WILDLIFE CONTROL PERMITS

Code Section O.C.G.A. 27-2-31 provides for four different permits for controlling wildlife in certain nuisance situations. Previously, homeowners had no legal recourse other than to pay private contractors or solicit assistance from WRD offices. These permits provide an option to individuals who are capable of handling these problems themselves.

These permits (verbal and written) are:

- Nuisance wildlife control when wildlife is damaging personal property
- Deer control on airports
- Furbearer control on property managed under a *bona fide* management plan
- Feral hog control

Region offices provide authorization of these permits. Region offices contact information can be found at: http://georgiawildlife.com/about/contact

Guidance: Nuisance Wildlife Control Permits for Individuals

Authorized under O.C.G.A. § 27-2-31(1) (February 22, 2000)

DNR is authorized to prescribe the method, means, species, numbers, time limits, location and any other conditions necessary to ensure the continued viability of the wildlife population involved and ensure the public safety and interest are not compromised. Permits may be issued when:

> "*the Department determines that there is a substantial likelihood that such wildlife will endanger or cause injury to persons or will destroy or damage agricultural crops, domestic animals, buildings, structures or other personal property*."

Callers should prepare answers to the following questions before calling Region offices:

- What damage is occurring?
- What type of animal is causing damage?
- Have any prevention methods been tried?
- Are you the property owner or legal resident?

If a permit is warranted, callers will receive verbal authorization to take the necessary actions. Caller should record the date and name of the office personnel giving this authorization for their records.

Permits are issued with the following authorizations and limitations:

- Permits may last for up to 90 days.
- Specify methods (if appropriate).

- Permits DO NOT cover: deer, bear, turkey, waterfowl or alligators.
- Permits are issued to property owner or legal resident only.
- Permits are issued for a specific property and species.
- No permits for bats between May 1 and August 15.
- Animals may be killed or trapped and relocated (no relocation of carnivores).
- Permits for birds also need approval of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (404-679-7070).
- Animals may be released in suitable habitat (with property owner's permission) or disposed of properly.

Written permits should be used when the location, methods, species or the land owner/legal resident indicates that some question or conflict may arise from the permitted activity.

When deciding if a written permit is warranted, consider:

- Methods used – such as shooting with a firearm. If this or other methods are used, are they accepted in the local area?
- Will activity be directly adjacent to, or in plain view of, neighbors/public?
- Is activity to take place next to an area of public concern? (eg. public park, school, day care or animal activist's house)
- Is there a publicized problem with the species to be removed or is this new?