fish, and in making such rules~~  
21 ~~and regulations and in providing when~~] Chapter 17 NMSA 1978.

22 B. The rules may include, as applicable, when,  
23 where, by what means and to what extent, if at all, [and by  
24 what means game animals, birds and fish] wildlife may be  
25 hunted, taken, captured, killed, possessed, released, bartered,

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1 sold, purchased, ~~[and]~~ shipped and imported into or exported  
2 from the state. ~~[game and fish]~~

3 C. In making rules, the commission shall ~~[give due~~  
4 ~~regard to the zones of temperatures and to the distribution,~~  
5 ~~abundance, economic value and breeding habits of such game~~  
6 ~~animals, birds and fish.~~

7 ~~The state game commission is hereby authorized to spend~~  
8 ~~such reasonable amounts as in its judgment is desirable and~~  
9 ~~necessary annually, from their funds not otherwise needed, for~~  
10 ~~the eradication of predatory animals]~~ consider a species'  
11 population size and trends, migration patterns, availability of  
12 suitable habitat, response to changes in climate conditions,  
13 conservation actions necessary to sustain healthy populations  
14 and ecosystems and any other factors, natural or human-driven,  
15 that are judged to affect the health of a species or a species'  
16 ecosystem."

17 SECTION 6. A new section of the Wildlife Conservation Act  
18 is enacted to read:

19 "[NEW MATERIAL] WILDLIFE TO BE PROTECTED--MANAGEMENT.--

20 A. In addition to species defined as protected in  
21 Chapter 17 NMSA 1978, the commission is authorized to extend  
22 management and protection by rule or policy to any species of  
23 wildlife.

24 B. When determining whether and how to protect a  
25 species of wildlife, the commission shall consider:

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1 (1) whether the species qualifies as a species  
2 of greatest conservation need;

3 (2) the science-based reasons for protection  
4 of a species; and

5 (3) the rules and management programs that  
6 would potentially accompany protected status.

7 C. The department is not required to respond to  
8 wildlife nuisance incidents unless:

9 (1) the commission, in its own discretion,  
10 adopts a policy or rule to do so; or

11 (2) the wildlife nuisance incident involves  
12 game animals, other quadrupeds, game birds or fowl and presents  
13 an immediate threat to human life or an immediate threat of  
14 damage to crops or other property.

15 D. As used in this section, "wildlife" means a  
16 nondomestic mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, fish or  
17 invertebrate species, including a living animal, or any part,  
18 egg, spawn, offspring or the dead body or parts thereof."

19 SECTION 7. A new section of the Wildlife Conservation Act  
20 is enacted to read:

21 "[NEW MATERIAL] SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED--  
22 DEFINITION--DATA COLLECTION.--

23 A. For the purposes of Chapter 17 NMSA 1978,  
24 "species of greatest conservation need" means species as  
25 identified and updated by the department in an assessment of

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1 the state's wildlife and habitat.

2 B. The department shall annually publish on the  
3 department's website data collected on species of greatest  
4 conservation need and the use of state and federal funds for  
5 the support and recovery of species of greatest conservation  
6 need."

7 SECTION 8. Section 17-2-38 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1974,  
8 Chapter 83, Section 2, as amended) is amended to read:

9 "17-2-38. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Wildlife  
10 Conservation Act:

11 A. "commission" means the state [~~game~~] wildlife  
12 commission;

13 B. "director" means the director of the department  
14 of [~~game and fish~~] wildlife;

15 C. "ecosystem" means a system of living organisms  
16 and their environment;

17 D. "endangered species" means any species of fish  
18 or wildlife whose prospects of survival or recruitment within  
19 the state are in jeopardy due to any of the following factors:

- 20 (1) the present or threatened destruction,  
21 modification or curtailment of its habitat;
- 22 (2) overutilization for scientific, commercial  
23 or sporting purposes;
- 24 (3) the effect of disease or predation;
- 25 (4) other natural or man-made factors

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1 affecting its prospects of survival or recruitment within the  
2 state; or

3 (5) any combination of the foregoing factors.

