

Chapter 421

(House Bill 1063)

AN ACT concerning

Natural Resources – Hunting – Management

FOR the purpose of providing that the Department of Natural Resources may authorize the reduction of the deer population on certain property with deer damage using certain methods; altering the time restrictions for Sunday deer hunting in certain counties during deer firearms season; repealing certain time restrictions that apply to the hunting of game birds and mammals on certain Sundays on private property in Wicomico County; authorizing the Department to allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer bow hunting season in Baltimore City; ~~repealing the prohibition against hunting migratory game birds on Sundays and authorizing the Department to allow Sunday hunting for migratory game birds, subject to a certain requirement;~~ repealing certain provisions of law governing Sunday hunting on a county-by-county basis and authorizing the Department to adopt regulations allowing Sunday hunting during game bird and game mammal seasons, subject to a certain standard; and generally relating to hunting management.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Natural Resources

Section 10–206 ~~and 10–410(a)~~, 10–410(a), and 10–906(b)(3)(i)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Natural Resources

Section 10–410(a) and 10–906(b)(3)(i)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

(As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Natural Resources

10–206.

(A) The Department may reduce the wildlife population in any county, election district, or other identifiable area of the State after a thorough investigation reveals that protected wildlife is seriously injurious to agricultural or other interests in the affected area. The method of reducing the wildlife population is at the Department's discretion, except that trapping is preferred whenever feasible. The Department shall dispose of

wildlife taken pursuant to the provisions of this section as the Department deems advisable.

(B) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, “DEER DAMAGE” INCLUDES:

(I) WIDESPREAD DAMAGE CAUSED BY DEER, INCLUDING THE ELIMINATION OF FOREST UNDERSTORY, TREE REGENERATION, AND NATIVE PLANTS; AND

(II) THE DESTRUCTION OF AGRICULTURAL CROPS ~~OR LANDSCAPING, INCLUDING ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING,~~ CAUSED BY DEER.

(2) THE DEPARTMENT MAY AUTHORIZE THE REDUCTION OF THE DEER POPULATION ON ANY SINGLE, CONTIGUOUS PROPERTY OF AT LEAST 10 ACRES WHERE THE DEPARTMENT HAS DOCUMENTED DEER DAMAGE.

(3) (I) THE METHOD OF REDUCING THE DEER POPULATION:

1. IS AT THE DEPARTMENT’S DISCRETION; AND

2. SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, MAY INCLUDE THE ISSUANCE OF A PERMIT TO A PROPERTY OWNER, OR THE PROPERTY OWNER’S EMPLOYEE, LESSEE, OR AGENT, TO SHOOT DEER ON THE PROPERTY ON SUNDAYS.

(II) A PERMIT ISSUED UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I)2 OF THIS PARAGRAPH ~~SHALL:~~

1. MAY NOT AUTHORIZE HUNTING ON SUNDAYS IN:

A. BALTIMORE CITY;

B. BALTIMORE COUNTY;

C. HOWARD COUNTY; OR

D. PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY; AND

2. SHALL PROHIBIT DEER HUNTING ON SUNDAYS DURING DEER FIREARMS SEASON WITHIN ~~25~~ 150 YARDS OF A DEPARTMENT TRAIL DESIGNATED FOR BICYCLING, HIKING, EQUESTRIAN USE, OR OTHER ACTIVE OR PASSIVE RECREATIONAL USE.

(4) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

(I) MAP AREAS OF THE STATE TO WHICH A PERMIT MAY APPLY UNDER THIS SUBSECTION; AND

(II) MAKE THE MAPS READILY AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

10-410.

(a) (1) (i) The Department may allow a person to hunt on each Sunday of the game bird and game mammal seasons in:

1. Allegany County;
2. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Calvert County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
3. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Caroline County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
4. Cecil County;
5. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Charles County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
6. Subject to subparagraph (iv) of this paragraph, Dorchester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
7. Garrett County;
8. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Queen Anne's County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
9. St. Mary's County;
10. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
11. Washington County;
12. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Worcester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.; and
13. ~~Subject to subparagraph (v) of this paragraph, Wicomico County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.~~

(ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 and 12 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and
2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

(iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)2, 3, 5, and 8 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. On each Sunday during the deer firearms season;
2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November during the deer bow hunting season; and
3. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

(iv) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)6 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. On each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive; and
2. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

~~(v) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)13 of this paragraph do not apply:~~

~~1. A. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and~~

~~B. ON THE REMAINING SUNDAYS OF THE DEER FIREARMS SEASON, FOR WHICH THE TIME RESTRICTIONS SHALL BE FROM 30 MINUTES BEFORE SUNRISE UNTIL 10:30 A.M. AND FROM 3:00 P.M. UNTIL SUNSET; AND~~

~~2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.~~

(2) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive, in:

- (i) Carroll County; and
- (ii) Frederick County.

