OHIO COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY 29 – WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE STATE OF OHIO TO PROVIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE IN THE COASTAL AREA TO ASSURE THE CONTINUED ENJOYMENT OF BENEFITS RECEIVED FROM WILDLIFE BY:

- A. PROTECTING ALL WILDLIFE INCLUDING NONGAME AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (O.R.C. 1531.02, 1531.08 AND 1531.25);
- B. REGULATING THE TAKING OF WILDLIFE (O.R.C. CHAPTER 1533 AND O.A.C. 1501:31);
- C. ESTABLISHING STATE WILDLIFE AREAS AND PROVIDING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES;
- D. PROVIDING FOOD, COVER AND HABITAT FOR WILDLIFE, AND
- E. PROVIDING NONGAME WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FUNDING.

Authorities and Administration

- A. The state holds title to all wild animals in Ohio for the public (O.R.C. 1531.02). The Chief of the Division of Wildlife, ODNR, has authority and control in all matters pertaining to the protection preservation, propagation and management of wild animals (O.R.C. 1531.08). The chief may regulate the taking, possession, transportation, buying, selling, offering for sale or exposing for sale any wild animal or part thereof. DOW also protects fish and wildlife species threatened with statewide extinction (O.R.C. 1531.25). See Policy 14.
- B. O.R.C. Chapter 1533 specifies the laws concerning the taking of wild animals. O.A.C. 1501:31 specifies the rules promulgated by the chief on taking wild animals. All orders of the DOW relating to establishment of seasons, limits, size, species, method of taking and possession shall be adopted only upon approval of the Wildlife Council (O.R.C. 1531.03).

Persons hunting any wild bird or wild quadruped are required to have a hunting license or a trapping permit if trapping furbearers (O.R.C. 1533.10 and 1533.111). Special permits are required for deer and turkey hunting (O.R.C. 1533.11). A property owner may hunt on his or her own property without a hunting license. First-time hunters are required to complete a hunter safety and conservation course before a license will be issued. First-time trappers must complete a trapper education course. Persons owning or controlling land or water within a 10-mile radius of a state or federal waterfowl management area shall annually obtain a permit from the Chief of DOW prior to allowing the hunting or taking of waterfowl on said land or water (O.R.C. 1533.81). This permit is designated as a "waterfowl hunting area permit." Fees from

the sale of hunting and trapping licenses are to be used by the DOW for the following purposes (O.R.C. 1533.15):

- 1. Education of hunters and trappers;
- 2. Purchase, management, preservation, propagation, protection, and stocking of wild birds and wild quadrupeds; and
- 3. Establishing and purchasing or otherwise acquiring title to lands for wildlife preservation, propagation, and protection, and for public hunting.
- C. The Chief of DOW, with the approval of the Director of ODNR, may acquire or lease lands or surface rights upon lands and water for wild animals, fish and wildlife management, preservation, propagation, and protection, outdoor and nature activities, public fishing and hunting grounds, and flora and fauna preservation. The lease or purchase of all such lands and waters may be paid for from hunting and fishing license fees (O.R.C. 1531.06). Under this effort, four state wildlife areas have been established in the coastal area. These areas are managed by wildlife biologists and devoted primarily to the management of migratory birds, fish habitat, and marsh-dependent wildlife. The areas are generally open to the public except during hunting season, when their use may be restricted.
- D. The DOW offers a variety of programs and services to rural landowners who wish to make their property more attractive to wildlife or to control excessive hunting pressure. A qualified biologist from the DOW will review a landowner's current wildlife habitat and evaluate the potential for developing additional habitat. A complete wildlife management plan will be designed for the current and future pattern of crop and land use on the property.
- E. An Endangered Species and Diversity Program has been established in the Division of Wildlife, with responsibilities encompassing more than 1,000 species of wild animals. In less than 200 years, 10 of these species have become extinct and 78 have been extirpated from the state. One hundred-sixteen species are protected as endangered, and more are being reviewed for endangered status. O.R.C. 1531.25 provides for the adoption of rules by the chief restricting the taking or possession of native wildlife, or any eggs or offspring thereof, that the chief finds to be threatened with statewide extinction. Current program objectives are to provide population status reports, develop habitat management guidelines and procedures, develop species-specific management programs for endangered animals and develop restoration programs for selected nongame wildlife species extirpated from Ohio.

The State of Ohio administers the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Tax Checkoff Program to help fund nongame management. Money from this source has contributed to activities such as the restoration of Ohio's Bald Eagle population; a wildlife education program called "Project Wild;" a bluebird restoration project; and the reintroduction of the River Otter into four watersheds in the eastern portion of the state, including the Grand River watershed in the coastal region.