

Public Comments

Other

Mark Smedsrud

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I strongly oppose the petition for adding 500 nonresident special buck tags to the east river season. I feel this is a way of steering our traditions toward the selling of landowner tags. East river as a whole is over hunted and the deer populations would see further decline. The petition claims it wouldn't be impacted, but in fact the addition of 55 tags is more than some counties are allotted. I urge the commission to keep our traditions and continue with the new drawing system. Non residents have plenty of opportunity in the far less populated areas of western SD along with unlimited archery tags. Thanks for your consideration

Dan Waldman

Aberdeen SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the petition to add 500 Non-Resident Special buck tags for East River. It will continue to push for further commercialization of hunting, and further affect the resident hunters that choose to live and raise families here. Thanks

Thad Nafziger

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

As to a special pool of special buck non-resident east river tags..I strongly oppose,figure out a management system as far as wildlife (ie don't lease ground that is basically a parking lot for years on end..hello crop rotation schedule)that is sustainable for wildlife population,& you won't have to look elsewhere to replace lost license dollars, because the numbers won't drop, should only increase with good opportunities. You are not doing the bidding of your states residents, I know in my heart of hearts it's a means to an end for our birthright & heritage as South Dakotans,& that is exactly what you folks desire. Your commission needs to either be abolished or be a strictly elected position..so they have a constituency to answer to. I know you folks will not stop until you have pushed the little guy, resident hunter out,& are collecting high dollar license & special permit fees from out of staters who are only here a few days & never question your policies or procedures.Maybe if there is not enough license dollars to sustain your budget (if you are truly funded by license dollars & not other sources..ie special interest groups ect.)then you should look at cutting staff to conform to budget constraints, like the rest of the fiscally responsible works does, vs. taking opportunities away from residents to fund your Dept.,...& you folks know as well as we do, no matter the number of licenses you keep for residents, allowing more people (ie out of staters) definitely does take away an opportunity for a resident (simple math folks) . More animals harvested, less animals in the population to be taken. I can write a thousand e-mails & it will not stop your quest to open up ALL big game (to include our elk population)to our if state hunters who pay more & never question your policy & procedure. The Dept of game fish & parks continues to do a disservice to it's residents.

Bob Messerli

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

NR east river tags! NO

Spencer Neuharth

Bozeman MT

Position: support

Comment:

I'm writing to strongly support the addition of 500 non-resident special buck tags.

I'm a former South Dakota resident who recently moved to Montana. I have family with land in eastern South Dakota that I can't rifle hunt (even though those with family land in western South Dakota can rifle hunt), and these tags would allow that. The state already makes it difficult on out-of-staters, not allowing any public land hunting for the entire first month of September. It seems incredibly harsh that I can't come home and hunt public land for all of September, and I can't come home to hunt family land with a gun.

I would gladly hand over \$500 every year for a chance to come back home for what would be my favorite hunt of the season.

Chad Taecker

Brookings SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Between the non-meandered waters and the tag allocation you guys just seem to want to mess everything up. No wonder why the sportsmen's and woman are leaving the water and the fields. South Dakota doesn't need any additional influence from the "The Big coalition" nor out of state influence. Take care of our state and it's sportsman!

No Non-resident special buck!

Chris Larson

Vermillion SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am strongly opposed to offering more big game licenses to out of state hunters. Do not take away opportunities for residents to get a license.

R. Craig Oberle

Mellette SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am against any proposal to allow special bucks tags to non residents for east river deer. This is just selling out again to the non residents. Then you wonder why resident hunting numbers are down? Time to stop further commercialization of our hunting

Bill Sorensen

Beresford SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

East River nonresident special buck. I am totally against this.

Jason Lee

Cresbard SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I strongly oppose the proposal for 500 NR tags for east river. It will be devastating to the local hunting opportunities available and change our great state to pay to hunt. Unacceptable. Thanks, Jason

Travis Engle

Sturgis SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Proposal 500
take care of your resident hunters first or hunter numbers will continue to decline

Jamie Mertins

Willow Lake SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please withdraw from the non resident east river special buck license. There is hardly enough opportunity for licenses for our SD residents

Joe Henderson

Colton SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am writing regarding the petition for the 500 NR East River special buck tags.

