



STATE OF NEW YORK CONSERVATION FUND ADVISORY BOARD  
**625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4750**  
 Monthly Meeting Minutes

**Four Hundred and Twenty Second Meeting – February 12, 2024**  
**Department of Environmental Conservation, 625 Broadway,**  
**Albany, NY**

**Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM.

**Meeting Adjourned** – The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 PM.

**Roll Call: 9:10am**

**Voting Board Members Present**

Timothy Huss	Region 1
Brandon Dale	Region 2
Vacant	Region 3
Nate Galimore	Region 4
Jason Kemper	Region 5
Scott L. Faulkner	Region 6
Shari Dann	Region 7
Marc Osypian	Region 8
Vacant	Region 9
Bill Connors	FWMB
Anthony Kordziel	NYSCC

**Voting Board Members**

**Excused**

None

**Voting Board Members**

**Absent**

None

**Abbreviations**

CFAB or the Board = Conservation Fund Advisory Board  
 FWMB = Fish and Wildlife Management Board  
 DEC or the Department = NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
 DFW = Division of Fish and Wildlife  
 DLE = Division of Law Enforcement

**Ex-Officio Members Present**

None

*Senate Finance Committee*  
*Senate EnCon Committee*  
*Assembly Ways and Means Committee*  
*Assembly EnCon Committee*  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*

**DEC Personnel**

*Division of Fish and Wildlife:*  
 Jacqueline Lendrum, Director  
 Michael Schiavone, Assistant Director  
 Ben Sears, Fish & Wildlife Administration Section  
*Executive:*  
 Katherine McNamara, Director, Legislative Affairs  
*Division of Law Enforcement:*  
 James Boylan, Assistant Director, DLE

**Guests**

Kevin Maloney, License Sales  
 Krista Spohr, Ecosystem Health  
 Greg Kozlowski, Fisheries

**Ex-Officio Members Absent**

**Correspondence:** Deer Hunting by 12- and 13-Year-Old Hunters, DECALS power point overview, Licensing Issuing Agent Printing Fee power point overview, Wetlands power point, Fishing tournaments power point and final DLE HRSI Report (attached at the end of these minutes).

**Minutes of Prior Meeting:**

*December 2023 and January 2024 meeting minutes voted on and passed. Posted on February 20, 2024.*

**Legislative Affairs:**

*Katharine Petronis, Deputy Commissioner of Natural Resources*

- Discussed terms of appointed CFAB representatives:
  - Under New York State Public Officers Law, statutorily appointed board members can remain in their positions when their term expires as “holdovers.” The “holdover” status has the full force and effect of the original appointment, so official reappointment is not required. Members will continue to serve their term unless notified by the appointing authority that they are being removed.
  - Discussed adding a clarifying statement on the website for members serving under “holdover” status.

*Katherine McNamara, Director, Legislative Affairs*

- Working with interested Legislators to implement the Deer Management Plan priorities to remove the requirement for backtags and amend the statute to accommodate the potential use of electronic deer carcass tags.
- Discussed other bill proposals currently circulating including a bill that would allow the use of crossbows during any deer season for hunters age 60 and older.
- Currently, no additional legislative discussions on Saltwater licenses.

**Division of Fish and Wildlife**

*Jacqueline Lendrum, Director*

- Regulatory agenda update:
  - Part 182 Endangered Threatened Species: Mitigation Bank Fund
  - Part 182 Endangered Threatened Species: Repromulgation
  - Part 182 Endangered Threatened Species: Species Listing
  - Part 664 Freshwater Wetlands – Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking serves as a “pre-proposal” to inform development of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that will go out later this year for public comment.
  - Part 177 Sporting License Issuance and Use (see presentation below)
  - Chapter 1, Subchapter 1 Fishing Tournament Permit (see presentation below)
- Adirondack Brook Trout Pond Management Plan update:
  - Public meetings scheduled for March 9th and March 16<sup>th</sup>.
  - Steve Hurst will attend the March meeting to provide a more detailed

update on the draft plan.

*Michael Schiavone, Assistant Director*

- New York NASP State Tournament is scheduled for March 15<sup>th</sup> at the Center for Progress building at the New York State Fairgrounds.
  - Almost 800 archers (grades 4-12) from schools across the state have signed up.
- *“Habitat Stamp” Projects selected for 2024-25* - The Habitat Conservation and Access Account (HCAA) is a capital projects fund that may be used for services and expenses related to management, protection, and restoration of fish and wildlife habitat, and improvement and development of public access for fish- and wildlife-related recreation. The Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) expects to have \$500,000 in HCAA funding available in state fiscal year 2024-25 (04/01/2024-03/31/2025) for habitat and access projects on publicly accessible lands. In fall 2023, we solicited project proposals from Division of Fish and Wildlife managers and 11 projects were selected for funding. Additional detail will be provided at the March meeting.
- *DFW Promotion and Outreach Efforts* – promotion and outreach are key components of all the work done by the Division of Fish and Wildlife. Major management actions undertaken by DFW (e.g., management plans, proposed regulations) have an accompanying “Rollout Plan” that describes key messages and stakeholders, outreach products, and timelines. DFW staff work with DEC’s Division of Communications, Education, and Engagement (DCEE) to develop and disseminate promotion and outreach materials. DFW staff are responsible for content development and identification of priority programs and messaging, and DCEE staff work with them on designing communications products like public reports/plans, pamphlets, flyers, “advertisements”, signage, videos, and social media posts. Staff from DCEE can come to a future meeting to discuss the work they do and the tools they have in their outreach toolbox.
  - DFW adopted a Promotion and Outreach Strategic Plan in 2023 and created a working group to develop strategies and actions to achieve the goals outlined in that plan. Additional details will be provided at a future meeting.

*Ben Sears, Environmental Program Specialist 3*

*Kevin Maloney, Environmental Program Specialist 2*

- DECALS presentation.
- Licensing Issuing Agent presentation.

*Krista Spohr, Environmental Program Specialist 1*

- Freshwater Wetland Regulatory changes presentation.

*Gregory Kozlowski, Biologist 3 Aquatic*

- Fishing Tournament Permit presentation.

