WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §20-2-5j

§20-2-5j. Leashed dogs and unmanned aerial vehicles for tracking or locating mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear.

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, a person who is legally hunting and reasonably believes he or she has mortally wounded a deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear may use a leashed dog or a unmanned aerial vehicles as defined in West Virginia Code §61-16-1(3) (hereafter "UAV") or both, to track and locate the mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear. The hunter is also permitted to use a dog handler of a leashed dog and/or a licensed UAV operator to track and locate the mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear. The hunter or the dog handler shall always maintain physical control of the leashed dog. Only one leashed dog per handler may be used and, if the hunter is using a dog handler, the hunter may not handle additional dogs for the handler.

(b) The act of tracking a mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear with a dog, or locating with a UAV, is hunting and the hunter, handler, or licensed UAV operator are subject to all applicable laws and rules. It is unlawful for a hunter, licensed UAV operator, or dog handler to track or locate deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear with leashed dogs or a UAV under the provisions of this section unless he or she is in possession of a valid hunting license issued pursuant to this article or is a person excepted from licensing requirements pursuant to this article, and all other lawful authorizations as prescribed in this article. The hunter shall accompany the dog handler and only the hunter may kill a mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear. However, any hunter who is physically unable to accompany the handler in the tracking and locating of the mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear may designate the handler to kill the deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear when located by the handler. The deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear shall count toward the bag limit of the hunter who fired the initial shot.

(c) Any dog handler or any UAV operator providing tracking services for profit must be licensed as an outfitter or guide pursuant to §20-2-23 of this code. Any UAV operator not operating on property they own or lease must be licensed according to FAA Part 107. The Director shall provide a list of licensed outfitters and guides who provide dog tracking or UAV tracking services pursuant to this section to the public prior to September 1st of each year.

WVLegislature