

Article 24.

Wildlife Resources Commission.

§ 143-237. Title.

This Article shall be known and may be cited as the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Law. (1947, c. 263, s. 1.)

§ 143-238. Definitions.

As used in this Article unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

- (1) The word "Commission" shall mean the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.
- (2) The word "Director" shall mean the Executive Director of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.
- (3) The terms "wildlife resources" and "wildlife" shall be defined in accordance with the definitions in G.S. 113-129. (1947, c. 263, s. 2; 1965, c. 957, s. 12.)

§ 143-239. Statement of purpose.

The purpose of this Article is to create a separate State agency to be known as the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, the function, purpose, and duty of which shall be to manage, restore, develop, cultivate, conserve, protect, and regulate the wildlife resources of the State of North Carolina, and to administer the laws relating to game, game and freshwater fishes, and other wildlife resources enacted by the General Assembly to the end that there may be provided a sound, constructive, comprehensive, continuing, and economical game, game fish, and wildlife program directed by qualified, competent, and representative citizens, who shall have knowledge of or training in the protection, restoration, proper use and management of wildlife resources. (1947, c. 263, s. 3; 1965, c. 957, s. 13.)

§ 143-240. Creation of Wildlife Resources Commission; districts; qualifications of members.

(a) There is hereby created the Wildlife Resources Commission of the Department of Environmental Quality which shall consist of 19 citizens of North Carolina who shall be appointed as is provided in G.S. 143-241.

Each member of the Commission shall be an experienced hunter, fisherman, farmer, or biologist, who shall be generally informed on wildlife conservation and restoration problems.

Members of the Commission shall receive per diem and necessary travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 138-5 or G.S. 138-6 as the case may be, which shall be paid from fees collected by the Wildlife Resources Commission.

(b) There are established the following geographical wildlife districts:

First district to be composed of the following counties: Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, Washington.

Second district to be composed of the following counties: Beaufort, Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender, Pitt.

Third district to be composed of the following counties: Edgecombe, Franklin, Halifax, Johnston, Nash, Northampton, Vance, Wake, Warren, Wayne, Wilson.

Fourth district to be composed of the following counties: Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Cumberland, Harnett, Hoke, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland.

Fifth district to be composed of the following counties: Alamance, Caswell, Chatham, Durham, Granville, Guilford, Lee, Orange, Person, Randolph, Rockingham.

Sixth district to be composed of the following counties: Anson, Cabarrus, Davidson, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond, Rowan, Stanly, Union.

Seventh district to be composed of the following counties: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Davie, Forsyth, Iredell, Stokes, Surry, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin.

Eighth district to be composed of the following counties: Avery, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln, McDowell, Mitchell, Rutherford, Yancey.

Ninth district to be composed of the following counties: Buncombe, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, Polk, Swain, Transylvania. (1947, c. 263, s. 4; 1961, c. 737, s. 11/2; 1965, c. 859, s. 2; 1971, c. 285; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; c. 906, s. 1; 1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1191, s. 79; 1989, c. 68, s. 1; c. 727, s. 218(112); 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 684, s. 13; 1997-443, s. 11A.119(a); 2001-486, s. 2.11(a); 2015-241, s. 14.30(u).)

§ 143-241. (Effective until June 30, 2025) Appointment and terms of office of Commission members; filling of vacancies.

The members of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission shall be appointed as follows:

The Governor shall appoint one member each from the first, fourth, and seventh wildlife districts to serve six-year terms;

The Governor shall appoint one member each from the second, fifth, and eighth wildlife districts to serve two-year terms;

The Governor shall appoint one member each from the third, sixth, and ninth wildlife districts to serve four-year terms;

The Governor shall also appoint two at-large members to serve four-year terms.

The General Assembly shall appoint 10 members of the Commission to serve two-year terms, five upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House, and five upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, in accordance with G.S. 120-121. Of the members appointed upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House and upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, at least one of each shall be a member of the political party to which the largest minority of the members of the General Assembly belongs.