4 The term may also include any species of fish or wildlife  
5 appearing on the United States list of endangered native and  
6 foreign fish and wildlife as set forth in Section 4 of the  
7 federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 as endangered species;  
8 provided that the commission adopts those lists in whole or in  
9 part. The term [~~shall~~] does not include any species covered by  
10 the provisions of 16 U.S.C. 1331 through 1340 (1971) [~~and shall~~  
11 ~~not include~~] or any species of the class insecta determined by  
12 the director to constitute a pest whose protection under the  
13 Wildlife Conservation Act would present an overwhelming and  
14 overriding risk to [~~man~~] humans;

15 E. "investigation" means a process pursuant to  
16 Subsections B through L of Section 17-2-40 NMSA 1978 undertaken  
17 whenever the director [~~suspects~~] believes that a species may be  
18 threatened or endangered and [~~which~~] that consists of a formal  
19 review of existing data and studies and may include additional  
20 field research to determine whether a species is threatened or  
21 endangered;

22 F. "land or aquatic habitat interests" means  
23 interests in real property or water rights consisting of fee  
24 simple title, easements in perpetuity, time certain easements,  
25 long-term leases and short-term leases;

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1           G. "management" means the collection and  
2 application of biological information for the purposes of  
3 establishing and maintaining a congruous relationship between  
4 individuals within species and populations of wildlife and the  
5 carrying capacity of their habitat. The term includes the  
6 entire range of activities that constitutes a full scientific  
7 resource program [of], including [~~but not limited to~~] research,  
8 census, law enforcement, propagation, acquisition or  
9 maintenance of land or aquatic habitat interests appropriate  
10 for recovery of the species; improvement and maintenance,  
11 education and related activities; [~~or~~] and protection and  
12 regulated taking;

13           H. "recovery plan" means a designated program or  
14 methodology reasonably expected to lead to restoration and  
15 maintenance of a species and its habitat;

16           I. "peer review panel" means an advisory panel of  
17 scientists, each of whom possesses expertise relevant to the  
18 proposed investigation and at least one of whom is a wildlife  
19 biologist, convened to review the scientific methodology for  
20 collection and analysis of data by a researcher based on  
21 commonly accepted scientific peer review;

22           J. "species" means any species or subspecies;

23           K. "substantial public interest" means a  
24 nonfrivolous claim indicated by a broad-based expression of  
25 public concern;

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1 L. "take" or "taking" means to harass, hunt,  
2 capture or kill any wildlife or attempt to do so;

3 M. "threatened species" means any species that is  
4 likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable  
5 future throughout all or a significant portion of its range in  
6 New Mexico; the term may also include any species of fish or  
7 wildlife appearing on the United States list of endangered  
8 native and foreign fish and wildlife as set forth in Section 4  
9 of the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 as threatened  
10 species; provided that the commission adopts the list in whole  
11 or in part; and

12 N. "wildlife" means [~~any~~] a nondomestic mammal,  
13 bird, reptile, amphibian, fish [~~mollusk or crustacean~~] or  
14 invertebrate species, including a living animal, or any part,  
15 egg, spawn, [~~or~~] offspring or the dead body or parts thereof."

16 SECTION 9. Section 17-3-13 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1964  
17 (1st S.S.), Chapter 17, Section 5, as amended) is amended to  
18 read:

19 "17-3-13. LICENSE FEES--FEE ADJUSTMENTS.--

20 A. The director of the department of [~~game and~~  
21 ~~fish~~] wildlife shall keep a record of all money received and  
22 licenses and permits issued by the department, numbering each  
23 class separately. Upon satisfactory proof that a license or  
24 permit has been lost before its expiration, the director may  
25 issue a duplicate and collect a just and reasonable fee [~~for~~

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1 it] as determined by [~~regulation of the~~] state [~~game~~] wildlife  
2 commission rule.

3 B. Beginning January 1, 2027 and on January 1 of  
4 each successive year, the state wildlife commission may adjust  
5 the fees provided by this section for inflation as provided in  
6 Subsection C of this section. The director of the department  
7 of [~~game and fish~~] wildlife shall collect the following fees  
8 for each license of the class indicated:

9	Resident, fishing . . . . .	[ <del>\$25.00</del> ]	<u>\$35.00</u>
10	Resident, game hunting . . . . .	[ <del>15.00</del> ]	<u>25.00</u>
11	Resident, deer . . . . .	[ <del>31.00</del> ]	<u>50.00</u>
12	Resident, junior-senior, deer . . . . .	[ <del>19.00</del> ]	<u>25.00</u>
13	Resident, senior, handicapped,		
14	game hunting and fishing . . . . .		20.00
15	Resident, fishing and game hunting		
16	combination . . . . .	[ <del>30.00</del> ]	<u>42.00</u>
17	Resident, junior, fishing and game		
18	hunting combination . . . . .		15.00
19	Resident, disabled veteran, fishing and game hunting		
20	combination . . . . .		10.00
21	Resident, antelope . . . . .	[ <del>50.00</del> ]	<u>60.00</u>
22	Resident, elk cow . . . . .	[ <del>50.00</del> ]	<u>60.00</u>
23	Resident, elk bull or either sex . . . . .	[ <del>80.00</del> ]	<u>90.00</u>
24	Resident, junior-senior, elk . . . . .	[ <del>48.00</del> ]	<u>60.00</u>
25	Resident, bighorn sheep, ram . . . . .		150.00