Vote this down with a NO. Vote it down with authority! no compromises, no restructure, the simple answer of this is no! The fact that this petition has even made the table is very sad.

Why should this be voted no? Many reasons. It will all be a chain effect.

1) This is already a high demand tag. We don't need to give tags to NR. Let's take care of our residents first.

2) These 98% of these hunters will only hunt pay for private ground. This will only expand out fitters in south Dakota, is that what we really want? Pay to play? This will encourage more and more farmers not to enroll their land into public WIA, or Creps etc.

a. Do we really want hunting to become only commercialized in south Dakota? That is the route it is going. Great example is pheasant hunting. Right now licenses are down, why? Because people don't want to come to South Dakota and pay big bucks to shoot a bird. However, the rich will, they always have they always will. Don't let hunting south Dakota become a rich man's sport.

b. This will completely ruin the hunting sport in south Dakota. More and more youth will not be able to hunt because frankly, a lot of family will not be able to afford it.

PLEASE! Think past the money on this one. Please get Kristi Noem out of the commissionions ear and listen to the people of South Dakota! If this passes, this is the GFP just trying to make a play to make money. The only thing worse, is a politician who thinks she is a biologist.

The only argument to this is "if someone has a son who lives out of state and they want to be able to hunt their fathers land." If that is the argument, then the landowner rules may need to change or have different wording.

Randall Maddox

Redfield SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the petition to allow Out of State White Tail Deer Any deer license.

Pat Malcomb

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I understand there is a petition to allow out of state hunters East River deer tags. This is a BAD idea, East River public land is already hunted to hard, plus it takes a lot of preference to get a good tag, and all this will do is turn the East River farms into pay hunting. It took us many years to find good property to hunt and even that land is over crowded. We already messed up the deer tag lottery lets not compound the problem by making it harder on in state deer hunters, we can't afford to keep losing hunters due to lack of land to hunt.

Andrew Stainbrook

Parkston SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I heard there is a proposal to put 500 nonresident tags east river. I am strongly against it. Especially with it being a any county east river tag. All land is gonna be eaten up by outfitters! No more asking for permission cause the farmers are gonna see extra dollars for leases. With only 150 resident tags in my county and even less in past 4 years there is still 9 guys within half mile of my house hunting every opening day rifle. I know they are not getting a county wide tag every year and I'm pretty positive they are getting landowner tags and not hunting their land. I don't think we need more hunters on the small population of our deer in this county. The only thing I could accept would be a percent of county specific tags like west river deer. But until you get a handle on the illegal landowner tags in my area I strongly oppose any more tags

Doug Boer

Madison SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Folks, I can't even believe the additional 500 NR deer tags was brought up, any such tags that the state feels there are need to go to Residents. this kind of thing will open up to a lot of things that we just don't need in our state, we need to be making sure that we increase opportunities to old and young alike, this will take away from those groups.

Strongly opposed to this idea!

Jesse Kurtenbach

Spearfish SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose 500 NR special buck tags.
Before adding these tags we should consider a come home to hunt program for nonresidents born in SD or 8% to NR in the draw. Adding 500 special buck tags will be the end of the SDGFP being able to lease WIA east river. Outfitters will join forces with pheasant lodges and lease up anything with habitat for more than \$2/acre. Outfitted rifle hunts being sold by the petitioner are \$3500. The only reason for this petition is money. The common SD hunter will be pushed to the back of the line.

Dana Rogers

Hill City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Non-Resident East River Special Buck Petition

Commissioners,

The petition to add 500 Non-Resident firearm permits to the east river rifle season is yet another example of commercializing our public trust resources. I respect private property and landowners rights. It's entirely up to them who is granted access to their property, when and the decision to charge for the privilege if they so choose.

We SD sportsmen continue to see our opportunities decrease through privatization and commercialization of the public's resources. Look at the reduction in license sales and the funding sources that fuel the department. The correlation is directly tied to access and opportunity.