Thereafter as the terms of office of the members of the Commission appointed by the Governor from the several wildlife districts expire, their successors shall be appointed for terms of six years each. As the terms of office of the members of the Commission appointed by the General Assembly expire, their successors shall be appointed for terms of two years each. All members appointed by the Governor serve at the pleasure of the Governor that appointed them and they may be removed by that Governor at any time. A successor to the appointing Governor may remove a Commission member only for cause as provided in G.S. 143B-13. Members appointed by the General Assembly serve at the pleasure of that body and may be removed by law at any time. In the event that a Commission member is removed, the member appointed to replace the removed member shall serve only for the unexpired term of the removed member. (1947, c. 263, s. 5; 1961, c. 737, s. 1; 1965, c. 859, s. 3; 1973, c. 825, s. 2; 1977, c. 906, s. 2; 1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1191, s. 80; 1989, c. 68, s. 3; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 684, s. 14; 1995, c. 490, s. 64; 2001-486, s. 2.11(b); 2023-136, s. 6.1(a).)

§ 143-241. (Effective June 30, 2025) Appointment and terms of office of Commission members; filling of vacancies.

The members of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission shall be appointed as follows:

The Governor shall appoint one member each from the first, fourth, and seventh wildlife districts to serve six-year terms;

The Governor shall appoint one member each from the second, fifth, and eighth wildlife districts to serve two-year terms;

The Governor shall appoint one member each from the third, sixth, and ninth wildlife districts to serve four-year terms;

The Governor shall appoint one at-large member and the Commissioner of Agriculture shall appoint one at-large member to serve four-year terms.

The General Assembly shall appoint 10 members of the Commission to serve two-year terms, five upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House, and five upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, in accordance with G.S. 120-121. Of the members appointed upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House and upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, at least one of each shall be a member of the political party to which the largest minority of the members of the General Assembly belongs.

Thereafter as the terms of office of the members of the Commission appointed by the Governor from the several wildlife districts expire, their successors shall be appointed for terms of six years each. As the terms of office of the members of the Commission appointed by the General Assembly expire, their successors shall be appointed for terms of two years each. All members appointed by the Governor serve at the pleasure of the Governor that appointed them and they may be removed by that Governor at any time. A successor to the appointing Governor may remove a Commission member only for cause as provided in G.S. 143B-13. Members appointed by the General Assembly serve at the pleasure of that body and may be removed by law at any time. In the event that a Commission member is removed, the member appointed to replace the removed member shall serve only for the unexpired term of the removed member. (1947, c. 263, s. 5; 1961, c. 737, s. 1; 1965, c. 859, s. 3; 1973, c. 825, s. 2; 1977, c. 906, s. 2; 1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1191, s. 80; 1989, c. 68, s. 3; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 684, s. 14; 1995, c. 490, s. 64; 2001-486, s. 2.11(b); 2023-136, s. 6.1(a), (b).)

§ 143-242. (Effective until June 30, 2025) Vacancies by death, resignation or otherwise.

Appointments to fill vacancies of gubernatorial appointees on the Commission occurring by reason of death, disability, resignation or otherwise shall be made by the Governor for the balance of the unexpired terms by appointment of a member from the State at large, or from the appropriate district in accordance with the procedure set out in G.S. 143-241. Appointments to fill vacancies of those members of the Commission appointed by the General Assembly shall be made under G.S. 120-122. The Governor shall have the power to remove any member of the Commission from office for misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance. (1947, c. 263, s. 6; 1973, c. 825, s. 3; 1977, c. 906, s. 3; 1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1191, s. 81.)

§ 143-242. (Effective June 30, 2025) Vacancies by death, resignation or otherwise.

