

5-22-13

S.D. Game, Fish, and Parks,

This letter is being written to voice concern and opposition to the proposed early Canadian Goose season that is currently under discussion within South Dakota departments. I understand that the Game and Fish is under pressure from certain farmers in regards to what is considered to be an over population of Canadian Geese in our area. Claims of crop damage seem to be taking the limelight, and dollars seem to be driving the issue.

I want you to understand that I come from a family farm which is still active, and currently farm acres near Watertown, SD. My understanding of the impacts of wildlife on crops is quite extensive, but things are getting out of hand (in particular with this early goose season), and someone needs to speak up about it.

Growing up, Canadian geese were a rare commodity in our area. Through the last decade of wet years and good habitat, we are finally enjoying the presence of the Canadian Goose. I currently work very hard to providing nesting, food, and habitat on my farm for the benefit of these geese and see NO problems caused by them. I have spent many dollars to try to establish honkers in this area for people to enjoy, only to watch the nearly entire population killed off with this unjustified early goose season that encompasses the entire area. It frustrates me greatly to say the least! Not all farmers are goose haters and people from the city, as well as the country enjoy these magnificent birds. Due to the current drive for increased farm acres, increasing grain prices, and the destroying of habitat, all wildlife is under distress in this state.

Wildlife preservation is a responsibility of everyone, especially area farmers!! I am aware, as should you, that the people that are complaining the most are the ones that should be complaining the least. I have little respect for farmers that reap the rewards of government subsidy, monumental grain prices, and unprecedented crop yields, but complain that geese are eating .0001 percent of their yields. Especially the ones that are farming up sloughs and wetlands for increased personal income. Farmers are some of the wealthiest people in our state, but still seek and consider only personal gain instead of looking at the entire eco-system they directly impact in their practice.

I understand that wildlife can have great impacts on production in certain areas, but these are few and far between. Certainly NOT WORTHY of implementing a season on the entire area. The Game and Fish needs to look at these areas on an individual basis! Any farmers that are

seeking help from the S.D. Game, Fish, and Parks, need to be willing to make their so called "problem area" open to public hunting as a walk in area, and surrender all hunting rights of their property to the public until the problem is resolved. If this criteria is not met, the complaint should be disregarded altogether!

Many of us that promote wildlife are tired of millionaire farmers complaining about crop damage and dollars lost. Very few other vocations on the planet, such as farming, can insure for a guaranteed income. While I understand and support such practice, a certain regard and security for wildlife is a must for all farmers as they have the greatest impact on wildlife. I know of some farmers that would be happy to not have any wildlife around. This, however, is foolish thinking and that kind of attitude is what is driving ridiculous and unnecessary legislation for "game control" such as this early goose season. We finally get the population levels up to a respectable amount the people can enjoy, and in one fail swoop the population is desecrated!

I don't envy the task at hand of the Game and Fish to satisfy the general public, but that is not the responsibility of your department. Your job is to preserve wildlife in this state for this, and future generations to enjoy. Big dollars should not win out to heritage. With climates changing, farming practices impacting habitat, and the almighty dollar driving decisions, all wildlife is under the gun. Common sense needs to be applied to lead to good decisions and problem areas should not be generalized. Specific problem areas need specific solutions, plain and simple.

Thank you for allowing me to table my input. I sure hope something can be done to eliminate this early goose season on a unit basis and address those few problem areas with open hunting to the general public whose license fees pays for the wages you make and for promotion of wildlife habitat. Wealthy farmers should not be making policy, but should instead be promoting for the general good of wildlife and be thankful for all blessings they have and the resources they have to be prosperous.