Though private landowners and outfitters have every right to do as they wish within the law, the wildlife is not theirs to sell. By continuing to increase non-resident licenses to tip the scales in favor of commercial interests, it reduces opportunity and access for residents.

Firearm licenses are difficult enough for a resident to obtain in many East River units already, now with this petition it pushes that opportunity further from reach.

The west river special buck permits and the 8% west river allocation was originated to placate the outfitter industry, now that commercialization movement continues. We continue to surge toward the model used in Europe that was the basis for the creation of our North American wildlife model. The peoples wildlife, not the "King's".

I ask that you vote against this petition and consider the severe future ramifications of commercializing our public trust resources.

Thank you for your time.

Patricia Braun

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

please educate the governor to help her know the bounty for tails of predators is not a good program, is too costly, does not get kids outdoors. Encourage her to use our tax money to improve game fish&parks pay! thank you for all you do with the little staff you have!

Dave Hagen

Aberdeen SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I'm not in favor of the Nest Predator Bounty Program. Please be better stewards of our tax dollars.

Lorri May

Madison SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the Nest Predator Bounty Program. Why do we kill animals so that we may kill other animals? Instead of spending the proposed \$1M on this, let's spend it on education. Or food for seniors. Or sheltering the homeless. Please do something rather than letting Kristi Noem do whatever she wants, which usually hurts South Dakotans.

Gregory Palmer

Nemo SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Stop the Nesting Predator Bounty Program! I am a SPORTSMAN! There is no SPORT in killing animals in there nests! It is inhumane and goes against all the ethics involved in the hunting and killing of wild animals! Don't you think man has screwed the environment enough! Nature is the GREAT EQUALIZER! Let her do her work!! Stop It!!

Julie Anderson

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am vehemently opposed to using GF&P funds and/or state funds to give away free traps to encourage children to kill, dismember, then throw away the carcass of an animal and possibly its young (if is female) for "fun and recreation". The Nest Predator Bounty program is morally reprehensible and should never be considered for renewal. End this program permanently.

Wendy Luedke

Lead SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the Nest Predator Bounty Program for the following OBVIOUS reasons:

1. It is not an ecologically sound plan. Killing the predators of pheasants does not solve the dwindling population, it just causes more ecological issues such as an overrun of other animals the predators eat. Providing more marshlands is how to solve this.
2. Our wildlife is not here for sacrifice to the few, seasonal businesses that thrive on the killing of animals. Our State needs a more solid economy and employment plan.
3. IT IS CRUEL AND INHUMANE and SENSELESS!
4. I am not a supporter of providing graft for our governor.

Kris Stapelberg

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I cannot believe you are seriously considering having a Nest Predator Bounty again this year. It did nothing the help our Game Bird numbers and did everything to hinder the rest of our wildlife. It also cost the state a whole lot of money that could be better spent elsewhere. With all the negative media we got throughout the country last year (despite you trying so hard to show how wonderful it is for kids to kill animals on your Facebook page), you can bet a lot of people will be crossing South Dakota off the list to visit this year. And I don't blame them. I love this state, but I am thoroughly embarrassed by it right now.

Dean Parker

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am writing in opposition of renewing the "Nest Predator Bounty Program" for 2020.

Not only is trapping an ineffective method of wildlife conflict management, but it is a cruel way for any animal to die – including pets and other non-targeted animals that will get caught in these traps.

Wildlife management professionals across the U.S. have long acknowledged the ineffectiveness of bounties and predator control, including South Dakota's own Habitat Work Group in its 2014 report to Governor Daugaard. To my knowledge, no science-based evidence has been presented to suggest that the species targeted by this "Nest Predator Bounty Program" (opossums, raccoons, skunks, badgers or red fox) are negatively impacting pheasant populations.

Furthermore, each native species plays an important role in our ecosystem. In particular, opossums are a great benefit to any area they inhabit. Their diet includes snails, mice, rats, and insects such as cockroaches, crickets, beetles and disease-carrying ticks.