Appointments to fill vacancies of gubernatorial appointees on the Commission occurring by reason of death, disability, resignation or otherwise shall be made by the Governor for the balance of the unexpired terms by appointment of a member from the State at large, or from the appropriate district in accordance with the procedure set out in G.S. 143-241. Appointments to fill vacancies of those members of the Commission appointed by the General Assembly shall be made under

G.S. 120-122. Appointments to fill vacancies of members of the Commission appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture shall be made by the Commissioner of Agriculture for the balance of the unexpired terms by appointment of a member from the State at large in accordance with the procedure set out in G.S. 143-241. The Governor shall have the power to remove any member of the Commission from office for misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance. (1947, c. 263, s. 6; 1973, c. 825, s. 3; 1977, c. 906, s. 3; 1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1191, s. 81; 2023-136, s. 6.1(c).)

§ 143-243. Organization of the Commission; election of officers; Robert's Rules of Order.

The Commission shall hold at least two meetings annually, one in January and one in July, and seven members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Additional meetings may be held at such other times within the State as may be deemed necessary for the efficient transaction of the business of the Commission. The Commission may hold additional or special meetings at any time at the call of the chairman or on call of any five members of the Commission. The Commission shall determine its own organization and methods of procedure in accordance with the provisions of this Article, and shall have an official seal, which shall be judicially noticed.

At the first scheduled meeting of the Commission after July 1, 1977, and on July 1 of each odd-numbered year thereafter, the Commission shall select from among its membership a chairman and a vice-chairman who shall serve for terms of two years or until their successors are elected and qualified. The Secretary of Environmental Quality or his designee shall serve as secretary of the Commission.

The chairman shall guide and coordinate the official actions and official activities of the Commission in fulfilling its program responsibility for (i) the appointment and separation of the executive director of the Commission, (ii) organizing the personnel of the Commission, (iii) setting the statewide policy of the Commission, (iv) budgeting and planning the use of the Wildlife and Motorboat Funds, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, (v) holding public hearings, and (vi) adopting rules as authorized by law. The chairman shall report to and advise the Governor on the official actions and work of the Commission and on all wildlife conservation and boating safety matters that affect the interest of the people of the State.

Meetings of the Commission shall be conducted pursuant to Robert's Rules of Order. (1947, c. 263, s. 7; 1973, c. 825, s. 4; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; c. 906, s. 4; 1983, c. 717, ss. 71, 72; 1987, c. 827, s. 213; 1989, c. 727, s. 218(113); 1997-443, s. 11A.119(a); 1997-456, s. 27; 2015-241, s. 14.30(v).)

§ 143-244. Location of offices.

The Board of Public Buildings and Grounds shall provide the Commission with offices in the city of Raleigh, North Carolina. (1947, c. 263, s. 8.)

§ 143-245. Repealed by Session Laws 1977, c. 906, s. 5.

§ 143-246. Executive Director; appointment, qualifications and duties.

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission as soon as practicable after its organization shall select and appoint a competent person qualified as hereinafter set forth as Executive Director of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. The Executive Director shall be charged with the supervision of all activities under the jurisdiction of the Commission and shall serve as the chief administrative officer of the said Commission. Subject to the approval of the Commission and the Director of the Budget, he is hereby authorized to employ such clerical

and other assistants as may be deemed necessary. The person selected as Executive Director shall have had training and experience in conservation, protection and management of wildlife resources. The salary of such Director shall be fixed by the Wildlife Resources Commission, in an amount at least equal to the salary of the Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries. The Director shall be allowed actual expenses incurred while on official duties away from resident headquarters. The salary and expenses of the Director shall be paid from the Wildlife Resources Fund subject to the provisions of the Executive Budget Act. The term of office of the Executive Director shall be at the pleasure of the Commission. Such bond shall be made as part of the blanket bond of State officers and employees provided for in G.S. 128-8. (1947, c. 263, s. 10; 1957, c. 541, s. 17; 1969, c. 844, s. 5; 1979, c. 830, s. 7; 1981, c. 884, s. 11; 1983, c. 717, s. 73; 1985, c. 479, s. 221; 1998-212, s. 28.19(a).)

