

By: Representative McGee

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and  
Parks

HOUSE BILL NO. 1131

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 AUTHORIZE THE HUNTING OF DEER ON PRIVATE LANDS AND LANDS UPON  
3 WHICH HUNTING RIGHTS HAVE BEEN LEASED BY CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WITH  
4 ANY LEGAL WEAPON OF CHOICE DURING ANY PRIMITIVE WEAPON SEASON ON  
5 DEER ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-7-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
8 amended as follows:

9 49-7-31. (1) The open season on deer shall be as follows:

10 (a) With bow and arrow: October 1 through the Friday  
11 prior to Thanksgiving.

12 (b) With guns and with dogs: from the Saturday prior  
13 to Thanksgiving through December 1.

14 (c) With primitive weapons and without dogs: December  
15 2 through December 15.

16 (d) With guns and without dogs: December 16 through  
17 December 23. However, the commission may allow hunting statewide  
18 or in specific areas with any legal weapon which it may designate  
19 without dogs after the end of the last season for hunting deer  
20 with guns and with dogs, but the season with legal designated  
21 weapons and without dogs shall not extend beyond January 31.

22 (e) The commission shall establish an extended season  
23 with primitive weapons and bow and arrow without dogs from  
24 February 1 through February 15 for the area south of U.S. Highway  
25 84 and east of Mississippi Highway 35 only for legal bucks. Any  
26 antlered deer taken in this area during any open season under this  
27 section must be a legal buck as defined in this paragraph. For  
28 purposes of this paragraph, the term "legal buck" means a deer



29 with antlers of four (4) points or more with a minimum inside  
30 spread of ten (10) inches or a minimum main beam length of  
31 thirteen (13) inches. The commission may regulate the taking of  
32 deer with antlers of four (4) points or less under this paragraph  
33 for the proper management of antlered deer. The commission may  
34 delay the opening date and change the length of bow and arrow  
35 season in subsection (1) (a) in this area.

36 (f) With guns and with dogs: December 24 through a  
37 date fixed by the commission that will provide a total of  
38 thirty-nine (39) days of hunting deer with guns and with dogs when  
39 added to the number of days provided for hunting deer with guns  
40 and with dogs in paragraph (b).

41 (2) The commission may set and regulate the deer seasons on  
42 wildlife management areas which it administers.

43 (3) (a) The commission may allow the harvesting of  
44 antlerless deer in the districts or zones upon the recommendation  
45 of the executive director based upon good and substantial  
46 quantitative data and research evaluations that demonstrate that  
47 the harvesting is necessary to properly manage the herd.

48 (b) The commission, only upon the recommendation of the  
49 executive director, may allow the harvesting of antlerless deer  
50 during the deer season with guns and with dogs by a majority vote  
51 of the commission.

52 (c) Nothing in this subsection prohibits the harvesting  
53 of either-sex deer by landowners or leaseholders on private lands  
54 under the deer management assistance program prescribed or  
55 approved by the executive director.

56 (4) The commission may provide a special permit for the  
57 harvesting of deer when they are depredating and destroying crops.  
58 The department shall supervise the harvesting and provide for the  
59 salvaging of the meat of the animals. The commission may  
60 authorize the department to assist any farmer in this state, who



61 sustains crop damage by wildlife, in eradication of the problem  
62 wildlife.

63 (5) During any open season on deer as prescribed in  
64 subsection (1)(c) and (e) of this section, it shall be lawful for  
65 a hunter to use any legal weapon of choice only on private lands  
66 for which the title to said lands is vested in the hunter and upon  
67 private lands upon which hunting rights have been leased by the  
68 hunter, provided that the hunter, if required by law to purchase a  
69 hunting license, has purchased either a valid primitive weapons  
70 permit or sportsman's license.

71 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
72 and after July 1, 2012.

