

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 356 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY HADDOCK, GREINER, VENKAT, HILL-EVANS, K. HARRIS,
PASHINSKI, KULIK, BURGOS, MERSKI, GUENST, STEELE AND NEILSON,
OCTOBER 23, 2025

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON GAME AND FISHERIES, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, NOVEMBER 18, 2025

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating ~~November 3~~ DECEMBER 27, 2025, as "Pennsylvania Elk <--
2 Hunt Day" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Today, approximately 1,400 elk call this
4 Commonwealth home, with most of these animals residing in the
5 north-central region of the state; and

6 WHEREAS, Each year, nearly 500,000 people come to this area
7 of Pennsylvania to witness its native elk population; and

8 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has seen its elk population both
9 dwindle and flourish multiple times over hundreds of years; and

10 WHEREAS, In the 1700s, elk could be found across Pennsylvania
11 and the eastern United States, but European settlers and
12 indigenous populations overhunted the native elk during this
13 era, leading to the entire eastern elk population in
14 Pennsylvania going extinct by 1880; and

15 WHEREAS, By 1913, while Pennsylvania had exhausted its elk
16 population, elk in the Rocky Mountain region were experiencing
17 overpopulation, leading to many elk in Wyoming being transferred

1 to other states, including Pennsylvania; and

2 WHEREAS, Through the efforts of the Pennsylvania Game
3 Commission, 50 elk were shipped to this Commonwealth from
4 Wyoming, with the elk being evenly split between Clearfield and
5 Clinton counties; and

6 WHEREAS, Two years later in 1915, an additional 95 elk were
7 brought to this Commonwealth from Yellowstone National Park and
8 were distributed between Cameron, Carbon, Potter, Forest, Blair
9 and Monroe counties; and

10 WHEREAS, Shortly after the arrival of the initial elk
11 shipment, the General Assembly passed a law prohibiting the
12 hunting of elk until November 1921, when a two-week hunting
13 season would be held; and

14 WHEREAS, The first regulated elk hunt in Pennsylvania took
15 place in 1923, two years later than originally scheduled, and
16 only permitted the hunting of bull elk with four or more points
17 on at least one antler and only allowed hunting through
18 stalking; and

19 WHEREAS, These hunts were an annual occurrence until the
20 final hunt took place in 1931, though many other elk were killed
21 illegally by poachers or by disgruntled farmers after elk had
22 disrupted their crops; and

23 WHEREAS, Later, in the 1970s and 1980s, the Pennsylvania Game
24 Commission accelerated its efforts to manage the elk population,
25 taking action to improve elk habitats in response to damage
26 caused by strip mining in this Commonwealth in the preceding
27 decades; and

28 WHEREAS, Habitat management and elk research conducted by the
29 Pennsylvania Game Commission has allowed the Pennsylvania elk
30 population to grow to its current levels; and

1 WHEREAS, In 2000, the General Assembly and Governor Tom Ridge
2 passed a law authorizing elk hunts to return to this
3 Commonwealth; and

4 WHEREAS, In 2001, the Pennsylvania Game Commission issued
5 this Commonwealth's first hunting licenses for elk and held a
6 regulated hunting season 70 years after the original
7 Pennsylvania elk hunts ended; and

8 WHEREAS, Since then, the Pennsylvania Game Commission has
9 annually held elk hunting seasons, with tens of thousands of
10 hunters applying to the commission for their chance to hunt a
11 Pennsylvania elk; and

12 WHEREAS, Today, the Pennsylvania Game Commission holds three
13 elk hunting seasons each year, an archery season in September, a
14 rifle season in November and a late hunting season in late
15 December into early January; and

16 WHEREAS, In 2024 alone, more than 55,000 hunters submitted
17 applications for just 140 elk licenses for these three elk
18 hunting seasons; and

19 WHEREAS, Hunters across this Commonwealth consider it a once-
20 in-a-lifetime privilege to hunt an elk in Pennsylvania, with
21 many hunters submitting multiple applications over several years
22 for the chance to participate; and

23 WHEREAS, This year, the ~~general~~ LATE elk hunting season in <--
24 this Commonwealth will begin on ~~Monday, November 3~~ SATURDAY, <--
25 DECEMBER 27, 2025, and will last until ~~Sunday, November 8, 2025~~ <--
26 SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 2026; and <--

27 WHEREAS, Hunting elk is a celebrated aspect of Pennsylvania's
28 storied hunting culture, and the House of Representatives should
29 recognize the importance of this tradition to Pennsylvania's
30 hunters while celebrating the anniversary of Pennsylvania's

1 first elk hunt over a century ago; therefore be it
2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate
3 ~~November 3~~ DECEMBER 27, 2025, as "Pennsylvania Elk Hunt Day" in <--
4 Pennsylvania.