§ 143-247. Transfer of powers, duties, jurisdiction, and responsibilities.

All duties, powers, jurisdiction, and responsibilities now vested by statute in and heretofore exercised by the Department of Conservation and Development, the Board of Conservation and Development, the Director of Conservation and Development, the Division of Game and Inland Fisheries, the Commissioner of Game and Inland Fisheries, or any predecessor organization, board, commission, commissioner or official relating to or pertaining to the wildlife resources of North Carolina, subject to the provisions of Subchapter IV of Chapter 113 of the General Statutes, are hereby transferred to and vested by law in the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission hereby created, subject to the provisions of this Article. The powers, duties, jurisdiction, and responsibilities hereby transferred shall be vested in the Commission immediately upon its organization under the provisions of this Article. Provided however, that no provision of this Article shall be construed as transferring to or conferring upon the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, herein created, jurisdiction over the administration of any laws regulating the pollution of streams or public waters in North Carolina. (1947, c. 263, s. 11; 1965, c. 957, s. 14.)

§ 143-247.1. Commission may accept gifts.

The Wildlife Resources Commission is hereby authorized and empowered to accept gifts, donations or contributions from any source, which funds shall be held in a separate account and used solely for the purposes of wildlife conservation and management. Such funds shall be administered by the Wildlife Resources Commission and shall be used for wildlife conservation and management in a manner consistent with wildlife conservation management principles. (1971, c. 388.)

§ 143-247.2. Wildlife Conservation Account; emblems for those who donate to the Account.

(a) Account. – The Wildlife Conservation Account is established within the Wildlife Resources Fund and is subject to the oversight of the State Auditor pursuant to Article 5A of Chapter 147 of the General Statutes. Revenue is credited to the Account from donations of income tax refunds, from other donations, from revenue derived from the sale of wildlife resources license plates, and from interest earned on the Account balance. The Commission may use revenue in the Account only for the following purposes:

- (1) To manage, preserve, or protect wildlife species that are endangered, threatened, or of special concern and are included on the State's protected animal lists.

- (2) To manage, preserve, or protect nongame wildlife species that are not on the State's protected animal lists.
- (3) To administer and enforce nongame wildlife programs under the jurisdiction of the Commission.

(b) Emblems. – The Commission may issue and sell appropriate emblems by which to identify recipients of the emblems as contributors to the Wildlife Conservation Account. Emblems of different size, shape, type, or design may be used to recognize contributions in different amounts. The Commission may not issue an emblem for a contribution of less than five dollars (\$5.00). (1975, c. 77; 1993, c. 257, s. 14; c. 543, s. 7; 1995, c. 509, s. 81; 2007-448, s. 1.)

§ 143-248. Transfer of lands, buildings, records, equipment, and other properties.

There is hereby transferred to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission all lands, buildings, structures, records, reports, equipment, vehicles, supplies, materials, and other properties, and the possession and use thereof, which have heretofore been acquired or obtained and now remain in the possession of, or which are now and heretofore have been used or intended for use by the Department of Conservation and Development, the Director of Conservation and Development, the Division of Game and Inland Fisheries, and the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, and any predecessor organization or division or official of either, for the purpose of protecting, propagating, and developing game, fur-bearing animals, game fish, inland fisheries, and all other wildlife resources which heretofore have been used or held by them in connection with any program conducted for said purposes, whether said lands or properties were acquired, purchased, or obtained by deed, gift, grant, contract, or otherwise; the said lands and other properties hereby transferred, subject to the limitations hereinafter set forth to the said Wildlife Resources Commission shall be held and used by it subject to the provisions of this Article and other provisions of law in furtherance of the intents, purposes, and provisions of this Article and other provisions of law in such manner and for such purposes as may be determined by the Commission. In the event that there shall arise any conflict in the transfer of any properties or functions as herein provided, the Governor of the State is hereby authorized and empowered to issue such executive order, or orders, as may be necessary clarifying and making certain the issue, or issues, thus arising: Provided, further, nothing herein contained shall be construed to transfer any of the State parks or State forests to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission: Provided, further, title to the property transferred by virtue of the provisions of this Article shall be held by the State of North Carolina for the use and benefit of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and the use, control and sale of any of such property shall be governed by the general law of the State affecting such matters. (1947, c. 263, s. 12; 1965, c. 957, s. 15.)