This program is simply not backed by science-based wildlife management principles. If GFP wants more game birds for hunters, please focus on improving their habitat - not killing indigenous species that play an important role in that habitat.

West River Spring Turkey-Use of Rifles

Pat Malcomb

Sioux Falls SD

Position: support

Comment:

I think as long as this is used on private land it should be fine, I support this.

Brandon Mickelson

Rochester MN

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

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 - a. Do we really want hunting to become only commercialized in south Dakota? That is the route it is going. Great example is pheasant hunting. Right now licenses are down, why? Because people don't want to come to South Dakota and pay big bucks to shoot a bird. However, the rich will, they always have they always will. Don't let hunting south Dakota become a rich man's sport.
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Nancy Hilding
President
Prairie Hills Audubon Society
P.O. Box 788
Black Hawk, SD 57718
nhilshat@rapidnet.com
605-787-6466
January 12th, 2020

Opposition to Nest Predator Bounty Program and to giving away free traps,

Dear SD Game, Fish and Parks Commissioners,

We have heard that Kristi Noem wants to spend another million on a nest predator bounty program this year; we are not sure if she wants to give away traps as well as offer bounties. Under current law (SDCL 40-36-9) the staff of Game, Fish and Parks has the authority to approve a nest predator bounty program and fund it, without the consent or permission of the Commission or even the Governor.

http://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/Codified_Laws/DisplayStatute.aspx?Type=Statute&Statute=40-36-9

If the staff wants another bounty program, please don't do this "behind closed doors". If you wish to repeat the program, we hope you will put this matter before the Commission for a decision by them, with a public comment period first. We believe this is a very controversial issue and thus, if you continue this issue to March and are taking public comment in March, that you should have remote hubs at Outdoor Campuses West and East to take remote public comments by teleconference or video-conference.

We object to this expenditure of SDGFP funds. We think last year's plan (about 1.4-1.5 million) was supposed to consume about 2.5% of your budget. By statute, funds must come from GFP funds or animal damage control funds and lots of GFP and ADC revenues are derived from hunter's fees/licenses. We believe many hunters and biologists believe this won't work and is a waste of money; money that would be much better spent on habitat protection or development.

We don't believe that statewide bounty programs on predators work to increase pheasant or duck populations. In order for predator removal to work, it needs to be more intense and in smaller areas. We refer you to Pheasants Forever & Ducks Unlimited web pages:

<https://www.pheasantsforever.org/Habitat/Pheasant-Facts/Effects-of-Predators.aspx>

https://www.ducks.org/media/Conservation/Conservation_Documents/_documents/Ducks%20and%20Predators%20low%20res.pdf

Also see page 11 of SDGFP Pheasant Management Plan, the section on predators:

"Where predator control may be considered as a management option, managers should be aware that cost, logistics, and lack of effectiveness often limit success when compared to habitat management."

<https://gfp.sd.gov/UserDocs/nav/pheasant-mngmnt-planpdf.pdf>

We hope that SDGFP will instead focus programs to increase habitat, not kill predators.

We object to a statewide bounty also, as the pheasants are not evenly distributed across the state, with parts of western SD lacking pheasants. The ponds and wetlands needed to support ducks much less common in western SD. So predators may be killed in areas where their deaths could do nothing for pheasants or ducks.

Predators also provide important functions such as killing small mammals, which can carry "pests". There is plague in western SD. Plague is spread by fleas often carried on rodents, which these small predators might eat. Lyme disease is in eastern SD. It is spread by ticks, which can be carried by mice. SD's bounty program will be removing some of the rodent's predators.

Some trappers will be trapping with leg-hold traps or snares, or body crushing traps. Some will use the live traps. People should also realize that in SD's west river the trap check time is "3 and a partial-day" and east river the trap check time is "2 and a partial-day". Trapping can be cruel. In high heat, an animal in a box can die in half a day. Animals in boxes or leg-hold traps can freak out and damage their bodies and/or teeth & thus not survive even if released. Animals in boxes or traps can't feed their dependent children.