(3) (i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. in:

1. Kent County;
2. Montgomery County; and
3. Talbot County.

(ii) The time restrictions under this paragraph do not apply:

1. To a participant in a junior deer hunt authorized under this subtitle;

2. **A.** On one Sunday designated by the Department during the deer firearms season; **AND**

B. ~~ON IN KENT COUNTY AND TALBOT COUNTY, ON THE~~ REMAINING SUNDAYS OF THE DEER FIREARMS SEASON, FOR WHICH THE TIME RESTRICTIONS SHALL BE FROM 30 MINUTES BEFORE SUNRISE UNTIL 10:30 A.M. AND FROM 3:00 P.M. UNTIL SUNSET;

3. In Kent County, on each Sunday during the deer bow hunting season and the deer muzzle loader season;

4. In Montgomery County, on one Sunday designated by the Department during the deer bow hunting season; and

5. In Talbot County, on the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November during the bow hunting season.

(4) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer firearms season:

- (i) On each Sunday in Harford County; and
- (ii) On the first Sunday in Anne Arundel County.

(5) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer bow hunting season on:

(i) The last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November in Harford County; and

(ii) The first Sunday in November in Anne Arundel County.

(6) **THE DEPARTMENT MAY ALLOW A PERSON TO HUNT DEER ON EACH SUNDAY OF THE DEER BOW HUNTING SEASON IN BALTIMORE CITY.**

(7) The Department may allow a person to hunt turkey on each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season in:

(i) Carroll County;

(ii) Kent County; and

(iii) Talbot County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.

~~(7)~~ **(8)** Notwithstanding any other provision of this subtitle, the Department may allow ~~a person with~~ **[a]**:

(I) A *person with a* deer management permit **ISSUED UNDER § 10-206(A) OF THIS TITLE** to shoot deer on any Sunday throughout the year in accordance with the terms of the permit; **AND**

(II) ~~A~~ **EXCEPT IN BALTIMORE CITY, BALTIMORE COUNTY, HOWARD COUNTY, AND PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, A PERSON WITH A DEER DAMAGE PERMIT ISSUED UNDER § 10-206(B) OF THIS TITLE TO SHOOT DEER ON ANY SUNDAY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THE PERMIT.**

~~(8)~~ **(9)** The Department may allow a person using a State certified raptor to hunt game birds or mammals on each Sunday during the open season for the game birds or mammals.

~~(9)~~ **(10)** The Department may allow an unarmed person participating in an organized fox chase to chase foxes on Sunday.

~~(10)~~ **(11)** The Department may allow a person shooting pen-reared game birds or tower-released flighted mallard ducks to hunt on Sunday at a regulated shooting ground in accordance with § 10-906 of this title.

~~(11)~~ **(12)** The Department may allow a person who is 16 years old or younger to hunt on Sunday if participating in a junior hunt established by the Department in accordance with this subtitle.

~~(12)~~ **(13)** Except as provided in paragraphs ~~(8)~~ **(9)** through ~~(10)~~ **(11)** of this subsection and subject to paragraph ~~(7)~~ **(8)** of this subsection, a person may not hunt on Sunday in:

- (i) Baltimore City;
- (ii) Baltimore County;
- (iii) Howard County; or
- (iv) Prince George’s County.

~~(13)~~ **(14)** ~~(H)~~ [A person may not] ~~SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (H) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE DEPARTMENT MAY ALLOW A PERSON TO~~ hunt migratory game birds on Sunday.

