

4VAC15-90-294

Game: Deer: Rehabilitation of cervids.

Summary:

The recommendation is to change the allowable date of release of rehabilitated deer fawns from December 31st to January 15th, which would allow fawns to remain in rehabilitation until the close of the regular deer hunting seasons.

Recommended language of amendment:

4VAC15-90-294. Rehabilitation of cervids.

A. For the purposes of this section:

"Juvenile" means any cervid less than one year of age on December 31 of the current calendar year.

"Adult" means any cervid greater than one year of age on December 31 of the current calendar year.

B. No person permitted by the department to rehabilitate cervids may rehabilitate or release adult cervids. Rehabilitators permitted by the department may transport and temporarily possess adult cervids solely for the purpose of immediate humane dispatch but must notify the department immediately after the deer has been dispatched.

C. Juvenile cervids requiring continued rehabilitation beyond January 15th of the subsequent calendar year ~~December 31 of the current calendar year~~ shall not be transported, possessed, released, or rehabilitated without written authorization from the department.

D. Cervids that originate within an area designated by the department for disease management shall not be transported or possessed for the purposes of rehabilitation. If such a cervid is brought to a rehabilitator permitted by the department, the permittee shall hold the cervid in isolation and immediately notify the department.

E. Cervids from any county (including the cities and towns therein) containing an area designated by the department for cervid disease management may be rehabilitated and released in the county of origin only if the cervid originated from a portion of the county outside the disease management area.

Rationale:

There is interest among permitted fawn rehabilitators to extend the time period for release of rehabilitated fawns until after the conclusion of the regular deer seasons (1st Saturday in January). This time extension may allow rehabilitated fawns additional time to acclimate without ongoing, elevated deer hunting pressure typically noted at the end of the regular deer seasons. There should be limited additional risk of habituation from this extension, provided that it only extends through January 15th. This recommendation does not allow the extension of rehabilitation beyond January 15th, even in localities which have late antlerless only deer seasons, unless the provisions of subsection C are met (written authorization from the Department).