Even via a "live trap" non-target species adults and their dependent young can die, in addition to target species. This may include endangered and threatened species. The swift fox is listed under SD threatened & endangered species law and could be trapped and killed inadvertently: <https://gfp.sd.gov/natural-heritage-program/>
There is a petition before the USFWS to list the plains spotted skunk and the prairie grey fox under the Endangered Species Act. These could be trapped and killed inadvertently: <https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/es/mammals.php>

Increasing pheasants harms SD's greater prairie chicken. The greater prairie chicken is

a "vulnerable species" losing about half its' population every decade. Male pheasants (an exotic species) fight with and drive off male prairie chickens and female pheasants lay eggs in their nests, and pheasants hatch first causing abandonment of chicken eggs. You can read in the IUCN Red List about greater prairie chicken:

<https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/22679514/92817099>

<https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/22679514/92817099 - assessment-information>

GFP claims part of the reason for the trap give-away and bounty is to involve kids in trapping. We believe there is an ethical issue here. We assume you are teaching kids the killing of predators (and indirectly their dependent young) is justified by saving ducks and pheasants. What happens to children's trust in adults & the GFP when they learn that bounties don't work to protect pheasants/ducks and they were misled to kill that opossum and her babies for unjust cause? What happens to their enjoyment of hunting/trapping or their trust of trapping advocates, especially those kids with empathy and a conscience?

The State gave away 1 million in money for kids to engage with wildlife in a lethal way. Why not introduce children to nature by giving them binoculars, bird feeders, cameras and/or wildlife ID books? Why not have parity -- in 2019 you gave to involvement in lethal recreation. In 2020 why not spend 1 million on non-lethal involvement of children with wildlife. Organize things like photography contests with prizes for children who take the best wildlife photos or prizes for completing wildlife check lists? Why must we engage with and teach about wildlife by killing them? Why doesn't GFP look at new ways to raise money...such as photo contests with entry fees or fund raise for walk-in "wildlife watching" areas, not just selling wildlife death.

Sincerely,



Nancy Hilding
President
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

February 21, 2019

TO: Kristi Noem South Dakota Governor

From: Danny Hubregtse

1515 E ST patrick Street

#293

Rapid City, SD 57703

Cell phone: (605) 431-9699

E-mail: dghubregtse@gmail.com

RE: 2019 Spring Wild Turkey Regulation
under the heading LEGAL FIREARMS

In response to South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks 2019 Spring Wild Turkey Regulation not including a rimfire, centerfire or muzzle loading rifle, please remember that we should not disregard the experience of age and the multitude of years I have been hunting turkey - my entire life.

yearly I eagerly wait with enthusiasm + look forward to Spring Turkey Hunting. From an early age I have always taken my child, now my grandchildren and

other youngsters.

I have always been accommodating + helpful in bringing about a harmonious adaption to nature in a turkey hunting environment with youngsters.

Its springtime the budding + blooming of the plants. The children smell them + search for a variety of colored blooms, learning from each other, asking a lot of questions pertaining to nature. They run + play + entertain each other at their own pace. They want to see whats over the next hills go down by the water/streams where wildlife + birds drink and look at there tracks and identify them. There hearts desire is to see more. In doing so they are also looking for hiding places for the next turkey hunting outing. Now its like the game hide and seek, see if you can find/see me. They have realized they need to hide behind rocks, dirt and grass mounds, larger trees standing and also fallen trees, bushes, various vegetation etc, so as not to be seen by the turkeys.

They then realize on the next hunting outing along with a good hiding location it needs to be comfortable so they can endure not moving.

The youngsters have observed that turkeys have very good eyesight and are very good at detecting movement. When the youngsters move they have learned the turkeys response is to run or fly away.

please keep in mind that it is very, very difficult for a child to sit motionless for any length of time.

I do have some suggestions.

1. A shotgun is heavy and very short range gun for turkeys. A child is inexperienced, they are small, some not very strong. They lack physical coordination, skill, grace. They are awkward in bringing the shotgun to their shoulder to shoot and by now the turkey is fleeing and out of range.

