



townhall.virginia.gov

Exempt Action: Proposed Regulation Agency Background Document

Agency name	Virginia Board of Wildlife Resources
Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) Chapter citation(s)	4VAC15-40-310 (New)
VAC Chapter title(s)	Game: In General
Action title	Tracking collars for bear and deer hunting with dogs
Date this document prepared	March 22, 2024

This information is required for executive branch review pursuant to Executive Order 19 (2022) (EO 19), any instructions or procedures issued by the Office of Regulatory Management (ORM) or the Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) pursuant to EO 19. In addition, this information is required by the Virginia Registrar of Regulations pursuant to the Virginia Register Act (§ 2.2-4100 et seq. of the Code of Virginia). Regulations must conform to the Regulations for Filing and Publishing Agency Regulations (1 VAC 7-10), and the *Form and Style Requirements for the Virginia Register of Regulations and Virginia Administrative Code*.

Brief Summary

Provide a brief summary (preferably no more than 2 or 3 paragraphs) of this regulatory change (i.e., new regulation, amendments to an existing regulation, or repeal of an existing regulation). Alert the reader to all substantive matters. If applicable, generally describe the existing regulation.

This proposal would require that deer and bear hunters use GPS tracking on any dogs (hounds) actively engaged in the hunt. GPS is the current best technology for hunters to track their dogs that is in widespread (though not universal) use. It aids in dog recovery both by showing location of the dog and tracking the dogs' movement patterns, which assists in predicting where the dogs may be going to help facilitate recovery at opportune places and provide the Department opportunity to reduce hunting hound conflicts with private landowners. It also allows a hunter, should they desire, to show where their dogs have been (and also have not been) over the course of a hunt if that is in question.

As this technology has evolved, other features (e.g., toning/corrective abilities) have become available. This proposal does not require these advanced features, simply basic GPS tracking capabilities.

Mandate and Impetus

Identify the mandate for this regulatory change, and any other impetus that specifically prompted its initiation (e.g., new or modified mandate, internal staff review, petition for rulemaking, periodic review, or board decision). For purposes of executive branch review, "mandate" has the same meaning as defined in the ORM procedures, "a directive from the General Assembly, the federal government, or a court that requires that a regulation be promulgated, amended, or repealed in whole or part."

The impetus for this regulatory amendment is the Board's desire to create reasonable measures to address the growing problem of hunting hound conflicts with private landowners across the Commonwealth. This regulatory proposal is the result of a process conducted by the DWR's Hunting Hounds-Landowners Stakeholder Advisory Committee that was initiated in spring of 2023 and commenced in January 2024. Code of Virginia 29.1-103(12) and 29.1-501(A) mandate the Department to promulgate regulations to assure the proper management of wildlife and game species across the Commonwealth. This proposed action aims to address user conflicts associated with a very popular and widely-used method of deer and bear hunting utilizing hounds for chase.