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1	Resident, bighorn sheep, ewe . . . . .	75.00
2	Resident, Barbary sheep . . . . .	<del>[100.00]</del> <u>120.00</u>
3	Resident, bear . . . . .	<del>[44.00]</del> <u>55.00</u>
4	Resident, turkey . . . . .	<del>[25.00]</del> <u>35.00</u>
5	Resident, cougar . . . . .	<del>[40.00]</del> <u>55.00</u>
6	Resident, oryx . . . . .	<del>[150.00]</del> <u>175.00</u>
7	Resident, ibex . . . . .	<del>[100.00]</del> <u>110.00</u>
8	Resident, javelina . . . . .	55.00
9	Resident, fur dealer . . . . .	<del>[15.00]</del> <u>100.00</u>
10	Resident, trapper . . . . .	<del>[20.00]</del> <u>100.00</u>
11	Resident, junior trapper . . . . .	<del>[9.00]</del> <u>50.00</u>
12	Nonresident, fishing . . . . .	<del>[56.00]</del> <u>90.00</u>
13	Nonresident, junior fishing . . . . .	<del>[15.00]</del> <u>20.00</u>
14	Nonresident, junior, game hunting . . . . .	<del>[15.00]</del> <u>20.00</u>
15	Nonresident, game hunting . . . . .	<del>[65.00]</del> <u>85.00</u>
16	Nonresident, deer . . . . .	<del>[260.00]</del> <u>375.00</u>
17	Nonresident, quality deer . . . . .	<del>[345.00]</del> <u>600.00</u>
18	Nonresident, bear . . . . .	<del>[250.00]</del> <u>350.00</u>
19	Nonresident, cougar . . . . .	<del>[280.00]</del> <u>350.00</u>
20	Nonresident, turkey . . . . .	<del>[100.00]</del> <u>125.00</u>
21	Nonresident, antelope . . . . .	<del>[260.00]</del> <u>400.00</u>
22	Nonresident, elk cow . . . . .	<del>[315.00]</del> <u>550.00</u>
23	Nonresident, elk bull or either sex . . . . .	<del>[525.00]</del> <u>750.00</u>
24	Nonresident, quality elk . . . . .	<del>[750.00]</del> <u>975.00</u>
25	Nonresident, bighorn sheep . . . . .	3,150.00

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1	Nonresident, Barbary sheep . . . . .	350.00
2	Nonresident, oryx . . . . .	1,600.00
3	Nonresident, ibex . . . . .	1,600.00
4	Nonresident, javelina . . . . .	155.00
5	Nonresident, fur dealer . . . . .	<del>[125.00]</del> <u>200.00</u>
6	Nonresident, trapper . . . . .	<del>[345.00]</del> <u>500.00</u>
7	Nonresident, nongame . . . . .	65.00
8	Resident, senior, handicapped,	
9	fishing . . . . .	8.00
10	Resident, junior fishing . . . . .	5.00
11	Temporary fishing, one day . . . . .	12.00
12	Temporary fishing, five days . . . . .	<del>[24.00]</del> <u>30.00</u>
13	Resident, senior, handicapped,	
14	game hunting . . . . .	15.00
15	Resident, junior, game hunting . . . . .	10.00
16	Temporary game hunting, four days . . . . .	<del>[33.00]</del> <u>40.00</u>
17	Second rod validation . . . . .	<del>[4.00]</del> <u>10.00.</u>

18           C. On January 1, 2027 and on January 1 of each  
19 successive year, the state wildlife commission may adjust the  
20 fees provided by Subsection B of this section by multiplying  
21 the fee as of January 1, 2026 by a fraction, the numerator of  
22 which is the consumer price index ending in September of the  
23 previous year and the denominator of which is the consumer  
24 price index ending in September 2025; provided that the fees  
25 shall not be adjusted below the minimum amounts provided in

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1 Subsection B of this section as a result of a decrease in the  
2 consumer price index, and the fees shall be adjusted on January  
3 1, 2032 and every five years thereafter. The amount of the  
4 adjustment shall be rounded to the nearest dollar. By November  
5 1, 2026 and by November 1 of each successive year, the  
6 department of wildlife shall post on its website the fees in  
7 Subsection B of this section for the next year.

8 D. Residents who participate in the supplemental  
9 nutrition assistance program are eligible to receive a twenty-  
10 five percent discount on all license fees after qualifying with  
11 the department of wildlife.

12 E. As used in this section, "consumer price index"  
13 means the consumer price index, not seasonally adjusted, for  
14 all urban consumers, United States city average for all items,  
15 or its successor index, as published by the United States  
16 department of labor for a twelve-month period ending September  
17 30."