~~(H) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALLOW THE FOLLOWING PERSONS TO HUNT MIGRATORY CANADA GEESE (ATLANTIC POPULATION) ON SUNDAYS DURING THE OPEN SEASON:~~

- ~~1. JUNIOR HUNTERS;~~
- ~~2. SENIOR HUNTERS;~~
- ~~3. APPRENTICE HUNTERS; AND~~
- ~~4. FULL TIME STUDENTS WHO HOLD A HUNTING LICENSE.~~

~~(14)~~ **(15)** A person may not hunt on public land within the State park system on Sunday.

~~(15)~~ **(16)** (i) The Department may not allow a person to hunt on public land designated for hunting by the Department on Sunday except in:

- 1. Allegany County;
- 2. Cecil County;
- 3. Garrett County;
- 4. St. Mary’s County;
- 5. Washington County;

6. Dorchester County, for turkey during the spring turkey hunting season;

7. Frederick County, for deer from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January of the following year, inclusive;

8. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset County, on public land leased to a hunt club from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

9. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Worcester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.; and

10. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Wicomico County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.

(ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)8 and 9 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

(iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. **A.** On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

B. ON THE REMAINING SUNDAYS OF THE DEER FIREARMS SEASON, FOR WHICH THE TIME RESTRICTIONS SHALL BE FROM 30 MINUTES BEFORE SUNRISE UNTIL 10:30 A.M. AND FROM 3:00 P.M. UNTIL SUNSET; AND

2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

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(b) (3) (i) As part of the application for a regulated shooting ground permit, a person may apply to the Department for authorization to allow hunting on Sunday as provided under [§ 10-410(a)(10)] § 10-410(A)(11) of this title.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Natural Resources

10–410.

(a) [(1) (i) The Department may allow a person to hunt on each Sunday of the game bird and game mammal seasons in:

1. Allegany County;
2. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Calvert County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
3. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Caroline County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
4. Cecil County;
5. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Charles County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
6. Subject to subparagraph (iv) of this paragraph, Dorchester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
7. Garrett County;
8. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Queen Anne’s County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
9. St. Mary’s County;
10. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
11. Washington County;
12. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Worcester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.; and
13. ~~Subject to subparagraph (v) of this paragraph, Wicomico County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.~~

(ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 and 12 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

(iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)2, 3, 5, and 8 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. On each Sunday during the deer firearms season;

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

3. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

(iv) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)6 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. On each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive; and

2. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

~~(v) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)(13) of this paragraph do not apply:~~

~~1. A. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and~~

~~B. On the remaining Sundays of the deer firearms season, for which the time restrictions shall be from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. until sunset; and~~

~~2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.~~

(2) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive, in:

(i) Carroll County; and

(ii) Frederick County.

(3) (i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. in:

1. Kent County;
2. Montgomery County; and
3. Talbot County.

(ii) The time restrictions under this paragraph do not apply:

1. To a participant in a junior deer hunt authorized under this subtitle;

2. A. On one Sunday designated by the Department during the deer firearms season; and

B. ~~On~~ In Kent County and Talbot County, on the remaining Sundays of the deer firearms season, for which the time restrictions shall be from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. until sunset;

3. In Kent County, on each Sunday during the deer bow hunting season and the deer muzzle loader season;

4. In Montgomery County, on one Sunday designated by the Department during the deer bow hunting season; and

5. In Talbot County, on the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November during the bow hunting season.

(4) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer firearms season:

(i) On each Sunday in Harford County; and

(ii) On the first Sunday in Anne Arundel County.

(5) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer bow hunting season on:

(i) The last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November in Harford County; and

(ii) The first Sunday in November in Anne Arundel County.

(6) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer bow hunting season in Baltimore City.

~~(7)~~ The Department may allow a person to hunt turkey on each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season in:

- (i) Carroll County;
- (ii) Kent County; and
- (iii) Talbot County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.]

(1) (I) SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS ALLOWING PERSONS TO HUNT ON SUNDAYS DURING THE GAME BIRD AND GAME MAMMAL SEASONS.

(II) THE REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL AT A MINIMUM ALLOW SUNDAY HUNTING ON THE HOURS AND DAYS AUTHORIZED FOR SUNDAY HUNTING BY SPECIES, HUNTING SEASON, AND COUNTY ON JUNE 30, 2027.

