

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5174

By Delegates Eldridge, Gearheart, Leavitt, Parsons,

D. Cannon, Masters, Watt, and Sheedy

[Introduced February 04, 2026; referred to the

Committee on Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section,
2 designated §20-2-65, relating to permitting gold panning; and providing for the publishing
3 of dates.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. WILDLIFE RESOURCES.

§20-2-65. Gold-panning permitted; dates published.

1 (a) The Division of Natural Resources shall authorize gold panning in West Virginia rivers
2 and streams and shall designate times of year when gold panning is permissible depending in the
3 spawning season on various rivers and streams in the state.
4 (b) A gold pan shall be used and a sluice that is no bigger than four inches wide.
5 (c) After the establishment of the dates when gold panning is permitted, the Division of
6 Natural Resources shall publish these dates for the interested public.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to authorize gold panning and have dates published showing when the season is open.

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