They put in a lot of time and effort to find a hiding place and sit motionless.

They put out great effort again, & again and again to bag a turkey but their hope, desire & expectation slowly erode.

In my opinion to meet the demand of a child using a shotgun is not in their best interest.

please give the children a better chance of bagging a turkey.

2. I would also suggest the LEGAL FIREARMS Regulation be changed for a child up to the age of 18 years of age.

A .22 caliber Long Rifle rimfire rifle should be allowed for them.

They grew up and practiced many hours with a rifle shooting .22 caliber long rifle ammunition. Its lighter than a shotgun, its shorter no recoil, it has more range and they are comfortable with that rifle.

It goes back to the saying "beware of the person with 1 gun, they know how to use it." When one is comfortable with a gun they enjoy practice and everyone is much safer. They know their own capabilities and comfort zone more than anyone else.

As they age they will decide in their own mind and then ask if they can have a more entergetic gun. That makes my heart sing! They graduated at their own pace.

Everyone who has ever hunted has wounded a creature that has escaped. It is an unpleasant + distasteful feeling. Because that youngster enjoys what they are doing we are born with desire + attitude to practice, practice, practice so that does not happen again. I'm there practicing with them and we all enjoy the time spent practicing and improving.

Creatures as do people die for

various reasons daily without the use of firearms.

At this time I explain to them the life cycle of creatures, vegetation etc as well as nature's food chain cycles and the life cycles of nature. From then on the youngsters will remind each other.

After making a mistake children learn the do's + don't's. They are eager to correct the mistake.

3. As a senior citizen and Grandpa I would like to use a centerfire rifle for turkey hunting for a few reasons.

With age one lacks physical capability, stealthier ways, gracefulness, agility, strength, stamina etc.

Using a centerfire rifle as an adult senior citizen this will still make turkey hunting possible, fun and enjoying the great outdoors of South Dakota.

Above all spending quality time

with children of various ages makes my heart sing!

When Dad's + Mom's + Grandparents bag a turkey that's what they also want to do even when they are not of age yet. They want to be like their parents and Grandparents.

Children learn more by what they see you do than by what they hear you say.

please don't be so difficult with the children.

please reconsider your decision + allow the use of rimfire + centerfire fire arms.

These children trust the people that love them and they try their best to please + love those people in return. These children's hearts and minds are so very tender and need tender loving care by the people they look up to and that spend quality time with them.

It is so very healthy for them mentally and the physical exercise.

There are a lot of us that still hunt the primitive way. We don't have the camouflage blinds and the comforts in them. We use what nature has to offer. Like I stated earlier it's difficult for a child to sit motionless. Because their desire is to bag a turkey they discipline and train themselves to be motionless. It's awesome when no words need to be spoken as they are their own best trainers/teachers.

We don't have the camouflage equipment, netting, outfits etc. We wear everyday clothes, jackets, overshoes etc. We have no decoys only a rifle and a turkey call.

The youngsters have already observed that turkeys have very good eye sight and are very good at detecting movement.

As previously stated there are many

reasons why the distance between us and the wild turkeys is significantly greater. I am again asking that you please reconsider your decision and give us a better opportunity for the children to bag a turkey & keep them interested in hunting and the great outdoors in South Dakota!

Its really, really fun when the adults say very very little and they themselves figure things out to be successful in how to bag a turkey. When they get legal hunting age they are safety minded, already trained and field ready!

please allow them to use a .22 caliber rimfire gun using long rifle ammunition that they have practiced with, are comfortable with & know how to use and operate. That in itself is a major safety issue.

please allow a centerfire rifle also

for the reasons I stated as a senior citizen and Grandpa.

Above all spending quality time together in the great outdoors. This is very important to us and others as well.

I thank you kindly in reconsidering your decision.

Sincerely,

Danny Hulbregtse

A response will be greatly appreciated either by my above mailing address or by the above e-mail address which ever works best for you.

Thank you

Danny Hulbregtse