Sincerely,

Scott Simon

Watertown, SD 57201

(605) 886-1901

AGENDA
Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
June 6-7, 2013
Visitor's Center on Capitol Lake
Pierre, SD 57501

Call to order 1 PM CDT

Division of Administration

Action items:

1. Approve minutes of the May 2013 meeting
2. <http://gfp.sd.gov/agency/commission/archive/2013/may/draftMinutes.pdf>
3. Additional Commissioner Salary Days
4. License List Requests

Information item:

5. License Sales Report

Open Forum

Public Hearing at 2 PM

Finalizations

6. Golf cart use on park roads
7. Custer State Park Deer Hunting Seasons
8. East River Deer Hunting Season
9. West River Deer Hunting Season
10. Black Hills Deer Hunting Season
11. Refuge Deer Hunting Season
12. Archery Deer Hunting Season
13. Muzzleloader Deer Hunting Season
14. Youth Deer Hunting Season
15. Fall Turkey Hunting Season
16. Bobcat Trapping and Hunting Seasons
17. August Management Take Goose
18. Archery Accompaniment

Hunting Season Proposals

19. Antelope Hunting Season
20. Early Fall Canada Goose
21. Youth Waterfowl
22. Sage Grouse
23. Harvested wolf inspection requirement

Division of Parks and Recreation

Action item:

24. Good Earth State Park land acquisition - Resolution

Information items:

25. Park Improvement projects
26. Mt. Rushmore Connector Trail
27. Park Revenue and Visitation Reports

Division of Wildlife

Action item:

28. Sportsmen Against Hunger

Information items:

29. Antelope Population Survey
30. Sportsmen Against Hunger
31. Spring Canada Goose Take
32. 2013-14 Private Shooting Preserves
33. 2013 Fish Spawning Report
34. Walleye Tagging Study
35. Gizzard Shad Trap/Transfer Project
36. Fisheries Strategic Plan
37. Shoot Range Projects

Adjourn

Next meeting information:

July 8-9 at the Pierre Ramkota

*ER
deer*

From: Huebert, Andrew [<mailto:Andrew.Huebert@SanfordHealth.org>]
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2013 10:15 AM
To: SDGFPINFO
Subject: deer comment

in response to this i would like to say that you really need to rethink the deer tag numbers. we lost a lot more deer than you think an you need to limit tag numbers more. i am an avid deer hunter an i know from managing the deer heard on my property that to get your numbers up an have a healthy heard you need to limit what you take. Don't think about the money end of things. Think about a healthy deer population. Because right now if i were to send in for every tag i could i cloud get 20 tags just for myself and that is crazy. Think about it more you need to manage things because i know i am. Because i will only get 4 deer tags this year because i will do my part in helping you need to do the same.

Andrew Huebert, Sioux Falls

FK
deer

From: Schaal, Daniel [<mailto:Daniel.Schaal@SDSTATE.EDU>]

Sent: Friday, May 17, 2013 8:52 AM

To: SDGFPINFO

Subject: RE: SD GFP Commission Meeting Information

My name is Daniel Schaal, I live in Brookings SD. Our family farm that I am a part owner of is in McCook county. I hunt for deer every year exclusively on our land, the farm is just under 160 acres so I do not qualify for a landowner license. I much preferred the old method where both "any deer" and "antlerless only" converted to "antlerless only" licenses for the second season after Christmas. I usually draw an "any deer" tag every other year when I have a preference point and on the off years I get my second choice (antlerless deer) and earn the preference point. I harvest a deer in about 40% of the years and have never gotten a buck. The current system makes me choose between requesting an "antlerless deer" license so I can hunt in the second season to increase my chances of getting a deer, or requesting an "any deer" license to give me some chance of harvesting a buck someday. If the new method is designed to protect the deer herd during the current blue tongue crisis I understand that, but I hope we revert to the old system when the blue tongue crisis is over.

Daniel Schaal, Brookings SD

ER

Ascher, Debra

Subject: Comment - ER Deer - Tom Jensen

From: Tom.I.Jensen@wellsfargo.com [<mailto:Tom.I.Jensen@wellsfargo.com>]

Sent: Friday, May 17, 2013 12:43 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: In support of 2 proposals / recommendations

Good afternoon,

In regards to proposal to move up the open date on RFD-SL1:

Recommended changes from last year:

1. Adjust the start date for Unit RFD-SL1 from the Saturday before East River deer hunting season to the second Saturday of November. Start dates for all other Sand Lake units would adjust accordingly.

