STATE OF NEW YORK

6360--A

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 11, 2025

Introduced by Sens. HARCKHAM, COMRIE, SALAZAR -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Environmental Conservation -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to clarifying provisions regarding the use of crossbows for hunting

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Section 11-0103 of the environmental conservation law is amended by adding a new subdivision 33 to read as follows:

33. "Long bow" includes longbows, recurve bows, compound bows, and crossbows.

§ 2. Subparagraph 9 of paragraph b of subdivision 4 of section 11-0901 of the environmental conservation law, as added by section 6 of part EE of chapter 55 of the laws of 2014, is amended to read as follows:

(9) with a crossbow unless such crossbow shall consist of a bow and string, either compound or recurve, [~~that launches a minimum fourteen inch bolt, not including point,~~] mounted upon a stock with a trigger that holds the string and limbs under tension until released. The trigger unit of such crossbow must have a working safety. The [~~minimum limb width of such crossbow shall be seventeen inches, have a~~] minimum peak draw weight of **such crossbow shall be** one hundred pounds [~~and a maximum peak draw weight of two hundred pounds. The minimum overall length of such crossbow from buttstock to front of limbs shall be twenty-four inches~~].

§ 3. Subparagraph 9 of paragraph c of subdivision 4 of section 11-0901 of the environmental conservation law, as added by section 7 of part EE of chapter 55 of the laws of 2014, is amended to read as follows:

(9) with a crossbow unless such crossbow shall consist of a bow and string, either compound or recurve, [~~that launches a minimum fourteen inch bolt, not including point,~~] mounted upon a stock with a trigger

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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that holds the string and limbs under tension until released. The trigger unit of such crossbow must have a working safety. The [~~minimum limb width of such crossbow shall be seventeen inches, have a~~] minimum peak draw weight of **such crossbow shall be** one hundred pounds [~~and a maximum peak draw weight of two hundred pounds. The minimum overall length of such crossbow from buttstock to front of limbs shall be twenty-four inches~~].

§ 4. Paragraph a of subdivision 1, paragraphs a and b of subdivision 8 and subdivision 10 of section 11-0907 of the environmental conservation law, paragraph a of subdivision 1 as amended and subdivision 10 as added by section 14 and paragraphs a and b of subdivision 8 as amended by section 16 of part EE of chapter 55 of the laws of 2014, are amended to read as follows:

a. Wild deer without antlers or having antlers measuring less than three inches in length shall not be taken unless it is taken (1) by long bow in a special long bow season established in subdivision [~~3~~] **three** of this section, or (2) by muzzle-loading firearm [~~or crossbow~~] in a special muzzle-loading firearm season established in subdivision [~~8~~] **eight** of this section, or (3) by long bow in Westchester and Suffolk Counties in a year in which a regular season for deer of either sex is established for such counties, or (4) in a special open season for deer of either sex fixed by regulation pursuant to subdivision [~~5~~] **five** or [~~7~~] **seven** of section 11-0903 of this title, or (5) pursuant to a special antlerless deer license in a special open season for antlerless deer in a tract within a Wilderness Hunting Area fixed by regulation pursuant to subdivision [~~6~~] **six** of section 11-0903 of this title, or (6) pursuant to a deer management permit by a person eligible to take such deer pursuant thereto as provided in section 11-0913 of this title, or (7) pursuant to a permit issued to an eligible non-ambulatory person, pursuant to subdivision [~~2~~] **two** of section 11-0931 of this title, while in possession of a valid license issued by the department which authorizes the holder to hunt big game. Nothing in this subparagraph shall be construed to limit the power of the department to designate by regulation an area or areas of the state consisting of a county or part of a county where such season shall apply and whether the number of such special permits shall be limited.

a. In every area identified in column one of the table set forth in subdivision two of this section, except those areas restricted to special seasons for taking deer by longbow only, special open seasons may be established by regulation for taking deer and/or bear, by the use of muzzle-loading firearms, of not less than .44 caliber shooting a single projectile[~~, or by the use of a crossbow,~~] by the holders of a hunting license with a valid muzzle-loading privilege.

b. Such special open season for the Southern Zone shall be for the seven day period immediately preceding the regular open season for deer stated in column two of the table set forth in subdivision two of this section, except that the department may, by regulation, fix such open season in the Southern Zone or any portion thereof to be either the seven days immediately preceding or immediately following the regular open season for deer[~~, provided, however, that any taking of deer or bear by the use of a crossbow in a season or special season in which the muzzle loader is the only firearm permitted shall succeed the regular open hunting season for deer established pursuant to subdivision two of of this section~~].

10. Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter, or any prior notwithstanding language in this article, the department may, by regu-

lation, authorize the taking of big game by the use of a crossbow by any licensed person in any big game season in any area [~~designated in items (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (i), (k) and (l) of paragraph a of subdivision two of this section~~] in which a [~~shotgun or muzzle loader~~] long bow is permitted [~~provided however, that any crossbow use during an archery-only season shall only take place during the last fourteen consecutive days of such archery-only season in the southern zone provided that such archery-only season shall consist of not less than forty-five days and only during the last ten consecutive days of any archery-only season in the northern zone provided that such archery-only season shall consist of no less than twenty-three days. Any muzzle loading season which occurs at the same time as a special archery season may only occur during times when crossbows are authorized to be used~~].

§ 5. Section 11-0931 of the environmental conservation law is amended by adding a new subdivision 8 to read as follows:

8. a. No person in Westchester, Nassau, or Suffolk county shall discharge a crossbow within five hundred feet of a dwelling house, a farm building or farm structure actually occupied or used, or a school building or playground, public structure, or occupied factory or church.

b. A county not enumerated in paragraph a of this subdivision may opt by local law to be covered by the provisions of such paragraph.

§ 6. This act shall take effect immediately.