18 SECTION 10. Section 17-5-4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1939,  
19 Chapter 178, Section 4, as amended) is amended to read:

20 "17-5-4. [~~STATE GAME COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER ACT--RULES~~  
21 ~~AND REGULATIONS]~~ CONFLICT OF AUTHORITY.--[~~The state game~~  
22 ~~commission is authorized and directed to administer the~~  
23 ~~provisions of Sections 17-5-1 through 17-5-9 NMSA 1978 and to~~  
24 ~~make such rules and regulations and establish such service as~~  
25 ~~it may deem necessary to carry out all the provisions and~~

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1 ~~purposes of those sections. In making such rules and~~  
2 ~~regulations and providing when and by what means fur-bearing~~  
3 ~~animals may be hunted, taken, captured, possessed or killed,~~  
4 ~~the state game commission shall give due regard to the zones of~~  
5 ~~temperatures and to the distribution, abundance, economic value~~  
6 ~~and breeding habits of such animals. Provided]~~ Nothing in  
7 Sections 17-5-1 through 17-5-9 NMSA 1978 shall interfere with  
8 the authority granted to the president of New Mexico state  
9 university under Sections 77-15-1 through 77-15-5 NMSA 1978 or  
10 [~~shall~~] prevent livestock producers without a permit from the  
11 taking of bobcats that are doing damage to livestock."

12 SECTION 11. TEMPORARY PROVISION--NAME CHANGE--TRANSFER OF  
13 FUNCTIONS, PERSONNEL, MONEY, APPROPRIATIONS, PROPERTY,  
14 CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS AND STATUTORY REFERENCES--UPDATE NAME  
15 AND LOGO.--

16 A. The department of game and fish is renamed as  
17 the "department of wildlife".

18 B. The state game commission is renamed as the  
19 "state wildlife commission".

20 C. On July 1, 2026, all:

21 (1) functions, personnel, money,  
22 appropriations, records, furniture, equipment, supplies and  
23 other personal and real property of the department of game and  
24 fish are transferred to the department of wildlife;

25 (2) agreements and contractual obligations of

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1 the department of game and fish are binding on the department  
2 of wildlife;

3 (3) references in law to the department of  
4 game and fish shall be deemed to be references to the  
5 department of wildlife;

6 (4) functions, personnel, money,  
7 appropriations, records, furniture, equipment, supplies and  
8 other personal and real property of the state game commission  
9 are transferred to the state wildlife commission;

10 (5) agreements and contractual obligations of  
11 the state game commission are binding on the state wildlife  
12 commission; and

13 (6) references in law to the state game  
14 commission shall be deemed to be references to the state  
15 wildlife commission.

16 D. On July 1, 2026, statutory references in Chapter  
17 NMSA 1978 to:

18 (1) the "department of game and fish" or  
19 "department" shall be construed to be references to the  
20 department of wildlife;

21 (2) the "state game commission" or  
22 "commission" shall be construed to be references to the state  
23 wildlife commission; and

24 (3) the "director", "warden", "state warden",  
25 "state game warden" or "state game and fish warden" shall be

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1 construed to be references to the director of the department of  
2 wildlife.

3 E. Rules of the department of game and fish shall  
4 be rules of the department of wildlife until amended or  
5 repealed.

6 F. Rules of the state game commission shall be  
7 rules of the state wildlife commission until amended or  
8 repealed.

9 G. On July 1, 2026, or as soon thereafter as  
10 practicably possible, the department of wildlife shall update  
11 the department's name and logo; provided that existing  
12 supplies, forms, insignias, signs and logos may continue to be  
13 used until exhausted or unserviceable.

14 SECTION 12. TEMPORARY PROVISION--INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.--

15 The initial appointments made to the state wildlife commission  
16 by the governor pursuant to the provisions of Sections 3 and 4  
17 of this act shall replace the members of the state wildlife  
18 commission, whose terms shall end on December 31, 2026. Terms  
19 for the initial appointments to the commission beginning  
20 January 1, 2027 shall be as follows:

- 21 A. for position one, a one-year term;
- 22 B. for position two, a three-year term;
- 23 C. for position three, a five-year term;
- 24 D. for position four, a one-year term;
- 25 E. for position five, a three-year term;

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F. for position six, a five-year term; and

G. for position seven, a five-year term.

SECTION 13. REPEAL.--Section 17-2-2 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1937, Chapter 23, Section 1) is repealed.

SECTION 14. EFFECTIVE DATE.--

A. The effective date of the provisions of Sections 1, 2, 5 through 11 and 13 of this act is July 1, 2026.

B. The effective date of the provisions of Sections 3, 4 and 12 of this act is December 31, 2026.