I read this as meaning the open date is November 9th, and I strongly support this proposal as it better fits with the way the dates in November work out in 2013. Great proposal, please vote to pass this proposal!

In regards to East river deer recommendation for 48A (Marshall county):

48A	Marshall	900	800	-100	-11%
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Also strongly support this recommendation as deer numbers are still quite obviously below even an aggressive management objective. Please vote to pass this proposal.

Thanks for the hard work!

Tom Jensen
429 macey ave
Harrisburg, SD 57032
929-8970
Tomjensen178@gmail.com

ER

-----Original Message-----

From: Zaboda [<mailto:zaboda@venturecomm.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, May 01, 2013 7:53 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: east river deer season

Sirs,

I just received your email stating that you are holding a meeting to propose the East river deer season. Last year you cut the number of tags in Roberts County. Many people complained that we are no longer seeing deer in our area. I think that you made the right choice and would encourage and beg you to leave the number of tags for Roberts county at this lower number. I have seen a few more deer this spring, but it appears they have had a rough winter. Every deer I've seen this spring is very thin and they all seem to be the same size; small. Please keep the number of tags low, we can not maintain a deer herd that satisfies all of the hunters if we continue shooting off all our does.

Thank you,

Daniel Zach, Rosholt, SD

WR

April 29, 2013

To SD Game, Fish & Parks Commission,

We understand at your May 2-3, 2013, Game, Fish & Parks Commission meeting that you are going to set the WRD Hunting Seasons. There are several concerns we would like to address:

We would like you to consider letting the landowner or outfitter sell the tags so we can know how many deer we can take off our property and the hunters will know in advance if they have a tag or not.

Also please consider having the antlerless season immediately after the regular gun season. The reason for this request is because the bucks have already started dropping their antlers by December 15 and there are too many bucks being harvested because of the late antlerless season. If you would talk to the landowners you would find they would rather have the antlerless season right after the gun season.

We know there were areas in Gregory Co that had a large die off of deer last year. In our area (12 miles north of Burke, SD) we did not see this problem. We had a larger die off in 2011 and know one seemed too concerned. Once again-no one has come to talk to us or any of the landowners around us. If you reduce the licenses in all of Gregory Co (which will include our area) this will be a deterrent to us as landowners. We have lost crops and hay in our area due to the large number of deer this winter. Once again, this goes back to letting the landowner have control for the licenses for his land.

Thank you for your time

Gene & Sue Chytka
34548 S. Landing Crk Rd.
Burke, SD 57523

605-775-2740

BH

From: Hugh Toenjes [<mailto:hjt65@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, May 07, 2013 1:49 PM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Public meeting at State Park May 4th. 2013

Attention wildlife division: I was not able to attend the public meeting at the State Park on May 4 th. 2013.

I would like to express my thoughts and suggestions at this time. I am an avid hunter who has spent many yrs. hunting both big game and waterfowl from Minnesota to the wilderness of northern Canada. I have confronted grizzlies, been surrounded by a pack of wolves, charged by angry moose and spent many days interacting with big game who had never seen a human! I have just had my 72nd. birthday and am quite disappointed that because of the "broken" "point" system associated with big game hunting in the Black Hills of SD. ,where I have now made my home for the last 10 yrs., I am not allowed to hunt in the county where I live. I am also disabled which means that I need to hunt from my vehicle and not on foot! For the last 3 yrs. I have had to load my gear and travel many 100's of miles to another county where there is enough cover on public land where I can use a vehicle to hunt from. This in my opinion is "discrimination" against a senior citizen and the disabled! My suggestion is that any senior over 70 yrs. of age and disabled should have first pick of where he wants to hunt and not be required to put in for a draw! I am your eyes and ears in the Black Hills! Over the past several years I have been instrumental in providing information for the conviction of poachers! If I have to hunt out away from the Black Hills I can no longer provide that kind of service to wildlife law enforcement! Also I suggest that a solution to limiting the number of tags for any species is to not allow a hunter to "aggregate" his hunting methods. In other words the hunters will have to choose which season to hunt- they should not be able hunt archery , regular rifle and muzzle loading - but only choose ONE of the three! These are my recommendations for future hunting regulations. I hope someone in the department of wildlife will listen to what I have to say because this is the voice of someone who has 60yrs, of hunting and wilderness experience behind him! Sincerely,