## **Division of Law Enforcement**

*James Boylan, Assistant Director*

- Discussed preliminary HRSI report. A final HRSI report and “Elevated Hunting Incident” (tree stand-related injuries) report and press release is in development and will be out by the end of the month.
  - Question from board about when hunter education became mandatory in NYS. Hunter education certification was required in 1949 for first time hunters under the age of 16. In 1960, this was expanded to all first-time hunters regardless of age.
- Provided a summary of the number of service calls, investigations initiated, tickets and warrants issued, arrests and charges made, and fines and penalties levied.
- Provided an update on the next Academy class starting June 2, 2024.
  - 2,100 candidates canvassed; goal is to have 45 new officers.
  - Candidates will graduate before Christmas.

## **February 2024 CFAB Report**

### **Update on DEC’s E-Licensing system and sporting license sales:**

No system outages or issues were reported since our last update. The system has been performing well with sales and harvest reporting functionality working as expected.

Overall sales for the period remain approximately 1.5% lower than 2022-2023 sales during the same period. I Support Conservation Fund and Venison Donations are also down while Habitat and Access Stamp sales are up 32%.

Preparation for the move away from Valeron licenses and tags continues. A press release and Q&A document regarding this change were released the week of January 29 and posted on the DEC website ([NYS DEC Press Release / Q&A Document](#)). In addition, a message was sent to License Issuing Agents (LIAs) through DECALS and GovDelivery, and the Q&A document was posted in the online DECALS Help Centers.

We continue to move forward with finalizing our plain paper license and tag designs as well as working with Gordon-Darby’s app developer, Timmons, to make progress on development of the DLE field check app.

The NYS Donate Life Registry should go live in DECALS by mid-February. As required by Public Health Law Section 4310, the option to register as an organ donor will be presented to NYS residents that have a valid NYS driver’s license when they login to their DECALS profile online. LIA locations will not be prompted to collect this information from their customers.

### **License Year Sales by Item Comparison**

#### **Overall Sales:**

<b><u>Begin</u></b>	<b><u>End</u></b>	<b><u>Sales</u></b>	<b><u>Revenue</u></b>	<b><u>% Change</u></b>
August 1, 2023	January 28, 2024	1,994,532	30,906,539	-1.5%
August 1, 2022	January 28, 2023	2,012,632	31,375,046	-4.7%
August 2, 2021	January 28, 2022	2,087,972	32,934,477	

**I Support Conservation Fund:**

August 1, 2023	January 28, 2024	5,963	\$24,922	-16%
August 1, 2022	January 28, 2023	6,737	\$29,819	-7%
August 2, 2021	January 28, 2022	7,095	\$32,098	

**Venison Donation:**

August 1, 2023	January 28, 2024	4,120	\$15,137	-14%
August 1, 2022	January 28, 2023	4,455	\$17,633	-4%
August 2, 2021	January 28, 2022	4,773	\$18,393	

**Habitat & Access Stamp:**

August 1, 2023	January 28, 2024	33,294	\$166,470	32%
August 1, 2022	January 28, 2023	22,684	\$113,420	
August 2, 2021	January 28, 2022	22,681	\$113.405	

**Filled Position report as of 1/17/2024:**

<b>Division of Fish and Wildlife</b>		
<b>Account</b>	<b>January 2024</b>	<b>December 2023</b>
Access / Land Acquisition	1	1
Habitat Conservation & Access Account	6	6
Hazardous Waste Cleanup Account	1	1
State Purposes Account (GF)	64.50	61.4
Fish & Wildlife CLCPA	0	3
Federal Fish & Wildlife Grants Account	46.80	48.8
Conservation Fund (Main Account)	208.55	205.55
Environmental Regulatory Account	2	2
Natural Resources Damages Account	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>329.85</b>	<b>327.95</b>

<b>Conservation Fund (Main Account)</b>		
<b>Division</b>	<b>January 2024</b>	<b>December 2023</b>
Fish and Wildlife	208.55	205.55
General Counsel	0	0
Law Enforcement	0	0
Operations	3	3
Management & Budget Services	0	0
Communication, Education, & Engagement	0	0
Regional Affairs	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>214.55</b>	<b>211.55</b>

## **DEC Automated Licensing System (DECALS) – Overview of History, Costs, and Next Steps**

The DEC Automated Licensing System (DECALS) has been in place since 2002. The DECALS system issues hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses and tags, as well as habitat stamps and other items. There are over 2 million items sold each year, generating over \$40 million in revenue that is deposited in the Conservation Fund for fish and wildlife management programs.

Over the past 22 years, there have been multiple iterations of the licensing system provided by five different vendors, with the current vendor, Gordon-Darby, under contract through September 2026. The system has evolved to include online license sales, web-based harvest reporting, the HuntFishNY mobile application, and other features. Currently, DEC is working with Gordon-Darby on a transition from synthetic paper (Valeron) licenses and tags to plain paper licenses and tags.

Due to the size and complexity of the DECALS system, it is a cooperative effort between multiple Divisions within DEC (e.g., Fish and Wildlife, Management and Budget, Law Enforcement), as well as the NYS Office of Technology Services (ITS). In anticipation of the expiration of the current contract in 2026, DEC is working with ITS on a “Request for Proposals” (RFP) that will be published later in 2024. The vendor selected through the RFP process will be awarded a contract for the next five-year period with an option for an additional five-year extension, depending on their performance.

Kevin Maloney, License Sales Unit leader, will give a presentation to the Board on this topic at the February meeting.

## **Pheasant Propagation and R3 Program Update**

The Bureau of Wildlife (BoW) has taken the unfortunate highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak and used it as an opportunity to re-evaluate the pheasant program. BoW recognizes the important role pheasant hunting opportunity can play in the recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3) of new hunters. In an effort to more effectively utilize the pheasant propagation and release program as an R3 tool, we are taking the following steps over the coming years:

- increase the number of pheasants released from 35,000 to 50,000 (starting in 2024)
- continue the [day-old chick program](#) and provide up to 30,000 chicks for participants to raise and release on publicly accessible properties around the state
- increase the number of pheasants utilized for hunter recruitment programs (youth, military, novice, etc.) from a maximum of 2,000 birds to 6,000 birds
- explore opportunities to add stocking locations within 20 miles of human population centers to provide opportunity to a greater number of hunters
- engage with organizations holding mentored pheasant (and other species) hunting opportunities to promote the new mentored hunt registration program on the DEC website. This program is designed to help connect newly certified hunters with mentored hunting opportunities they may not otherwise be aware of around the state. Visit the [mentored hunt registration page](#) for more information.
- explore changes to stocking practices that may impact hunter satisfaction with their pheasant hunting experience on properties stocked by DEC. These changes may

include modifications to the frequency of stocking, the timing of stocking (e.g., adding opportunity later in the season), time of day, etc. BoW is considering logistical concerns and [input from pheasant hunters](#) to decide on the best path forward.

