

1 important tool for reducing conflicts between people and
2 wildlife and provides incentives for the conservation of
3 wildlife, habitats, and ecosystems on which wildlife
4 depend.

5 (6) Recreational hunting is an environmentally
6 acceptable activity that occurs and can be provided for
7 on State public lands without adverse effects on other
8 uses of that land.

9 Section 10. Definitions. For the purposes of this Act:

10 "Department" means the Department of Natural Resources.

11 "Department-managed lands" means those lands that the
12 Department owns or those lands of which the Department holds
13 management authority.

14 "Hunting" means the lawful pursuit, trapping, shooting,
15 capture, collection, or killing of wildlife or the attempt to
16 pursue, trap, shoot, capture, collect, or kill wildlife.

17 Section 15. Recreational hunting.

18 (a) Subject to valid existing rights, Department-managed
19 lands shall be open to access and use for recreational
20 hunting except as limited by the Department for reasons of
21 public safety or homeland security or as otherwise limited by
22 law.

23 (b) The Department shall exercise its authority,
24 consistent with subsection (a), in a manner to support,
25 promote, and enhance recreational hunting opportunities, to
26 the extent authorized by law. The Department is not required
27 to give preference to hunting over other uses of
28 Department-managed lands or over land or water management
29 priorities established by State law.

30 (c) Department land management decisions and actions may
31 not, to the greatest practical extent, result in any net loss
32 of land acreage available for hunting opportunities on

1 Department-managed lands that exists on the effective date of
2 this amendatory Act of the 93rd General Assembly.

3 (d) By October 1 of each year, the Governor shall submit
4 to the General Assembly a written report describing:

5 (1) the acreage administered by the Department that
6 has been closed during the previous year to recreational
7 hunting and the reasons for the closures; and

8 (2) the acreage administered by the Department that
9 was opened to recreational hunting to compensate for
10 those acreage closed under paragraph (1).

11 (e) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to compel the
12 opening to recreational hunting of national parks or national
13 monuments administered by the National Park Service.

14 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
15 becoming law."