§ 143-249. Transfer of personnel.

Upon July 1, 1947, the Division of Game and Inland Fisheries of the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development shall cease to exist and all employees of said Division shall continue as employees of the Commission at their option or until further action by the Commission. (1947, c. 263, s. 13.)

§ 143-249.1. Operating budget.

No more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the certified operating budget of the Wildlife Resources Commission shall be allowed to accumulate in a cash balance. It is the intent of the General Assembly to implement in any subsequent fiscal year a nonrecurring reduction in an

amount equal to the cash balance that exceeds twenty-five percent (25%) of the authorized operating budget in the prior fiscal year. (2013-283, s. 18.)

§ 143-250. Wildlife Resources Fund.

All moneys in the game and fish fund or any similar State fund when this Article becomes effective shall be credited forthwith to a special fund in the office of the State Treasurer, and the State Treasurer shall deposit all such moneys in said special fund, which shall be known as the Wildlife Resources Fund.

All unexpended appropriations made to the Department of Conservation and Development, the Board of Conservation and Development, the Division of Game and Inland Fisheries or to any other State agency for any purpose pertaining to wildlife and wildlife resources shall also be transferred to the Wildlife Resources Fund.

Except as otherwise specifically provided by law, all moneys derived from hunting, fishing, trapping, and related license fees, exclusive of commercial fishing license fees, including the income received and accruing from the investment of license revenues, and all funds thereafter received from whatever sources shall be deposited to the credit of the Wildlife Resources Fund and made available to the Commission until expended subject to the provisions of this Article. License revenues include the proceeds from the sale of hunting, fishing, trapping, and related licenses, from the sale, lease, rental, or other granting of rights to real or personal property acquired or produced with license revenues, and from federal aid project reimbursements to the extent that license revenues originally funded the project for which the reimbursement is being made. For purposes of this section, real property includes lands, buildings, minerals, energy resources, timber, grazing rights, and animal products. Personal property includes equipment, vehicles, machines, tools, and annual crops. The Wildlife Resources Fund herein created shall be subject to the provisions of the State Budget Act, Chapter 143C of the General Statutes of North Carolina as amended, and the provisions of the General Statutes of North Carolina as amended, and the provisions of the Personnel Act, Chapter 143, Article 2 of the General Statutes of North Carolina as amended.

All moneys credited to the Wildlife Resources Fund shall be made available to carry out the intent and purposes of this Article in accordance with plans approved by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, and all of these funds are appropriated, reserved, set aside, and made available until expended, for the enforcement and administration of this Article, Article 1 of Chapter 75A of the General Statutes, and Subchapter IV of Chapter 113 of the General Statutes. No later than October 1 of each year, the Wildlife Resources Commission shall report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources on the expenditures from the Wildlife Resources Fund during the fiscal year that ended the previous July 1 of that year and on the planned expenditures for the current fiscal year.

In the event any uncertainty should arise as to the funds to be turned over to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission the Governor shall have full power and authority to determine the matter and his recommendation shall be final and binding to all parties concerned. (1947, c. 263, s. 14; 1965, c. 957, s. 16; 1981, c. 482, s. 2; 1982 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1182, s. 1; 1987, c. 816; 1991, c. 689, s. 167(a); 2006-203, s. 92; 2011-145, s. 13.28(a); 2020-78, s. 9.2.)