- continue to improve to the [interactive pheasant release mapper](#)

### **Stream Access Verification Update**

Bureau of Fisheries staff met with the New York State Fish and Wildlife Management Board (FWMB) on January 30<sup>th</sup> in Utica to discuss how the regional FWMBs can contribute to the access verification process, including following-up with non-respondent landowners to assess their willingness to allow public access for fishing. Efforts are underway by FWMB members to contact these landowners.

### **Adirondack Brook Trout Pond Management Plan Update**

The Adirondack Brook Trout Pond Management Plan team have completed a draft of the plan that is undergoing internal review. As part of plan development, the team held focus group meetings with a diverse array of stakeholder groups to assess their needs, interests, and concerns with regard to the current and future status of brook trout in the Adirondacks.

There are two public meetings tentatively scheduled for the second week of March. The goal of these meetings is to provide an overview of the major tenets of the draft plan, seek feedback, and make changes as needed. After these meetings, the final draft plan would officially be released for a 30-day public comment period with the goal of adopting the plan in late summer or early fall 2024.

### **Status of Regulations:**

#### **Notice of Proposed Rule Making(s):**

**6 NYCRR Part 182, Endangered and Threatened Species Mitigation Bank Fund.** The Endangered and Threatened Species Mitigation Fund (Fund) Package is required to implement the new laws that created the Fund to be an alternate method for large scale renewable energy projects to use to meet their mitigation requirements if they take listed species. The regulation package outlines the intent of the fund, the process for the Department to develop a cost basis for evaluating appropriate payments into the fund, and the general approach on how the Department may utilize the Fund to provide a Net Conservation Benefit to listed species.

- NOPR is being reviewed by RRU as of 2/2/2024

**6 NYCRR Part 182, Endangered and Threatened Species Repromulgation Package.** The Part 182 Repromulgation Package is required due to a legal decision stating that the rule change adopted in 2010 did not include a public hearing, and therefore needs to be re-noticed, with a public hearing, to be officially adopted. This package would repost the 2010 language, along with the changes legally adopted in 2021, to ensure that Part 182 in its entirety was adopted correctly.

- NOPR is being reviewed by Chamber as of 2/2/2024

**6 NYCRR Part 182, Endangered and Threatened Species.** The List Revision Package begins the process of updating the list of endangered and threatened species, a process that has not been done since 1999. The first step in the process is focused on updating the freshwater fish species based on expert review and ensuring that all species listed under the Federal

Endangered Species Act are also captured in the regulatory list. The rest of the species will be addressed in subsequent rules over the next three years, with reptile, amphibians, marine species, invertebrates, mammals, and birds to all be addressed by the end of 2025.

- NOPR is being reviewed by Chamber as of 2/2/2024

**6 NYCRR Part 664, Freshwater Wetlands Maps and Classification.** The legislation contains three fundamental changes to the Freshwater Wetlands Act that will need to be reflected in regulation. First, beginning in January 2025, maps depicting freshwater wetlands will no longer be relied upon to determine DEC's permitting jurisdiction. Under the new legislation, freshwater wetlands maps will continue to be maintained by DEC but will be used for educational purposes. Second, smaller wetlands (less than 12.4 acres) of "unusual importance" will be regulated if they meet one of 11 newly established statutory criteria. Third, the acreage threshold for regulated wetlands will decrease from 12.4 acres to 7.4 acres (3 hectares) in 2028.

- Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking published in State Register on 1/3/24; public comment period ends 2/19/24.

**6 NYCRR Part 10, Trout Stream Sportfishing Regulations Changes.** These regulation changes are proposed on several stream reaches to update and align management consistent with the criteria documented in the Trout Stream Management Plan (TSMP). They include clarification of trout fishing seasons in tidal and inland waters of Nassau and Suffolk counties. Additionally, in response to new biosurvey and angler use information, management category changes are proposed as follows: Camden Creek (Region 5) from *Wild* to *Wild-Quality* and Goose Creek (Region 9) from *Stocked-Extended* to *Stocked*.

- NOPR Drafted and with Greg Kozlowski for edits as of 2/2/2024

**6 NYCRR Part 10, Fishing Tournament Permit and Reporting System.** This proposal related to registration and reporting of sportfishing (freshwater) tournaments. The Department may propose the creation of a sportfishing (freshwater) tournament registry and reporting system for select fish species. These amendments may require a Regulatory Flexibility Analysis for Small Businesses or a Rural Area Flexibility Analysis.

- NOPR is being reviewed by RRU as of 2/2/2024

**6 NYCRR Part 177, Sporting License Issuance and Use.** This rulemaking would give DEC the authority to allow License Issuing Agents (LIAs) to charge a small fee to cover the cost of printing plain paper hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses and associated carcass tags on their own printers, using their own paper and printer ink. ECL 11-0715 specifies that issuing clerks may charge a fee in addition to the cost of the license. This regulation will specify the conditions under which such a fee may be charged and the amount. With the transition to plain paper licensing, customers will have the option to receive an email with a PDF of their license to be self-printed at home, as well as having access to electronic versions of their licenses online and in the HuntFishNY mobile application. Some license buyers may opt to have their license printed at point-of-sale locations or printed and mailed when purchased via phone or internet. The transition to plain paper will require LIAs to utilize their own plain paper stock, printers, and ink, which will result in increased costs to agents. The proposed fee is intended to offset those costs.

- NOPR is being reviewed by RRU as of 2/2/2024





Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

# Deer Hunting by 12- and 13- Year-Old Hunters

A Report to the New York State Senate and Assembly

February 1, 2024



*Jenna S., age 12, deer hunting with her mentor in Wildlife  
Management Unit 4H*

## 12- and 13-year-old Deer Hunting Pilot Program Summary

Currently, all other states allow youths 12 years old or younger to hunt big game with a firearm. In 2021, New York State (NYS) enacted legislation that created a new section of the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) 11-0935 authorizing a license holder who is 12 or 13 years-of-age to hunt deer with a crossbow, rifle, shotgun, or muzzleloading firearm under the supervision of an experienced adult mentor in eligible counties. The legislation established this opportunity as a pilot program (hereinafter referred to as “pilot program”) through 2023 and required counties to adopt a local law authorizing participation and to notify the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) of such participation. Legislation enacted in 2023 extended this pilot program through 2025.

