

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2023 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

### **Senate Bill 200**

By Senator Hamilton

[Introduced January 13, 2023; referred  
to the Committee on Agriculture and Natural  
Resources]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §20-2-5j of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to  
2 allowing leashed dogs to track wounded elk, turkey, bear, and wild boar while hunting.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

## **ARTICLE 2. WILDLIFE RESOURCES.**

### **§20-2-5j. Leashed dogs for tracking mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar or bear.**

1 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, a person who is legally  
2 hunting and reasonably believes he or she has mortally wounded a deer, elk, turkey, wild boar or  
3 bear may use leashed dogs to track and locate the mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar or  
4 bear. The hunter is also permitted to use a dog handler of leashed dogs to track and locate the  
5 mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar or bear. The hunter or the dog handler shall maintain  
6 physical control of the leashed dogs at all times.

7 (b) The act of tracking a mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar or bear with a dog is  
8 hunting and the hunter and handler are subject to all applicable laws and rules. It is unlawful for a  
9 hunter or dog handler to track deer, elk, turkey, wild boar or bear with leashed dogs under the  
10 provisions of this section unless he or she is in possession of a valid hunting license issued  
11 pursuant to this article or is a person excepted from licensing requirements pursuant to this article,  
12 and all other lawful authorizations as prescribed in this article. The hunter shall accompany the  
13 dog handler and only the hunter may kill a mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar or bear.  
14 The deer, elk, turkey, wild boar or bear shall count toward the bag limit of the hunter.

15 (c) Any dog handler providing tracking services for profit must be licensed as an outfitter or  
16 guide pursuant to §20-2-23 of this code.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to allow leashed dogs to track wounded elk, turkey, bear and wild boar when hunting.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.