~~[(7)] [(8)]~~ **(2)** Notwithstanding any other provision of this subtitle, the Department may allow ~~a person with~~:

(i) A person with a deer management permit issued under § 10–206(a) of this title to shoot deer on any Sunday throughout the year in accordance with the terms of the permit; and

(ii) ~~A~~ Except in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Howard County, and Prince George's County, a person with a deer damage permit issued under § 10–206(b) of this title to shoot deer on any Sunday throughout the year in accordance with the terms of the permit.

~~[(8)] [(9)]~~ **(3)** The Department may allow a person using a State certified raptor to hunt game birds or mammals on each Sunday during the open season for the game birds or mammals.

~~[(9)] [(10)]~~ **(4)** The Department may allow an unarmed person participating in an organized fox chase to chase foxes on Sunday.

~~[(10)] [(11)]~~ **(5)** The Department may allow a person shooting pen-reared game birds or tower-released flighted mallard ducks to hunt on Sunday at a regulated shooting ground in accordance with § 10–906 of this title.

~~[(11)] [(12)]~~ **(6)** The Department may allow a person who is 16 years old or younger to hunt on Sunday if participating in a junior hunt established by the Department in accordance with this subtitle.

~~[(12)] [(13)]~~ **(7)** Except as provided in paragraphs ~~[(8)] [(9)]~~ **(3)** through ~~[(10)] [(11)]~~ **(5)** of this subsection and subject to paragraph ~~[(7)] [(8)]~~ **(2)** of this subsection, a person may not hunt on Sunday in:

- (i) Baltimore City;
- (ii) Baltimore County;
- (iii) Howard County; or
- (iv) Prince George's County.

~~[(13)] [(14)]~~ **(8)** ~~(i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the Department may allow a person to~~ A person may not hunt migratory game birds on Sunday.

~~(ii) The Department shall allow the following persons to hunt migratory Canada goose (Atlantic population) on Sundays during the open season:~~

- ~~1. Junior hunters;~~
- ~~2. Senior hunters;~~
- ~~3. Apprentice hunters; and~~
- ~~4. Full-time students who hold a hunting license.~~

~~[(14)] [(15)]~~ **(9)** A person may not hunt on public land within the State park system on Sunday.

~~[(15)]~~ **(16)** (i) The Department may not allow a person to hunt on public land designated for hunting by the Department on Sunday except in:

- 1. Allegany County;
- 2. Cecil County;
- 3. Garrett County;
- 4. St. Mary's County;
- 5. Washington County;
- 6. Dorchester County, for turkey during the spring turkey hunting season;

7. Frederick County, for deer from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January of the following year, inclusive;

8. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset County, on public land leased to a hunt club from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

9. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Worcester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.; and

10. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Wicomico County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.

(ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)8 and 9 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

(iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 of this paragraph do not apply:

1. A. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

B. On the remaining Sundays of the deer firearms season, for which the time restrictions shall be from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. until sunset; and

2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]

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(b) (3) (i) As part of the application for a regulated shooting ground permit, a person may apply to the Department for authorization to allow hunting on Sunday as provided under [§ 10-410(a)(11)] § 10-410(A)(5) of this title.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before December 1, 2029, the Department of Natural Resources shall:

(1) report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, on the effectiveness of this Act on deer management and balancing stakeholder interests; and

(2) include in the report:

(i) input from all relevant stakeholders;

(ii) a summary of all relevant safety statistics from the Department;

and

(iii) a summary of any regulations adopted in accordance with § 10-401(a)(1) of the Natural Resources Article, as enacted by Section 2 of this Act, during the reporting period.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act may not be construed to authorize the Department of Natural Resources to allow Sunday hunting in Baltimore County, Howard County, or Prince George's County:

(1) (i) except as provided in Section 10-410(a)(9) through (11) of the Natural Resources Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act; and

(ii) subject to Section 10-410(a)(8) of the Natural Resources Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act; or

(2) (i) except as provided in Section 10-410(a)(3) through (5) of the Natural Resources Article, as enacted by Section 2 of this Act; and

(ii) subject to Section 10-410(a)(2) of the Natural Resources Article, as enacted by Section 2 of this Act.

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act shall take effect July 1, 2027. It shall remain effective for a period of 3 years and, at the end of June 30, 2030, Section 2 of this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

SECTION ~~5~~ 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, except as provided in Section ~~4~~ 5 of this Act, this Act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, May 12, 2026.