

COMMENT FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON ANTELOPE SEASON, July 8, 2013:

Dear Commissioners,

I am Larry Stomprud, cattle rancher from northern Meade County. I would like to have attended the hearing in person, but an abundant hay crop takes priority this time.

As background, I was educated a wildlife biologist, spent 9 years as a Conservation Officer at Plankinton and Wall before going on Active Duty with the Army. I retired in 1995 and have since been managing the ranch I grew up on that has been in the family since 1909. The next two generations of Stompruds now live on the ranch as well.

We do not have pheasant, and have only marginal habitat for deer, waterfowl, grouse and partridge. We can, however, raise antelope. In years past, we have harvested up to 75 head in one year. We don't consider ourselves a commercial hunting operation, however in the past 7 years, we have entertained a total of about 10 paying customers. My son, Jay, in particular, enjoys guiding hunters, paying or not.

In the past the Regional and State staff have been very good in incorporating my recommendations into their Antelope Season proposal. This year, however, it seems my recommendations have fallen on deaf ears. In particular I am disappointed you have again proposed to eliminate non-resident licenses. Last year, it took me by surprise, but this year I must object to how unfair this is compared with other seasons. When pheasant populations are down, I don't see you eliminating nonresidents. Heck, when west river deer populations are down, you still issue 8% to nonresidents. What's the difference? If I did have a commercial hunting operation-which I don't-why should I be penalized because I have antelope habitat verses pheasant, or goose, or trophy mule deer habitat?

Let me give you a very specific situation that your proposal influences. One of my good friends from my stint of teaching ROTC at Montana State University is a sportsman from Mississippi who taught biology at a Junior College in Hattiesburg, Mississippi after he retired from the Army. He had wanted to come antelope hunting here for years, but his duties at the college precluded him from doing that. In anticipation of his retirement in 2012, he purchased a preference point in 2011. Then last year when he went to apply, we were both surprised to find you had eliminated the nonresident license. (In my view, accepting his money for a preference point, then giving him no chance to draw a license is tantamount to fraud.) At our age, 65-70 years old, we don't know how many more years we will be physically able to hunt antelope, waiting for you to determine when the population is high enough to allow non-resident licenses.

My recommendation for this year: Reinstate an allocation of 8% non-resident licenses. In my unit of Northern Meade County this would be an addition of only 32 licenses for the unit. A plus for you would be increased revenue. If the biologists think 432 is too many, then reduce the resident licenses by 32.

My recommendation for future years: Consider again the proposal of transferable landowner preference licenses. I'm not sure, but this may require legislation. A reasonable alternative was presented in the late 1990's by then Wildlife Division Director Doug Hansen and Secretary Cooper that gave preference to a limited number of landowner endorsed applicants. This appealed to most landowners and sportsmen at public meetings except at the Sioux Falls meeting. The proposal died at the time, but I think deserves reconsideration.

I thank you in advance for your consideration of this statement in lieu of my testimony at the public hearing on July 8.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry C. Stomprud

17223 Ollie Dr.

Mud Butte, SD 57758

Larry A. Bowles  
4140 Penrose Pl.  
Rapid City, SD 57702

June 10, 2013

Tom Kirschenmann  
Foss Building  
523 E. Capitol  
Pierre, SD, 57501

Re: Sage Grouse

Butch Paige and myself first met you along old Hi-way 85 in Butte County several years ago. We had harvested two sage grouse and you and an intern, (Greg?) "processed" the birds. I remember asking us if we thought hunters would voluntarily take their birds to a local source to be checked. Apparently you decided that we would. Actually it is enjoyable to share stories about the hunt with someone. Either you or Greg took our picture with the two birds.

In another year John Wrede checked our bird. We had a long visit and Butch asked John if you had a mounted Sage Grouse in Pierre. John agreed to take the beautiful adult male and have it mounted. In subsequent meetings we've asked about the bird and the response is something like "it is probably over in Pierre in a deep freeze"

John wrote an article I read somewhere about the joys and camaraderie of friends out hunting and I was sure it was about meeting Butch and myself on one of our annual Sage Grouse hunts.

Butch missed one year while he and his two brothers were traveling in Italy tracing their father's march up the "boot" during WWII.

We have had the pleasure of visiting Chuck Berdan with BLM in Belle Fourche while he processed our birds. He told of his night time exploits in capturing and banding the birds while working with an SDSU student doing research. One year we shot one of "his" collared birds and he facetiously lamented it's demise after all the effort he had put into collaring it in the first place. That may have been the same year that a lady BLM employee in Belle came out to the parking lot while Chuck was working on the birds. She inquired what they tasted like and we sent her home with the bird so she could find out for herself.