Of NYS’s 54 eligible counties, 52 participated during the first three years of the pilot program. DEC has documented no hunting-related shooting incidents (HRSIs) involving 12- and 13-year-old deer hunters over this time. Further, the pilot program has increased Conservation Fund resources (through license sales revenue) and provided DEC an additional tool to advance deer management objectives. DEC continues to document high levels of participation in and satisfaction with the pilot program through post-season surveys of eligible hunters and their mentors. Three hundred eighty 12- and 13-year-old hunters and their mentors responded to DEC’s post-season survey to evaluate the third year of the pilot program.

DEC is pleased to provide the following report to the Legislature highlighting the success of the first three years of the pilot program, and recommendations to make the program permanent. This report fulfills the requirement of ECL 11-0935(3), which states, “The department shall prepare a report by February first of each year including the following information at a minimum: number of violations; hunting related incidents and revocations pursuant to section 11-0719; the number of counties participating; the number of minors participating; and the number of deer taken.”

## Preliminary Results from the 2023-24 Deer Hunting Seasons

### *Participation by 12- and 13-year-old Deer Hunters in Each Big Game Hunting Season*

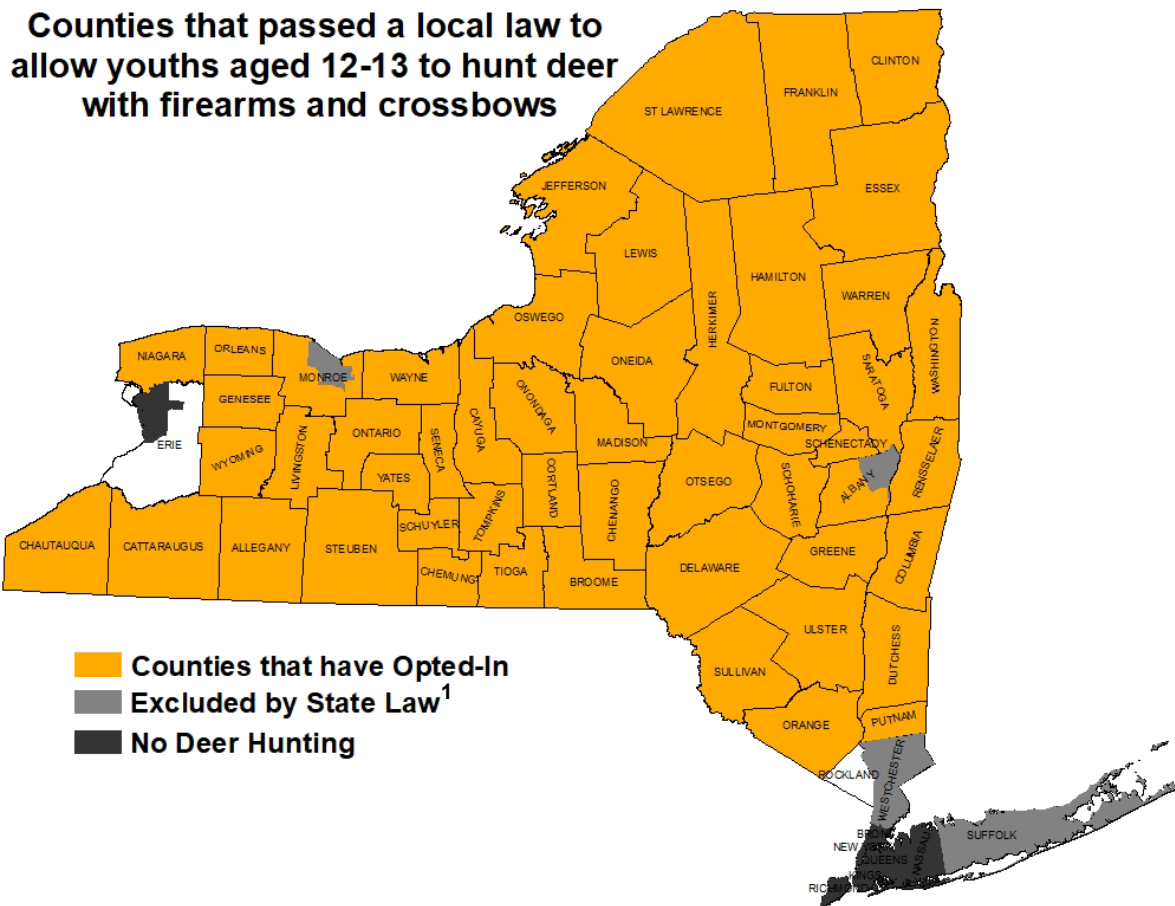
Big game hunting season		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
# Licensed 12- and 13-year-old hunters <sup>1</sup>		9,859	9,416	9,610
Estimated Participation:	Regular Firearms Season	85%	85%	79%
	Youth Big Game Hunt over Columbus Day Weekend	62%	70%	68%
	General Muzzleloader Season	21%	16%	18%
	Holiday Hunt portion of the Late Muzzleloader Season	26%	18%	18%
	Bowhunting Season	31%	25%	17%
With a Crossbow During any Season		18%	22%	12%
Deer Harvest Reports submitted by 12- and 13-year-old hunters <sup>2</sup>		1,564	1,824	1,487

<sup>1</sup> License holders who were 12- or 13-years-old at any time during the hunting season when 12- and 13-year-old hunters could use a firearm or crossbow.

<sup>2</sup> Values only include raw deer harvest reports. Without information on reporting rate these values operate as an index but may not accurately represent harvest trends through time. All deer harvest reports and reporting rate information for the 2023-24 hunting season were not available at the time of this report, as deer hunting seasons continued in portions of NYS until January 31. Final deer harvest estimates from the 2023-24 hunting season will be available on DEC’s website over the coming months.

