

Public Comments

Flathead Catfish Trophy Regulations

Travis Pollreisz

Mitchell SD

Position: support

Comment:

In the past couple of years, I have seen a dramatic increase in catfishing's popularity. This is great, as often these were considered trash fish, but with the increase in popularity comes the increased likelihood of overharvesting. Right now our rivers harbor some monster-sized trophy flatheads, but without restrictions and education about catch and release angling I believe those numbers could begin to dwindle in the coming years as catfishing continues to rise in popularity and people discover better techniques at catching these amazing fish.

Chad Pollreisz

Mitchell SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Tom Pollreisz

Mitchell SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

West River Spring Turkey-Use of Rifles

Robert Eddy

Spearfish SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Bullets do not recognize boundaries. For the safety of all, and consistency with regulations, please restrict all turkey hunting within the state to No Rifle use. Thank you!

Jim Dahlberg

Hot Springs SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Hunting turkeys with a rifle in the spring is dangerous no matter what property it is on. I have had bullets flying over my head in the past when spring turkey hunting. It is not a pleasant feeling.

Eric Spears

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Rifle hunting for Turkeys should not be allowed. Hunters are always in camouflage so hunters using rifles aren't looking for us when sitting by a decoy. Its dangerous and idiotic to use a rifle.

Randy Gaskins

Sturgis SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

This issue is personal for me, I have had two close calls with rifles during turkey hunting, one on public land in the Black Hills, but the other was on a private ranch when two rifle hunters shot from behind me at a flock of turkeys I was calling in. The hunters did not see me, but they were shooting from 200 yards away.

I also do not see the reasoning of different regulations for east and west river. The safety issues are the same on either side of the state.

This is not a hunter recruitment issue, there are very effective turkey shot loads now even in the smaller gauges. The recoil from a .410 or 20 gauge is not too much for younger hunters to handle.

Jim Shaeffer

Montrose SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I hunted turkeys with shotgun and archery gear in Michigan for 27 years before moving back to South Dakota 12 years ago. I couldn't believe it when I found out that you could shoot turkeys with a rifle in South Dakota. My first fall deer hunting after I got back, I watched a guy in his pasture shoot at least 10 times into a flock of turkeys at over 200 yards with a rifle. I was so disgusted at that blatant lack of sportsmanship. I don't know how many birds he wounded. I was very happy when the rifle restriction for turkey was put in place. This is too noble a big game species to be shot at the long distances that I have seen people try and kill them at. Ensuring a clean kill with a rifle at these distances along with the safety issues that this presents should be reason enough to keep the use of rifles for turkey hunting prohibited. Please do not undo this common sense restriction that many true sportsmen support. Thank you.

Francis Strohfus

Henry SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

As a landowner and a strong advocate of Hunting Wild Turkeys along with habitat restoration. I also have strong reservations of hunting in camouflage with lifelike decoys and calls and knowing that someone with a rifle make make a longrange shot not knowing that I am in the vicinity.

I also believe that the wild turkey living in marginal habitat will be subject to a strong decline in population that they will not be able to recover from. The investment in the Wild Turkey population and the risk of a serious injury from hunting in the environment or rifles.

Thank you. Francis Strohfus NWTF member

November 26, 2019

To: The South Dakota Game Commission

From: Dean Schueler, Sioux Falls, 27-year NWTF member and 25-year NWTF state board member

Re: Use of Rifles on Private Land During the West River Prairie Spring Turkey Season

I want to thank the Game Fish and Parks Department and the South Dakota Game Commission for the opportunity to share some thoughts about the proposal at hand.

The safety issue should always be at the top of our minds when we do any type of hunting. It becomes very critical when we are hunting turkeys since we often use decoys, are clothed in camouflage and are attempting to bring the gobbler in close for a lethal shot. BUT I would submit that the **"experience"** is and should be, part of "fair chase" hunting.

I would like to share 2 personal hunting experiences from over 40 years of turkey hunting and would ask the Game Commission to imagine they are sitting next to me against a tree and think about which scenario they would like to be part of.

First Scenario-It is spring turkey season about 35 years ago and I am using a Savage O/U with a 20 ga. and a .222 which was legal at the time. I have my decoys out. I have been calling a turkey for a long time and he has come to within about 75-90 yards. He is now "hung up" out of range of my shotgun and call as I might, he will not come closer for a shotgun shot. I hit the selector button and go to the .222 as he decides to walk away. I do kill the turkey. It was the only time I ever used a rifle to kill a turkey. After thinking about this, I realized that there had to be more to turkey hunting than just killing a turkey. If I just wanted a turkey I could go to my local grocery store and buy one a lot cheaper.

Second Scenario-It is spring turkey season and I am now using a pump action 12 ga. Mossberg shotgun. I have decoys out. I have been calling in a turkey for quite a while, BUT he is taking his time and won't move much. He too is "hung up" out of range for my shotgun. I try 5-6 different calls-a turkey hunter can never have too many calls-and I am starting to lose patience, but finally he hears something he likes and starts towards my position. He is walking slowly, he begins to fan, he sees my decoys and starts to strut and spin, he fans again and his wings drag the ground and he begins spittin' and drummin'. The sun hits his iridescent feathers and I am almost too enthralled to shoot. I do kill the turkey and I have had one of the greatest thrills and scenes that you can experience in the turkey woods. I have pitted my patience, my calling and my woodsmanship skills against the grandest game bird in America! Which scenario do we want to have residents and non-residents alike remember about their turkey hunt in South Dakota? I would suggest that it is the second scenario that the overwhelming majority of turkey hunters hope to experience.

I would like to end by paraphrasing Colonel Tom Kelly (US Army Ret.), legendary turkey hunter and well-known author with this thought: "The day the American Wild Turkey's gobbling, spitting and drumming don't make my hair stand on end is the day I quit turkey hunting". I feel the same way.

I encourage you to vote NO on this proposal. Again, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.