A few years ago we stopped in to GF&P in Rapid, late in the day, to have our bird inspected. I believe it was John Kanta who was still in the office and we were all anxious to go home. He agreed to "breast out" the bird for us and send us on our way so he could finish his work on another day. That was the first time I had seen him since the time years previous that he had tranquilized a mountain lion in my back yard in Rapid City. He reminded me that it was on a Sunday (Mother's Day) and his spouse was not happy that duty called

One more reminisce: As I recall the first year we had the Sage Grouse season the Hunting and Trapping Handbook included a statement that the limit on Sage Grouse was one bird per day. Elsewhere it was clear that the season limit was one bird, however that "misprint" may have caused some problems.

Jeff Olson is my dentist so I've had maybe 30 seconds of his time one or twice a year and the Sage Grouse season is usually a topic. A year or so ago he mentioned that the season for Sage Grouse was not on the agenda (inadvertent) however someone rescued the season.

Unfortunately neither Butch nor myself were able to hunt last year. Both out of state at the time, however during the later deer season I encountered a flock of 15 to 25 birds along Alkali Creek. More birds than I'd seen at one time in several years.

I realize there is way much more involved in this whole scene than 9 birds killed last season. However if you have any input into this process I'm asking that you speak up for those of us who enjoy the opportunity to get out of doors and stroll the prairie kicking rocks, looking at flowers, scouting for deer and/or antelope, spooking jack rabbits, wondering what happened to that dead sheep and what will eventually become of her lamb and enjoying a cool one at the close of a frustrating day, an activity called Sage Grouse hunting.

Sincerely,

*Jerry A. Bowles*

**P.S. My ear nose and throat Dr. Jay White tells me that shoe leather kills more Sage Grouse than any other item. It's obvious he has "hunted" them also.**

**From:** bill stevens [<mailto:wpstevens@hotmail.com>]

**Sent:** Saturday, June 08, 2013 8:51 AM

**To:** GFP Wild Info

**Subject:** Hunting and Trapping Limits

To: South Dakota Game Fish and Parks Commission

As a Nebraska landowner (and just miles from South Dakota), I would like to comment on two pieces of news regarding limits in South Dakota.

1. Sage grouse – an excellent decision. With only 9 birds taken last year, it is perhaps symbolic, but it does show commitment to recovering this species. I attach an article from a Utah paper which gives an enlightened hunter's view of this issue. Thank you for following suit.

[http://www.moabtimes.com/view/full\\_story/22596690/article-Grouse---the-passenger-pigeons-of-the-21st-century-West-?instance=letters\\_right\\_column](http://www.moabtimes.com/view/full_story/22596690/article-Grouse---the-passenger-pigeons-of-the-21st-century-West-?instance=letters_right_column)

2. Bobcats - thanks for lowering the take (although I do not think that is low enough, it is a start). The reason pelt prices are so high is that Africa has stopped the sale of spotted pelts. Furriers are buying bobcat furs and passing them off as African cats. I really don't see why Africa is more protective than we are, but . . . Felines reproduce quite slowly, and I am not sure that the state's population can sustain the loss of 600 animals per year (and these are just the legally taken animals). I urge you to watch this quite carefully.

I have always wondered why wild meat cannot be sold, but trapped pelts can. I am not sure that the purely profit motive should have any part in the taking of the state's wildlife. Trappers will tell you it is about their way of life, but that way of life seems to change when prices rise. In examining the bobcat take, please keep that profit motive in mind.

Thanks for hearing my concerns,

Katie Stevens  
Crawford, Nebraska

**Ascher, Debra**

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**Subject:** Comment - Bobcats - Lowden WSDFHA

**From:** Bowdens [<mailto:bowdens@gwtc.net>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 02, 2013 7:34 PM

**To:** GFP Wild Info

**Subject:** Proposed Bobcat season changes

July 2nd 2013

I would like this presented to the commissioners and read at the July 8th commission meeting in Pierre.

I am Larry Bowden of Hot Springs SD. I am the current president of the "Western South Dakota Fur Harvesters Association" and I represent that organization today.

After discussing the proposal to shift the season dates and add a 600 cat quota with our directors and members WSDFHA would like to give the following recommendation.

We would recommend that the 2013-2014 season remain exactly like the 2012-2013 season. We do not see the need to change the season without further discussions with SD GF&P and some clarifications of the "Bobcat Harvest Summary 2012-13".

There are lots of differing opinions about altering the season dates and a harvest quota. We do not see the urgency to rush to a decision.

If the current proposal is adopted we would like to have the quota raised to 650.

We are firmly against the first proposal by GF&P to change the season dates to December 26th thru February 15th.

WSDFHA has a long history of working with SD GF&P on furbearer issues.

We suggest that SD GF&P meet with WSDFHA and the South Dakota Trappers Association and discuss the further.

Sincerely,

Larry W. Bowden

President WSDFHA

Western South Dakota Fur Harvesters Association

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