### Participation in Eligible Counties and Wildlife Management Units

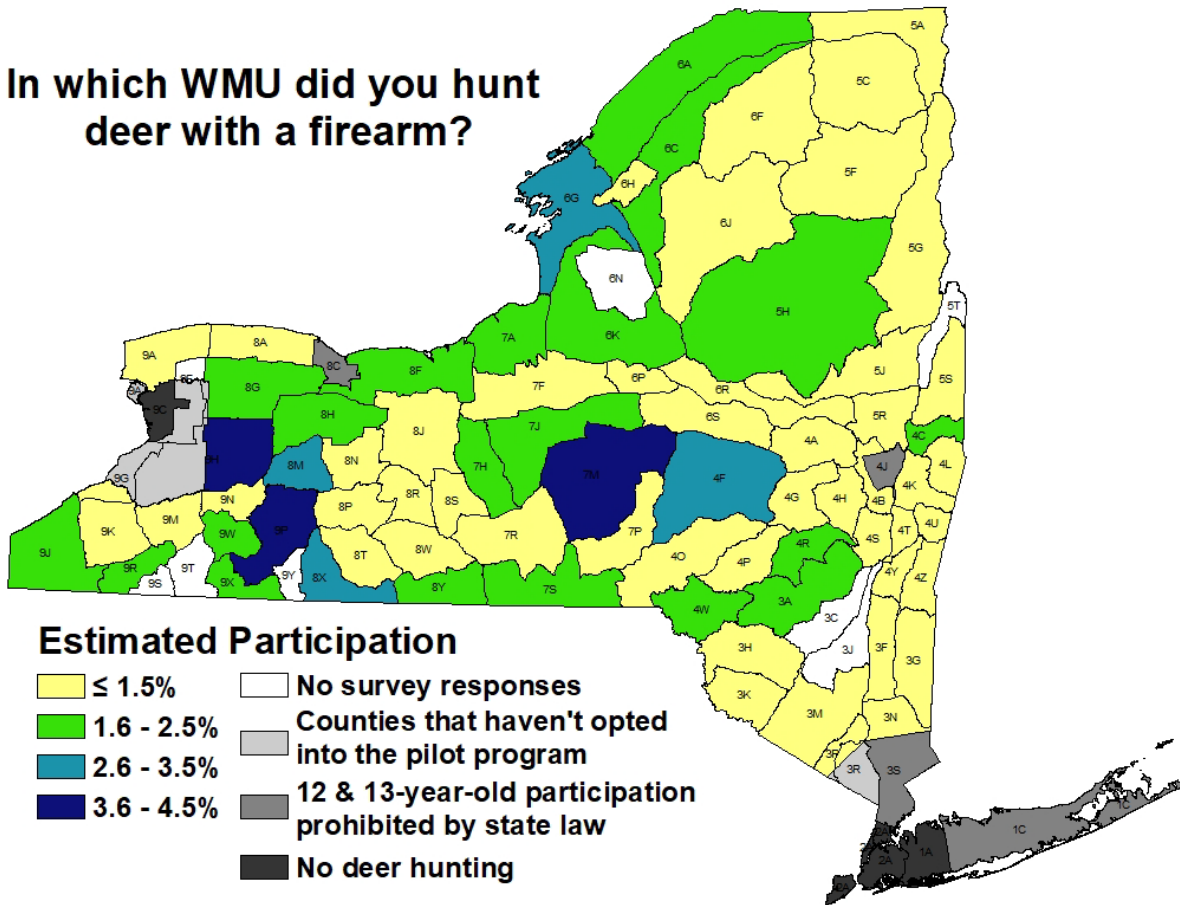
ECL 11-0935(2) defines eligible areas as: “a county that has passed a local law authorizing participation in the pilot program and has notified the department of such participation, however, that the following counties: Westchester; Richmond; Bronx; New York; Kings; Queens; Nassau; and Suffolk shall not be deemed to be eligible.” Thus, 54 of the 62 NYS counties were eligible to participate in the pilot program. Of the 54 eligible counties, only Erie and Rockland counties did not pass a local law allowing 12- and 13-year-old hunters to participate in the pilot program (Map 1). Surveyed 12- and 13-year-old hunters went deer hunting with a firearm in 78 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) across the state with the highest estimated participation in WMUs 7M, 9H, and 9P (Map 2).



<sup>1</sup> Portions of Albany and Monroe counties were excluded from the pilot program by state laws (ECL 11-0907(5)(a) and 11-0907(7)(b)) that restrict deer hunting in those areas to use of longbows only.

**Map 1.** New York State counties that passed a local law to participate in the 12- and 13-year-old deer hunting pilot program.

## In which WMU did you hunt deer with a firearm?



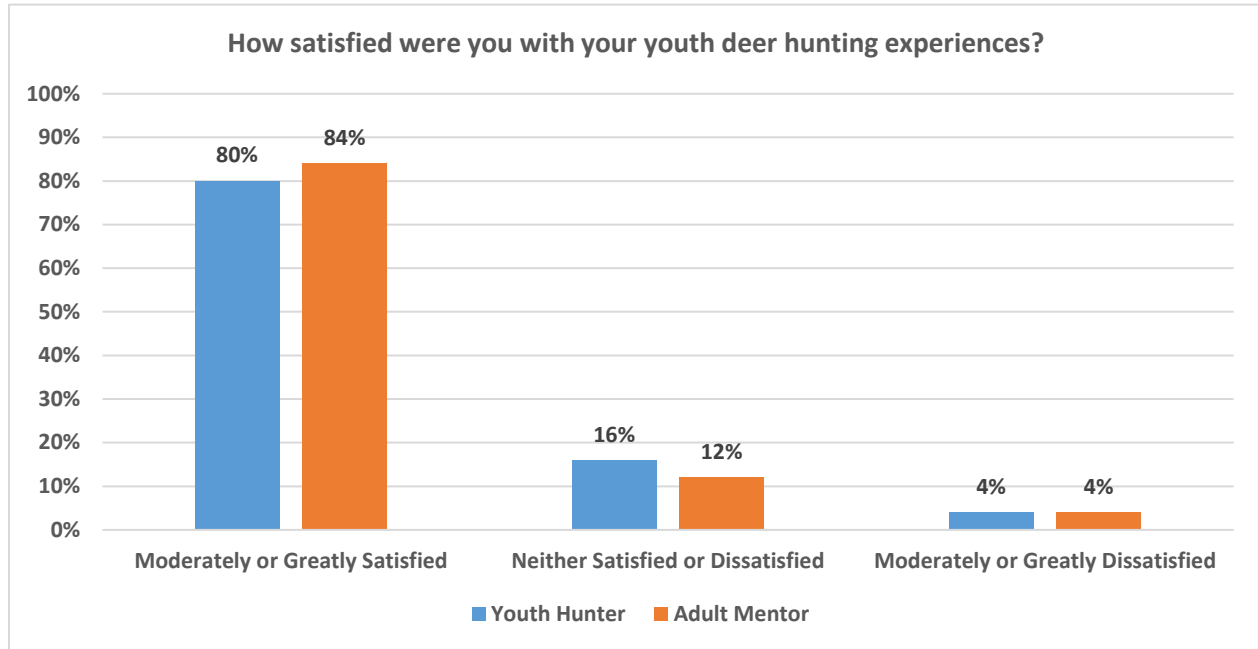
**Map 2.** Estimated participation by surveyed 12- and 13-year-old deer hunters (N = 380) in WMUs that were eligible under the pilot program to hunt deer with a firearm.