§ 143-250.1. Wildlife Endowment Fund.

(a) Recognizing the inestimable importance to the State and its people of conserving the wildlife resources of North Carolina, and for the purpose of providing the opportunity for citizens and residents of the State to invest in the future of its wildlife resources, there is created the North

Carolina Wildlife Endowment Fund, the income and principal of which shall be used only for the purpose of supporting wildlife conservation programs of the State in accordance with this section. This fund shall also be known as the Eddie Bridges Fund.

(b) There is created the Board of Trustees of the Wildlife Endowment Fund of the Wildlife Resources Commission, with full authority over the administration of the Wildlife Endowment Fund, whose ex officio chairman, vice-chairman, and members shall be the chairman, vice-chairman, and members of the Wildlife Resources Commission. The State Treasurer shall be the custodian of the Wildlife Endowment Fund and shall invest its assets in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 147-69.2 and 147-69.3.

(c) The assets of the Wildlife Endowment Fund shall be derived from the following:

- (1) The proceeds of any gifts, grants and contributions to the State which are specifically designated for inclusion in the fund.
- (2) The proceeds from the sale of lifetime sportsman combination licenses issued pursuant to G.S. 113-270.1D.
- (3) The proceeds from the sale of lifetime hunting and lifetime fishing licenses pursuant to G.S. 113-270.2 and G.S. 113-271.
- (3a) The proceeds from the sale of lifetime trapping licenses pursuant to G.S. 113-270.5(b).
- (4) The proceeds of lifetime subscriptions to the magazine Wildlife in North Carolina at such rates as may be established from time to time by the Wildlife Resources Commission.
- (5) Any amount in excess of the statutory fee for a particular lifetime license or lifetime subscription shall become an asset of the fund and shall qualify as a tax exempt donation to the State.
- (5a) The proceeds from the sale of lifetime combination hunting and fishing licenses for disabled residents pursuant to G.S. 113-270.1C.
- (5b) The Wildlife Resources Commission's portion of the proceeds from the sale of lifetime unified licenses pursuant to G.S. 113-351.
- (6) Such other sources as may be specified by law.

(d) The Wildlife Endowment Fund is declared to constitute a special trust derived from a contractual relationship between the State and the members of the public whose investments contribute to the fund. In recognition of such special trust, the following limitations and restrictions are placed on expenditures from the funds:

- (1) Any limitations or restrictions specified by the donors on the uses of the income derived from gifts, grants and voluntary contributions shall be respected but shall not be binding.
- (2) No expenditures or disbursements from the income from the proceeds derived from the sale of Infant Lifetime Sportsman or Youth Lifetime Sportsman Licenses pursuant to G.S. 113-270.1D(b)(1) or (2) shall be made for any purpose until the respective holders of such licenses attain the age of 16 years. The State Treasurer, as custodian of the fund, shall determine actuarially from time to time the amount of income within the fund which remains encumbered by and which is free of this restriction. For such purpose, the executive director shall cause deposits of proceeds and related investment income from Infant Lifetime Sportsman Licenses and Youth Lifetime Sportsman Licenses to be accompanied by information as to the ages of the license recipients.

- (3) No expenditure or disbursement shall be made from the principal of the Wildlife Endowment Fund except as otherwise provided by law.
- (4) The income received and accruing from the investments of the Wildlife Endowment Fund must be spent only in furthering the conservation of wildlife resources and the efficient operation of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission in accomplishing the purposes of the agency as set forth in G.S. 143-239.

(e) The Board of Trustees of the Wildlife Endowment Fund may accumulate the investment income of the fund until the income, in the sole judgment of the trustees, can provide a significant supplement to the budget of the Wildlife Resources Commission. After that time the trustees, in their sole discretion and authority, may direct expenditures from the investment income of the fund for the purposes set out in division (4) of subsection (d).

