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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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**HOUSE BILL**

**No. 160**      Session of  
2007

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INTRODUCED BY BAKER, ROHRER, CAUSER, PICKETT, BOYD, CALTAGIRONE,  
CAPPELLI, CLYMER, COX, DALLY, EVERETT, FAIRCHILD, FRANKEL,  
GEIST, GEORGE, GODSHALL, GOODMAN, HANNA, HARHAI, HESS,  
HUTCHINSON, JAMES, MARKOSEK, MARSHALL, MENSCH, MILLARD, PYLE,  
RAPP, READSHAW, REICHLEY, ROAE, SAYLOR, SOLOBAY, SONNEY,  
STABACK, STERN, R. STEVENSON, SURRA, WALKO AND YOUNGBLOOD,  
JANUARY 31, 2007

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON GAME AND FISHERIES, JANUARY 31, 2007

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AN ACT

1 Providing for recreational hunting on lands managed by the  
2 Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Hunting  
7 Heritage Protection Act.

8 Section 2. Findings.

9 The General Assembly finds as follows:

10 (1) Recreational hunting is an important and traditional  
11 recreational activity in which 14,000,000 Americans 16 years  
12 of age and older participate.

13 (2) Hunters have been and continue to be among the  
14 foremost supporters of sound wildlife management and  
15 conservation practices in the United States.

1 (3) Persons who hunt and organizations related to  
2 hunting provide direct assistance to wildlife managers and  
3 enforcement officers of Federal, state and local governments.

4 (4) Purchases of hunting licenses, permits and stamps  
5 and payment of excise taxes on goods used by hunters have  
6 generated billions of dollars for wildlife conservation,  
7 research and management.

8 (5) Recreational hunting is an essential component of  
9 effective wildlife management, in that it is an important  
10 tool for reducing conflicts between people and wildlife and  
11 provides incentives for the conservation of wildlife,  
12 habitats and ecosystems on which wildlife depend.

13 (6) Recreational hunting is an environmentally  
14 acceptable activity that occurs and can be provided for on  
15 department-managed lands without adverse effects on other  
16 uses of that land.

17 Section 3. Definitions.

18 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
19 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
20 context clearly indicates otherwise:

21 "Department." The Department of Conservation and Natural  
22 Resources of the Commonwealth.

23 "Department-managed lands." Those lands that the Department  
24 of Conservation and Natural Resources owns or those lands over  
25 which the department holds management authority.

26 "Hunting." This term shall have the same meaning given to it  
27 under 34 Pa.C.S. § 102 (relating to definitions).

28 "Secretary." The Secretary of Conservation and Natural  
29 Resources of the Commonwealth.

30 Section 4. Recreational hunting.

1 (a) General rule.--Subject to valid existing rights,  
2 department-managed lands shall be open to access and use for  
3 recreational hunting except as limited by the department for  
4 reasons of public safety, fish or wildlife management, homeland  
5 security or as otherwise limited by law.

6 (b) Department efforts.--The department shall exercise its  
7 authority, consistent with subsection (a), in a manner to  
8 support, promote and enhance recreational hunting opportunities,  
9 to the extent authorized by State law. The department shall not  
10 be required to give preference to hunting over other uses of  
11 department-managed lands or over land or water management  
12 priorities established by department regulations or State law.

13 (c) Limitation on department efforts.--Department land  
14 management decisions and actions may not, to the greatest  
15 practical extent, result in any net loss of land acreage  
16 available for hunting opportunities on department-managed lands  
17 that exists on the effective date of this section.

18 (d) Report to General Assembly.--By October 1 of each year,  
19 the secretary shall submit to the General Assembly a written  
20 report describing:

21 (1) The acreage administered by the department that has  
22 been closed during the previous year to recreational hunting  
23 and the reasons for the closures.

24 (2) The acreage administered by the department that, in  
25 order to comply with subsection (c), was opened to  
26 recreational hunting to compensate for acreage closed under  
27 paragraph (1).

28 Section 5. Effective date.

29 This act shall take effect in 60 days.