### *Safety and Compliance*

No HRSIs, violations, or license revocations involving 12- and 13-year-old deer hunters were reported/occurred during the first three years of the pilot program.

### 12- and 13-year-old Hunter/Mentor Testimonials and Satisfaction

Similar to previous years, 80% of 12- and 13-year-old hunters and 84% of their adult mentors were moderately or greatly satisfied with their youth deer hunting experience (Figure 1). The testimonials provided by participating 12- and 13-year-old hunters and their mentors demonstrate the great value they see in the pilot program and desire for it to continue permanently.



**Figure 1.** Results from DEC post-season survey of 12- and 13-year-old deer hunters and their adult mentors about their satisfaction with the 2023-24 youth deer hunting opportunity.

### Testimonials from 12 and 13 year old Hunters and their Mentors on the 2023 24 Deer Seasons

*“Couldn’t be happier with the NYSDEC Hunting Safety Course that Hunter attended, and our first experience hunting together during the 2023 Youth Hunt Weekend.” - Mentor of Hunter H., age 12, Suffolk County*

*“Anything we can do to get our youth outside personally experiencing, learning from, understanding, and enjoying the natural world and our environment is an incredible investment in our future and theirs.” - Mentor of Sawyer G., age 13, Warren County*

*“The time spent with my son that weekend was a wonderful experience. I am confident that he is now a safe and responsible hunter for life.” - Mentor of Arlo B., age 13, Saratoga County*

*“The youth hunting opportunities that NYS has implemented are great. We have an entire group of youth hunters that are enjoying it, and their time spent with family and friends.” - Mentor of Deven R., age 13, Wayne County*

*“We absolutely enjoy the time we get to spend together in the woods, regardless of whether we fill a tag or not.” - Mentor of Tyler L., age 13, Greene County*

*12- and 13-year-old Deer Hunter Photo Submissions*



*Joseph P., age 12, deer hunting with his mentor in WMU 40*



*Zara A., age 12, deer hunting with her mother, Amber A., in WMU 7R*



*Ryleigh K., age 12, deer hunting with her mentor in WMU 7F*



*Brendan S., age 13, deer hunting with his father in WMU 4Y*



*Jameson D., age 13, deer hunting with his mentor in WMU 9A*



*Sara M., age 13, deer hunting with her father, Jonathan M. in WMU 3H*



*Zachary C., age 13, deer hunting with his grandfather in WMU 4R*

## Recommendations

Over the first three years of the pilot program, 12- and 13-year-old hunters and mentors have proven they can safely and successfully hunt deer with a firearm or crossbow and should be authorized to retain this opportunity permanently. To continue to cultivate the next generation of safe and responsible hunters and capitalize on the success of this program, DEC provides the following recommendations:

1. **Make permanent the authorization for 12- and 13-year-old hunters to hunt deer with a firearm and crossbow.** Existing state law allows 12- and 13-year-old hunters to hunt small game with a firearm or long bow and big game with a long bow, when properly supervised. Establishing the same permanent provisions for 12- and 13-year-old hunters to hunt big game with a firearm would make NYS consistent with other states which all currently allow youths 12 years old or younger to hunt big game with a firearm. Further, many 12- and 13-year-old hunters lack the physical strength to pull back a longbow. Allowing 12- and 13-year-old hunters to use a crossbow would help ensure they are able to participate during New York's bowhunting seasons.
2. **Extend the authorization for 12- and 13-year-old hunters to hunt deer with a firearm or crossbow to all of NYS (subject to other provisions of ECL) and remove the requirement for counties to pass a local law opting into the program.** Throughout NYS, hunters aged 14 years or older can hunt deer and bear with firearms and crossbows. An annual county opt-in program for 12- and 13-year-old hunters creates a potential patchwork of regulations and hunting opportunities and additional work for county legislatures, increases the likelihood for confusion among participating hunters and mentors, and cedes DEC's regulatory authority to manage hunting seasons.
3. **Allow 12- and 13-year-old hunters to also hunt black bear with a firearm and crossbow.** Twelve- and 13-year-old hunters have been legally able to hunt black bears with a longbow in New York since 2011 and have done so successfully and without any safety incidents. Hunting black bear with a longbow is unquestionably more challenging than hunting black bear with a firearm. Therefore, 12- and 13-year-old hunters should be given the opportunity to also hunt black bear with firearms and crossbows.
4. **Allow 12- and 13-year-old hunters to hunt big game with a firearm from an elevated position.** Twelve- and 13-year-old big game hunters are currently able to hunt with long bows from elevated positions but are prohibited from using an elevated tree stand or blind when hunting with a firearm. This reduces sight distances which limits opportunities to see and harvest animals and restricts shot opportunities which might otherwise be safely taken using the ground as a backstop. Hunting from an elevated position is safe when hunters follow appropriate [safety precautions](#). Two-person ladder stands and elevated blinds provide easily accessible, safe shooting platforms for 12- and 13-year-old hunters and their mentors.





Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

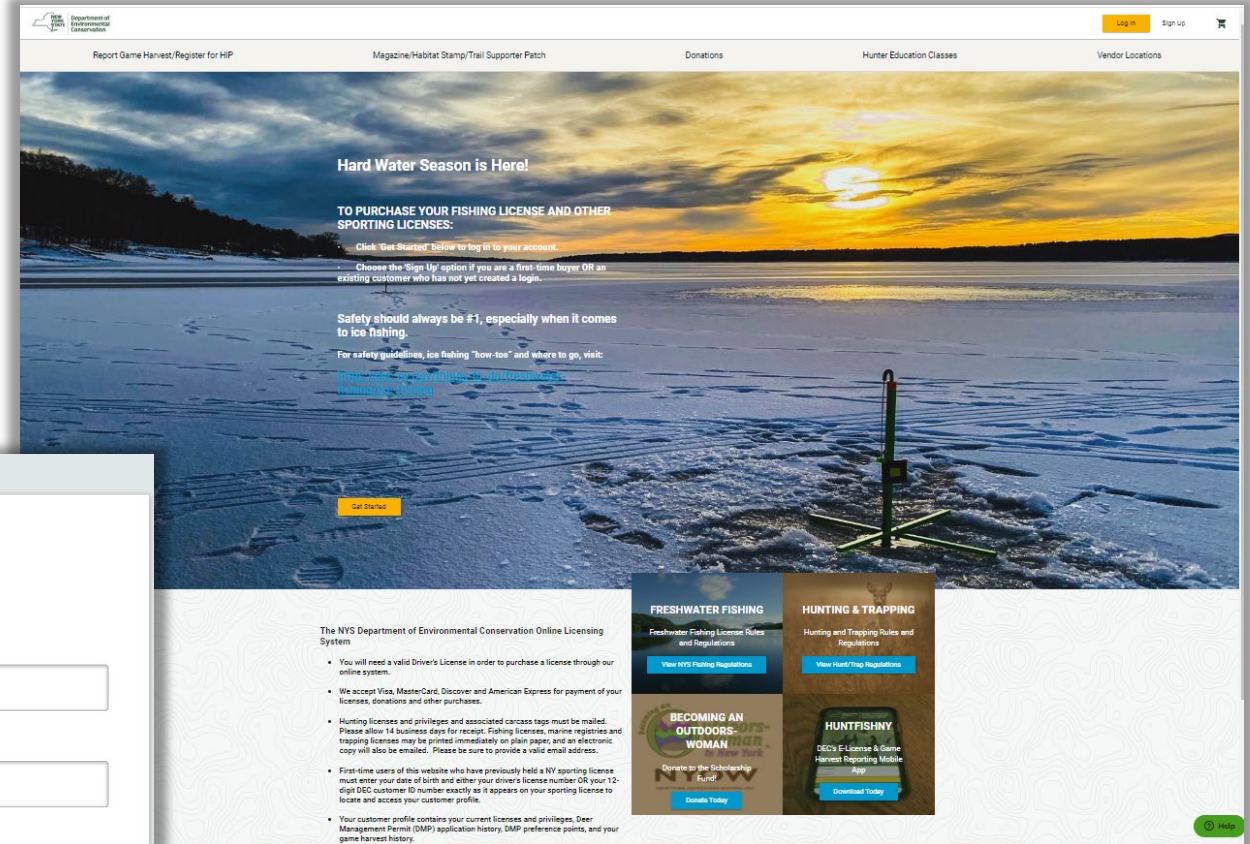
# DECALS

## Overview and History

February 13, 2024

# DECALS Overview

- DECALS is the system used to sell sporting licenses in New York.
- Built and operated by an outside vendor (currently Gordon-Darby).



**Bulletins**

UNREAD READ

**New** DECALS Transition from Valeron to Plain Paper  
N/A - 02/02/2024 12:09:07 PM  
1 - 1 of 1

**Search Customers**

Please enter at least two (2) search parameters.

DEC ID  Identifier

Last Name  First Name

Date of Birth  Zip Code

MM/DD/YYYY

Help

# DECALS History

## Before DECALS:

- Applying for sporting licenses was a manual process. About two million sales per year.
- Applying for Deer Management Permits (DMP) was a manual process. About 350,000 applications per year.

## After DECALS:

- Four vendors since the early 2000s: MCI/Verizon (2002-2013); Accela (2013-2020); Kalkomey (2020-2023); Gordon-Darby (2023-Present).
- Each vendor change (except the change to GD) requires a competitive procurement, which is a 2+ year process.

# DECALS History

## Current system under Gordon-Darby

- When DECALS transitioned from Kalkomey to Gordon-Darby the system stayed the same.
- All user interfaces and have the same functionality as they did under Kalkomey.
- Key Kalkomey staff moved to Gordon-Darby.
- Current contract with Gordon-Darby ends September 30, 2026.
- Expect the next Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2024.

## Payment History for Current System (Kalkomey/Gordon-Darby)

- CY 2021: \$2.7 million. 2022: \$3.0 million. 2023: \$1.8 million.



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# License Issuing Agent Printing Fee

Overview of proposed License Issuing Agent (LIA)  
printing fee

February 13, 2024

# LIA Printing Fee

## *Why propose a printing fee?*

- With the move away from printing on non-biodegradable Valeron stock and to printing on plain paper, LIAs will be utilizing their own plain paper printers and paper. The transaction fee is meant to compensate LIAs for use of their supplies.

## *How much is the proposed transaction fee?*

- DEC is proposing an amendment to 6 NYRR Part 177 that would allow LIAs to charge a \$1.00 fee, per transaction to print plain paper licenses, privileges, carcass tags and other printable items sold through DECALS.

# LIA Printing Fee

## *How will the transaction fee be implemented?*

- LIAs will still verify their customers personal information and then proceed to selecting the licenses and other sales items.
- DEC is proposing that upon checkout, the LIA will have the option to charge the transaction fee and print the licenses and tags on their existing plain paper printer OR bypass printing, add or edit the customer's email address, and email the license and tags.
- If the customer also has an email address in their profile, the licenses and tags will also be emailed to the customer.
- At the end of the business day, the LIA will generate updated daily sales report that will also account for any transaction fees collected on that day.
- Similarly to a LIAs commission, the transaction fee will be retained by the LIA.



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# Overview of NY's Freshwater Wetland Regulatory Changes