Hugh Toenjes
24657 Medicine Mt Rd.
Custer, SD. 57730

Archery
+ Youth

Dear Sirs,

I wanted to express my opinions very briefly on South Dakota's archery deer season. I recently contacted the SDGFP asking why archery deer season opens so late in September; this is a copy of what I wrote:

"Is there a biological reason why deer season does not open earlier in September? Are there other factors at play here that aren't necessarily biological, such as tradition or political pressure? The growing trend in western hunting is to open archery seasons earlier and not as late in the year because of the additional trophy potential it provides early and because of the extreme temperature conditions at the end of the season. Where/when would be the correct place/time to voice my opinion and justify my stance on this topic."

I received a response from the Senior Big Game Biologist, Andy Lindbloom, whose response I appreciate, but it somewhat concerning.

"In short, there is no biological reason for the start date of our archery season. This is a social issue, and I'd say the primary reasons given in the past for not starting it earlier hinge on keeping the youth season by itself, many private landowners don't want longer deer seasons, and the archery season is already the longest deer season (except youth)..."

First, I ask that you seriously consider opening archery deer season on September 1. If landowners are opposed to this change in regulation, much like pheasant season, SDGFP could open Archery Deer Season early, in this case September 1, on (1)state-owned ground only and/or (2)place access restrictions on public ground that is privately owned (WIA, CREP, etc...). I am not lobbying for a longer archery deer season, only a shift in season start and close dates. Access is permitted for archery antelope hunters and upland bird hunters in August and early September, respectively, so many of these areas are already open to the public hunting making the "landowner argument" null.

Second, youth season should have no bearing on when archery deer season opens. Based on the current regulations youth deer season is already the longest season in South Dakota. South Dakota youth have nearly 4 months to hunt antlerless deer which is more than enough time and opportunity to bag their animals. Further, many youth are now archery hunting and are extremely passionate about this growing sport; they would benefit from an earlier archery season as well.

Please consider these important factors before making a final decision on the start date for the Archery Deer Season. South Dakota has the

potential to be a top destination for western bowhunters. The growing trend in archery hunting is to open seasons earlier because of the trophy potential it provides and the because of the undesirable conditions associated with late season archery hunting. Poll any western bowhunter where their dream archery hunt would be and they would spout-off about early season mule deer hunting in WY, CO, UT, NV, and the like, while not even throwing SD into the conversation; and it all boils down to opportunity not the quality or quantity of game present between the states. Even closer to home, many bowhunters are traveling across SD to take advantage of the September 1 opener in ND and WY where they provide a unique opportunity to harvest a whitetail deer in velvet. This state is losing money to its neighbors because of the "social issues" mentioned by Mr. Lindbloom. Any earlier archery deer opener would help boost struggling rural economies and put SD back on the map nationally for its trophy deer hunting potential. Please seriously consider these slight alterations to the archery deer season and represent the majority of the public who have entrusted you to uphold our hunting privileges. I know this is a reoccurring issue that has been brought before the commission before and there is a reason; South Dakotans are tired of missing out.

In closing, there are countless ways to protect landowners' rights and provide further archery opportunities for all sportsmen. I ask you to explore additional avenues before proceeding and please do not sacrifice my sporting opportunities for a small vocal contingent of landowners that offer their land for public hunting solely for additional income.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please let me know if you would like to further discuss this topic; I would be happy to elaborate why I feel a shift in the archery deer season start date would greatly benefit our state.

Regards,

Matthew Sailor
1824 Kennedy Drive
Pierre, South Dakota
(816) 804-6749