(f) Expenditure of the investment income derived from the Wildlife Endowment Fund shall be made through the State budget accounts of the Wildlife Resources Commission in accordance with the provisions of the Executive Budget Act. The Wildlife Endowment Fund is subject to the oversight of the State Auditor pursuant to Article 5A of Chapter 147 of the General Statutes.

(f1) At all times during which the cash balance in the Wildlife Endowment Fund is equal to or greater than the sum of one hundred million dollars (\$100,000,000), the Wildlife Resources Commission shall budget at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the annual expendable investment income from the Fund, as determined by the Board of Trustees of the Fund, to implement the conservation goals set forth in the Wildlife Resource Commission's strategic plan.

(g) The Wildlife Endowment Fund and the investment income therefrom shall not take the place of State appropriations or agency receipts placed in the Wildlife Resources Fund, or any part thereof, but any portion of the income of the Wildlife Endowment Fund available for the purpose set out in subdivision (4) of subsection (d) shall be used to supplement other income of and appropriations to the Wildlife Resources Commission to the end that the Commission may improve and increase its services and become more useful to a greater number of people.

(h) In the event of a future dissolution of the Wildlife Resources Commission, such State agency as shall succeed to its budgetary authority shall, ex officio, assume the trusteeship of the Wildlife Endowment Fund and shall be bound by all the limitations and restrictions placed by this section on expenditures from the fund. No repeal or modification of this section or of G.S. 143-239 shall alter the fundamental purposes to which the Wildlife Endowment Fund may be applied. No future dissolution of the Wildlife Resources Commission or substitution of any agency in its stead shall invalidate any lifetime license issued in accordance with G.S. 113-270.1D(b), 113-270.2(c)(2), 113-271(d)(3), or 113-351(c). (1981, c. 482, s. 1; 1993, c. 257, s. 15; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 684, ss. 10-12; 1997-326, s. 4; 2013-283, s. 19; 2017-57, s. 13A.2(a); 2019-204, s. 5.)

§ 143-251. Cooperative agreements.

In furtherance of the purposes of this Article the Commission is hereby authorized and empowered to enter into cooperative agreements pertaining to the management and development of the wildlife resources with federal, State, and other agencies, or governmental subdivisions. (1947, c. 263, s. 15.)

§ 143-252. Article subject to Chapter 113.

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to affect the jurisdictional division between the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and the Department of Environmental Quality contained in Subchapter IV of Chapter 113 of the General Statutes, or in any way to alter or abridge the powers and duties of the two agencies conferred in that Subchapter. (1947, c. 263, s. 16; 1965, c. 957, s. 17; 1973, c. 1262, s. 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, s. 166; 1997-443, s. 11A.119(a); 2015-241, s. 14.30(u).)

§ 143-253. Jurisdictional questions.

In the event of any questions arising between the Department of Environmental Quality and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission as to any duty or responsibility or authority imposed upon either of said bodies by law, or in case of any conflicting rules or administrative practices adopted by said bodies, such questions or matters shall be determined by the Governor and his determination shall be binding on each of said bodies. (1947, c. 263, s. 17; 1973, c. 1262, s. 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, s. 167; 1997-443, s. 11A.119(a); 2015-241, s. 14.30(u).)

§ 143-254: Repealed by Session Laws, 1987, c. 827, s. 214.

§ 143-254.1. Repealed by Session Laws 1979, c. 830, s. 8.

§ 143-254.2. Enforcement of local laws.

(a) It shall be the duty and responsibility of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission to enforce all local acts heretofore or hereinafter enacted respecting game animals, fur-bearing animals and birds, including local acts which prohibit or restrict hunting from, to or across public roads and highways and including local acts which prohibit or restrict the taking of specified animals or birds.

Provided, however, that the provisions of this section shall not apply on the lands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

(b) The provisions of this section shall not be construed to require the hiring of additional personnel by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. (1977, c. 120, ss. 1-3.)

