**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**S. 532**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Senator Hembree

Document Path: SEDU-0030DB25.docx

Introduced in the Senate on April 2, 2025

Currently residing in the Senate Committee on **Fish, Game and Forestry**

Summary: Nuisance Alligator control

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

 Date Body Action Description with journal page number

 4/2/2025 Senate Introduced and read first time (Senate Journal‑page 4)

 4/2/2025 Senate Referred to Committee on **Fish, Game and Forestry** (Senate Journal‑page 4)

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[04/02/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/532_20250402.docx)

A bill

TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 50‑15‑550 SO AS TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS REGARDING THE ISSUANCE OF A SPECIAL PERMIT TO CAPTURE NUISANCE ALLIGATORS; BY ADDING SECTION 50‑15‑555 SO AS TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES TO RECEIVE NUISANCE ALLIGATOR COMPLAINTS ON A PRESCRIBED FORM, TO INVESTIGATE AND VERIFY THE COMPLAINT, TO APPROVE REMOVAL OF A NUISANCE ALLIGATOR BY A NUISANCE ALLIGATOR HUNTER WITH A DEPREDATION PERMIT, AND TO REPORT NUISANCE ALLIGATORS TRAPPED, RELOCATED, AND KILLED; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 50‑15‑500, RELATING TO THE ALLIGATOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Chapter 15, Title 50 of the S.C. Code is amended by adding:

Article 7

Issuance of a Special Permit to Capture Nuisance Alligator

 Section 50‑15‑550. As used in this Article:

 (1) “Alligator” means the species Alligator Mississippiensis.

 (2) “Department” means the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

 (3) “Depredation permits” means a special permit issued by the department for the taking, capturing, or transportation of an alligator that is determined to be a nuisance.

 (4) “Nuisance alligator” means a specific alligator that poses a threat to human life or property.

 (5) “Nuisance alligator hunter” means a person selected by the department who demonstrates by training and experience that they possess the skills to identify and remove nuisance alligators. Applicants with prior alligator hunting violations will be prohibited. The department shall require periodic demonstration of skill and continued training for nuisance alligator hunters.

 (6) “Nuisance alligator indicators” means those specific behaviors set forth by the department that indicate the presence of a nuisance alligator, including, but not limited to, the size, aggression toward people, failure to retreat when not guarding a nest, and location, beyond the banks of the water body, near homes, livestock pens, or other structures.

SECTION 2. Chapter 15, Title 50 of the S.C. Code is amended by adding:

 Section 50‑15‑555. (A) The department shall receive nuisance alligator complaints on a prescribed form from members of the public, homeowners associations, property management companies, and property owner associations. Complaints shall be verified and investigated by department personnel or nuisance alligator hunters, using established nuisance alligator indicators, prior to being approved for removal as a nuisance alligator.

 (B) Once the department approves the removal of an alligator, a nuisance alligator hunter who has been approved and issued a depredation permit may take the alligator at any time as prescribed by the department. Nuisance alligator hunters will capture nuisance alligators by means prescribed by the department and relocate the alligator to a natural habitat selected by the department. The department shall have an available and updated list of approved relocation areas.

 (C) If relocation is not possible because it would create health or other risks for the alligator population already in the relocation area or create an ecological disruption, or if the alligator is at high risk for relocation failure, the alligator may be trapped and euthanized in accordance with the American Veterinary Medical Association guidelines in a secure facility outside of the presence of the general public.

 (D) A nuisance alligator hunter shall function under the general guidance and supervision of the department for the capture and removal of nuisance alligators, including the disposition of the alligator or its parts, consistent with this article. Failure to comply with the departmental instructions may result in immediate termination of the individual’s depredation permit and participation in the nuisance alligator program.

 (E) A nuisance alligator hunter shall biannually report the number and location of alligators trapped, relocated, and killed, including methods of euthanasia and disposal location to the department.

SECTION 3. Section 50‑15‑500(B) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

 (B)(1) The department must establish an alligator management program that allows for hunting and for selective removal of alligators in order to provide for the sound management of the animals and to ensure the continued viability of the species. The department must set the conditions for taking, including the size, methods of take, areas, times and seasons, disposition of the parts, and other conditions to properly control the harvest of alligators and the disposition of parts. The department may allow alligators to be taken at any time of the year, in any area, including sanctuaries, as part of its alligator management program. All alligators taken under the alligator management program must be taken pursuant to permits and tags and under conditions established by the department in accordance with state and federal law. All alligators taken must be tagged. Except for those persons operating under authority of depredation permits, a person who hunts, takes, or attempts to take an alligator must have a hunting license. It is unlawful for a depredation permit holder or his or her designee to sell, barter, or trade or offer to sell, barter, or trade the privilege to take an alligator under the authority of a depredation permit.

 (2) The department may establish an alligator hunting season. The department may issue alligator permits and tags to allow hunting and taking of alligators in any game zone where alligators occur. A person desiring to hunt and take alligators must apply to the department.

 (3) A landowner or lessee of property on which alligators occur may apply to the department for a permit to participate in the Private Lands Alligator Program. On those private lands, the season for hunting and taking alligators is from September first through May thirty‑first. On those lands in the private lands program only, unsecured alligators may be taken by firearms, provided no alligator may be taken by use of rim fire weapons or shotguns. Unsecured alligators may be taken only by firearms from thirty minutes before sunrise until thirty minutes after sunset. A person who takes an alligator by use of firearms must make a reasonable effort to recover the carcass at the time of taking or for the next ensuing forty‑eight hours. A person using a firearm to take an alligator must have a gaff or grappling hook or other similar device to immediately locate and recover the carcass.

 (4) The department may designate alligator control agents who demonstrate by training and experience that they possess the skills to remove alligators. Those persons designated serve at the discretion of the department. The department may require periodic demonstrations of skill or require periodic training. Alligator control agents function under the general guidance and supervision of the department for the capture and removal of nuisance alligators including the disposition of the alligator or its parts.

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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