
Wisconsin Legislative Council

AMENDMENT MEMO



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2023 Senate Bill 208

**Senate
Amendment 1**

2023 SENATE BILL 208

2023 Senate Bill 208 provides limited exceptions to various laws relating to hunting and weapons, to facilitate nuisance wildlife management and control at certain airports.

With some exceptions, current law prohibits all of the following, with various applicable penalties:

- Shining a light on wild animals for the purpose of illuminating, locating, or attempting to illuminate or locate, the animals, either: (1) while in possession of a firearm, bow and arrow, or crossbow; or (2) from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. from September 15 to December 31.
- Placing, possessing, or transporting a firearm, bow, or crossbow in a motorboat or vehicle, unless: (1) the firearm is unloaded or a handgun; (2) the bow does not have an arrow nocked; or (3) the crossbow is not cocked or is unloaded.
- Loading a firearm, other than a handgun, in a vehicle.
- Discharging a firearm, or shooting a bolt or an arrow from a bow or crossbow, in or from a vehicle, from or across a highway, or within 50 feet of the center of a roadway.
- Intentionally discharging a firearm at or toward a person, building, or vehicle, from a vehicle while on a highway or on a vehicle parking lot that is open to the public.

The bill provides an exception from each of those general prohibitions. The exceptions allow designated personnel¹ at certain airports to conduct nuisance wildlife management and control that is conducted in accordance with applicable state and federal permits.

Specifically, the bill applies to designated personnel at public-use airports and airports under the exclusive control of the National Guard or the U.S. Department of Defense. For this purpose, the bill incorporates an existing definition of “public-use airport” as any of the following, as provided under federal law: (1) any public airport; (2) any privately owned reliever airport; or (3) any privately owned airport used for public purposes and determined by the U.S. Department of Transportation to enplane 2,500 or more passengers annually and receive scheduled passenger service of aircraft.

¹ The bill defines “designated personnel” to mean any person who is acting within the scope of his or her employment or employer and who is an employee or contractor of the airport of the local government that operates the airport of a federal employee or agent.

SENATE AMENDMENT 1

Senate Amendment 1 modifies the bill as follows:

- Amends the Department of Natural Resources' administrative rules relating to approval for destroying or relocating wild animals that are causing damage, by authorizing the department to exempt a permittee from general shooting hour restrictions, if the exemption is used to assist designated personnel at certain airports in conducting nuisance wildlife management and control authorized by state or federal permits.
- Specifies that the exceptions under the bill apply when "authorized by" state and federal permits, rather than when "conducted in accordance with applicable" state and federal permits.
- Updates a cross-reference to federal law in the current definition of "public-use airport."

BILL HISTORY

Senator Cowles offered Senate Amendment 1 on May 25, 2023, following a public hearing on the bill. On May 30, 2023, the Senate Committee on Natural Resources voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the amendment and passage of the bill, as amended.

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature's [bill history page](#).

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