§ 143-254.5. Disclosure of personal identifying information.

Social security numbers and identifying information obtained by the Commission shall be treated as provided in G.S. 132-1.10. For purposes of this section, "identifying information" also includes a person's mailing address, residence address, e-mail address, Commission-issued customer identification number, date of birth, information subject to G.S. 106-24.1 transferred to the Commission from the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and telephone number. (2005-455, s. 1.17; 2006-255, s. 11.1; 2017-10, s. 2.1(a); 2017-211, s. 2.)

§ 143-254.6. Powers of the Commission regarding certain fee negotiations, contracts, and capital improvements.

(a) Notwithstanding G.S. 143-341(3) and G.S. 143-135.1, the Commission shall, with respect to the design, construction, or renovation of property developments at boating access areas, public fishing areas, and game lands of the Commission, requiring the estimated expenditure of non-General Fund money, of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) or less:

- (1) Conduct the fee negotiations for all design contracts and supervise the letting of all construction and design contracts.

- (2) Develop procedures governing the responsibilities of the Commission to perform the duties of the Department of Administration and the Director or Office of State Construction under G.S. 133-1.1(d) and G.S. 143-341(3).
- (b) The Commission shall use the standard contracts for design and construction currently in use for State capital improvement projects by the Office of State Construction of the Department of Administration.
- (c) A contract may not be divided for the purpose of evading the monetary limit under this section.
- (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, the Department of Administration shall not be the awarding authority for contracts awarded pursuant to this section.
- (e) The Commission shall annually report the following to the State Building Commission:
 - (1) A list of projects governed by this section.
 - (2) The estimated cost of each project along with the actual cost.
 - (3) The name of each person or business awarded a contract under this section.
 - (4) Whether the person or business awarded a contract under this section meets the definition of "minority business" or "minority person" as defined in G.S. 143-128.2(g). (2023-69, s. 2.1(a).)

§ 143-254.7. Appropriation and emergency power to combat Chronic Wasting Disease; report.

- (a) Emergency Appropriation. – If the Commission determines that an outbreak of Chronic Wasting Disease in the State constitutes a significant threat to deer and other cervid species, the Commission may declare a wildlife emergency. Upon declaration of the wildlife emergency, the Commission shall request needed additional funding for immediate investigation, containment, and eradication of the outbreak from the Contingency and Emergency Fund to the Council of State for approval following the process set forth in G.S. 143C-4-4(c). The approved funds will be allocated by the State Controller to a special fund called the Chronic Wasting Disease Emergency Response Fund (CWD Response Fund). Funds allocated to the CWD Response Fund are appropriated to the Wildlife Resources Commission for the purposes for which the funds are requested and approved. The Commission shall request any federal funds available to combat Chronic Wasting Disease in cervids, and any such funds obtained will be used to offset State funds appropriated under this section to the extent allowed by applicable law. The Commission will inform the Office of State Budget and Management of the amount of State funds offset by federal funds, and the Office of State Budget and Management shall direct the State Controller to transfer these funds from the CWD Response Fund to the Contingency and Emergency Fund upon receipt of the federal funds.
- (b) Report. – No later than September 15 of each year in which the Commission receives State funds to combat, monitor, or contain an outbreak of Chronic Wasting Disease appropriated either under this section or in any other enactment of the General Assembly, the Director shall submit a report on the activities conducted with the funds during the prior fiscal year to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall include the following with respect to each Chronic Wasting Disease initiative or activity funded during the previous fiscal year:
 - (1) Identification of the source of the funds used for the initiative or activity.
 - (2) The goals and outcomes for the initiative or activity.

- (3) A description of the measures used or data collected to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the initiative or activity in reaching its desired goals and outcomes.
- (4) The performance of each initiative or activity with respect to the identified goals and outcomes. (2021-160, s. 7(a); 2022-74, s. 15.1.)