

House Bill 1175

By: Representatives Maddox of the 172nd, Shaw of the 176th, Williams of the 178th, Roberts of the 154th, Black of the 174th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 3 of Title 27 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 wildlife generally, so as to provide for permits for quality deer management programs on
3 privately owned tracts of land; to provide requirements for such programs; to change certain
4 provisions relating to unlawful enticement of game; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
5 purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 3 of Title 27 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to wildlife
9 generally, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

10 "27-3-51.

11 (a) Subject to the provisions of this Code section, the department may issue an annual
12 permit to an owner or lessee of a privately owned tract of land for the purpose of operating
13 a quality deer management program for such tract.

14 (b) Any landowner or lessee of a privately owned tract of land who desires to obtain such
15 a permit may apply to the department on forms provided by the department. Any such
16 application shall be accompanied by the owner's or lessee's proposed quality deer
17 management plan that is signed by a wildlife biologist and includes:

18 (1) A map of the tract, in such scale and with such detail as required by the department;

19 (2) A detailed set of management requirements aimed at protecting from harvest all 1.5
20 year-old and younger bucks unless they are obviously injured or sick;

21 (3) A plan for removing those adult bucks which, because of poor antler quality, could
22 be categorized as inferior or culls;

23 (4) Specified minimum and maximum numbers of does, on a per hundred acre basis, to
24 be removed from the tract to keep the total deer population at or below carrying capacity
25 of the land; and

26 (5) Provisions for maintaining a high quality protein diet for the deer population
27 throughout the year and not just during hunting seasons. The plan may include food plots
28 or supplemental feedings, or both, which may consist of peanuts, soybeans, pelletized
29 commercial feed, or any other mix of foods that contains at least 18 percent protein by
30 weight. If food plots or supplemental feedings are included, then the plan must specify
31 routine relocating and dispersing of supplemental feeding locations or stations so as to
32 minimize threats of spreading disease.

33 (c)(1) In addition to the permit required by this Code section, each applicant shall be
34 required to obtain a private shooting preserve license or commercial shooting preserve
35 license, as applicable, and pay the fee required by Code Section 27-2-23.

36 (2) The department may establish and require a fee for the permit under this Code section
37 in such amount as may be reasonable and necessary to offset part or all of the cost of
38 administering the program.

39 (d) No permit shall be issued under this Code section unless the management plan is
40 approved by the department as conforming with sound principles of wildlife management.
41 If the department denies an application, the applicant may submit a new plan.

42 (e) Each permit granted under this Code section shall be subject to the condition that the
43 department may modify the permit and management plan whenever, in the judgment of the
44 department, such modification is necessary and appropriate to conform with sound
45 principles of wildlife management. Each permit for a tract and all deer hunting on a
46 permitted tract shall be subject to compliance with the terms of the approved management
47 plan and any modification imposed by the department.

48 (f) Possession and bag limits shall be established in accordance with Code
49 Section 27-3-15.

50 (g) It shall be unlawful to shoot deer over supplemental feed unless there is a clear
51 biological need to improve herd health and such need is detailed in the management plan
52 for such tract.

53 (h) If a permittee detects or becomes aware of any sign of sickness in a deer on the
54 permitted tract, he or she shall notify the department for purposes of determining the
55 disease agent.

56 (i) Each permit shall expire annually on July 31. Each permittee shall, not later than such
57 expiration date, report to the department the numbers of bucks and does taken on such tract
58 during the preceding hunting season and the estimated ages thereof.

59 (j) Except as otherwise provided by this Code section, all other applicable provisions of
60 this title and rules and regulations issued by the department shall apply to deer hunting on
61 such tract.

62 (k) The board shall adopt such rules and regulations as are reasonable and necessary for
63 purposes of this Code section."

64 **SECTION 2.**

65 Said chapter is further amended by revising subsection (a) of Code Section 27-3-9, relating
66 to the unlawful enticement of game, as follows:

67 "(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to place, expose, deposit, distribute, or scatter any
68 corn, wheat, or other grains, salts, apples, or other feeds or bait so as to constitute a lure or
69 attraction or enticement for any game bird or game animal on or over any area where
70 hunters are or will be hunting; provided, however, that it:

71 (1) The prohibition of this subsection shall not apply and it shall be lawful to hunt deer
72 within the vicinity of such feeds if the hunter is at least 200 yards away from and not
73 within sight of the feed or bait; and

74 (2) The prohibition of this subsection shall not apply and it shall be lawful to hunt deer
75 within the vicinity of such feeds used as a lure or attraction or enticement for deer on a
76 privately owned tract of land in accordance with a permitted quality deer management
77 program as provided by Code Section 27-3-51."

78 **SECTION 3.**

79 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.