Freshwater Wetlands

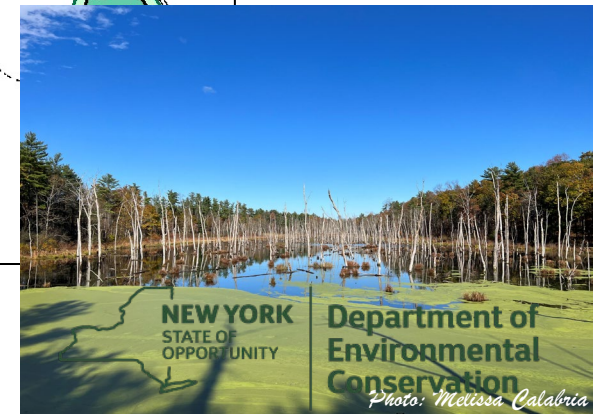
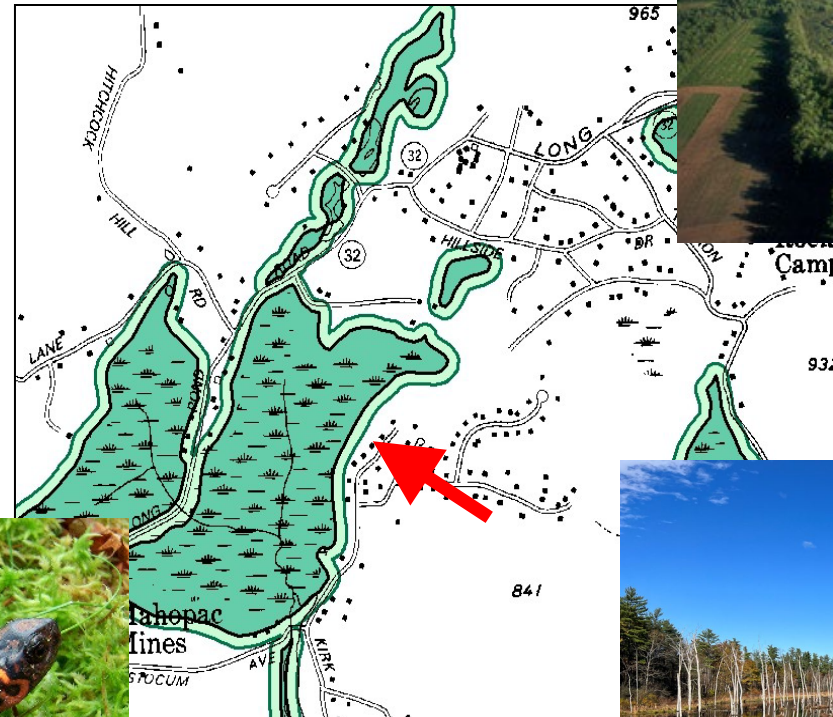
Repeal and Replace Part 664

Krista Spohr, 2024



# Current Article 24 – NY Freshwater Wetlands Act

- Mapped Regulated Wetlands >12.4 Acres
- Unusual Local Importance
  - ex. bog turtle
- 100 Foot Adjacent Area
- Classify Wetlands (I – IV)



# Existing Article 24 – NY Freshwater Wetlands Act Part 664

## Classify Wetlands I – IV

- Ability to perform wetland functions & provide wetland benefits.
- Special Ecological Importance – ex. Inland poor fen
- Special Features – habitat for endangered/threatened species
- Hydrological & Pollution Control Features

40 Criteria (7 Class I criteria)

PART 664 FRESHWATER WETLANDS MAPS AND CLASSIFICATION (Statutory authority: Environmental Conservation Law, §§3-0301 and 24-1301)	
<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
664.1 - Applicability.	1
664.2 - Definitions.	2
664.3 - Purposes and approach.	4
664.4 - Classification procedures.	6
664.5 - Classification system.	11
(a) Class I wetlands.	11
(b) Class II wetlands.	13
(c) Class III wetlands.	15
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664.6 - Explanation of classification characteristics.	17
(a) Covertypes.	17
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(e) Distribution and location.	35
664.7 - Freshwater wetlands map maintenance, amendment, and adjustment.	38
664.8 - Appeals and review.	44
664.9 - Effective date.	45



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# Proposed Part 664

## Classification:

- Class I – Class IV
- 35 Class criteria (9 Class I criteria)
- Unusual Importance
- Remote determinations:
  - Contract w/Cornell - wetland mapping
- Jurisdictional determinations remain valid for 5 years from date of JD.

### Express terms

6 NYCRR Part 662, Freshwater Wetlands -- Interim Permits, is repealed.

6 NYCRR Part 664, Freshwater Wetlands Maps and Classification, is repealed.

A new Part 664, Freshwater Wetlands Jurisdiction and Classification, is added to read as follows:

to read as follows:

#### 664.1. Applicability.

(a) This Part applies to all wetlands regulated under the Freshwater Wetlands Act, whether regulated by the department or by towns, cities, villages or counties. The department alone shall identify and classify wetlands, regardless of which agency is implementing the act in a particular locality, except that the Adirondack Park Agency shall classify the wetlands within the Adirondack Park.

(b) Where the department is the regulating authority, the wetlands classification presented in this Part takes effect in the department's freshwater wetlands permitting requirements regulations, Part 663 of this Title. In Part 663, standards for the issuance of permits are provided for each of the four wetland classes described in sections 664.1 and 664.5 of this Part.

#### 664.2. Definitions.

(a) "Act" means the Freshwater Wetlands Act (Section 11-0301 of the Environmental Conservation Law).



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- 1) Watershed with significant flooding
- 2) Urban areas
- 3) Rare plants
- 4) Habitat for essential behavior of Endangered/threatened/special concern/species of greatest conservation need
- 5) Class I wetland
- 6) Previously designated as a wetland of Unusual Local Importance (ULI)
- 7) Productive vernal pools
- 8) Wetlands in floodways
- 9) Previously mapped wetland
- 10) Regional or local significance
- 11) Significant for protecting state's water quality

# Timeline of the Rulemaking Process

Need by	What	Status
Nov./Dec. 2023	Develop list of stakeholders for rulemaking	Ongoing
Jan 2024	Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule Making	Complete
Jan 2024	Schedule various virtual stakeholder meeting via Webex	Complete
Jan/Feb 2024	Seek Public Comment and Engagement	Current
April 2024	Notice of Proposed Rule Making	TBD
April 2024 - September 2024	Develop and finalize educational materials	TBD
October 2024 -December 2028	Post materials on DEC website, social media, webinars	TBD



# Thank You

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# Regulatory Agenda Update

## Fishing Tournament Permit and Reporting System

February 12, 2024

# Background

- New York is a national destination for black bass fishing tournaments
- # of fishing tournaments is increasing
- Scope and scale of tournaments is unknown
- Valuable black bass fisheries are potentially at risk





# Proposal

- Promugate black bass fishing tournament permit and reporting system regulations, including:
  - Defining what a fishing tournament is for permitting purposes
  - Specifies a permit is only required for black bass tournaments
  - Sets timeframes for permits and reports
- Develop an online permit application/reporting system



# Benefits

- Provide information necessary to identify and respond to tournament-related issues and impacts, such as:
  - User conflicts
  - Overuse of resource
  - Concerns about fish populations



# Timeline

- Regulation proposal package currently with DOS
- Target dates:
  - Mid-April: start public comment period
  - Mid-August: publish NOA
  - September 1: Online Permitting and Reporting System goes live for tournaments taking place in 2025

