

# Public Comments

## Deer License Allocation

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**David Gesch**

**Mound MN**

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**Comment:**

As a hunter that lives in MN but hunts almost entirely in SD (by choice), I'd love to have SOME chance at drawing an occasional deer tag in Spink County. Under the current system, I only get drawn about once every 4-5 years. As someone who LOVES the state of SD and prefers to hunt with my family, who are residents of SD, I find it disappointing that I may never have that chance again. I've hunted pheasants in SD every season since 1990, and willingly spent 1000's of dollars to do so. I began antlerless deer hunting in Spink County in 1998 and had my best days afield in your great state, hunting with my brother & nephews. I was randomly drawn this season (after 5 years of unsuccessful draws), and I'd hate to think it was my last! I "passed" on dozens of smaller or running does I could've taken, never fired a shot all season, and had the time of my life- just because I actually had the chance to harvest ONE doe if I chose to do so. PLEASE reconsider that proposal that would eliminate any chance for non-residents like me to participate in my favorite hunt of my year... deer hunting in SoDak! Thank you for your time & God Bless, David Gesch.

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**Jeff Jundt**

**Lake Orion MI**

**Comment:**

I am not even sure where to start with this letter in regards to the upcoming changes proposed for deer in South Dakota. I grew up on a small farm/ranch in northeastern South Dakota and up until this year, my mother was still living on the farm, she was diagnosed with terminal cancer a couple months ago and doesn't have too much time left. In fact, this is the first year (in past 30) that I have not hunted on our family farm because I am caring for my mother in Michigan where I live. I have not lived in or been a resident of South Dakota since 1998 and have been hunting on our family farm as a non-resident all the years since. This upcoming year the land will be transferred over to me upon my mother's death and I had hoped to continue rifle hunting on our property for decades to come. With the changes that are being proposed, there is essentially no chance that I will ever get another rifle deer tag for my county ever again in my lifetime if I have to wait until after the fourth draw! Having to wait until the third draw like I do now has been hit or miss the past few years due to fluctuations with the deer population and numbers of tags as it is.

I guess what I don't understand is how South Dakota is so well known for inviting out of state hunters in to bring money to the economy. I guess that is only if it is pheasant hunting. All other hunting, a nonresident is no longer treated the same way and those of us who grew up on a generational farm but happen to live out of state are punished and cannot even hunt on our own land for deer with a rifle. That is kind of a shame that former residents and landowners, in my instance, are treated this way.

I like how South Dakota manages their deer because they manage it by the county unit which is much better than how deer are managed here in Michigan where I can buy a license and hunt anywhere in the state. That never made any sense to me because it puts a lot of pressure on certain areas and not enough on others. This was the first year that I hunted in Michigan since I moved here 11 years ago and it is only because I was unable to hunt in SD this year except for pheasants. Looking over the proposal, it is kind of outrageous that a single person can obtain up to 9 deer licenses!? Nobody is eating that much deer in a given year no matter the size of your family. Therefore, they must have to give most of it away. These extra deer could go to non-residents in the third drawing as it has been so it continues to bring us in to hunt and spend money in the local economies, which I do every year.

Which brings me to another point. If you are going to go with this type of system that is fine, but at least allow a landowner to purchase tags to hunt on their own land. When my dad was still able to hunt with me, we hunted throughout our county but once his health deteriorated before he passed away, I stuck to just hunting on the family farm and never left it and had always been able to get my deer there. I implore you that if you do make the proposed changes to add in a provision to allow landowners like myself who live out of state to be able to hunt on our family land. I would be perfectly ok with that, as I do not feel the need to hunt in the rest of the county. I was planning to build a new deer stand to put on my property, but in light of this, I may have to switch to elk hunting out farther west of SD or down south from here on out, I would be giving another state and their local economy my money, which is a shame since I love South Dakota so much and own land, which I could hunt on for my deer each year. It is a tradition for me and this proposal is effectively killing that tradition. It puts such a sour taste in my mouth that I'm unsure if I want to continue coming out each year for pheasant hunting. I made two trips

each year to SD to hunt, one for pheasant and one for deer, in fact this past year I made a third trip out for Black Hills turkey and was thinking about coming out again next spring to try my luck but again, with all of this coming down the pike, I'm not sure I want to continue giving the SD GF&P my money any longer. I've even brought a good friend out for pheasant and turkey hunting in the past 3 years. I was looking to get an upland bird dog this coming year but if I'm no longer coming to South Dakota to hunt pheasant then I don't really see the need and will probably get myself a dog for waterfowl hunting in Michigan.

Please reconsider this proposal or at the very least allow family landowners such as myself the opportunity to hunt on our own land.

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**Ross Swedeen**  
**Rapid City SD**

**Comment:**

Esteemed SD GFP Commissioners,

I will try to save you all from a book this time! I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year! I sure did. Aside from the quality time I got to spend with my family, I watched my oldest daughter harvest her first deer. That was truly the highlight of my hunting "career"! I had the opportunity to hunt deer 17 days for myself all over this great state. I was fortunate to harvest 3 great deer on public land with the 3 first choice licenses that I drew (ER, WR & MZ). One of them being the most mature deer I have ever harvested. He was a old brute of a warrior! Now it is back to a different type of grind. One not so enjoyable, work!

Once again, I would like to thank you for tackling this very contentious topic. I was honestly shocked when you voted unanimously to approve the previous proposal. That showed what you all truly care about! You separated the facts and statistics from all the emotion and rhetoric. Something rarely found in today's political climate. Point in case, the Legislature Review Committee's ruling on this same topic. On the contrary, I understand change is very slow in governmental bureaucracies. No matter the branch, department, etc.

The original proposal of having all the deer licenses in one "bucket" was a far better proposal. It would have allowed even more SD residents to draw a deer license. At the same time, it would have had the greatest positive impacts on the drawing odds. The special buck licenses should have remained at the very least. A person that draws a special buck license can potentially receive 2 first choice deer licenses, while the remaining hunters only have the chance for 1 first choice license. We are allowing people that draw a special buck license the opportunity to double dip. Double dipping is what got us into this situation to begin with!

Why is a resident that purchases a special buck license afforded the extra opportunity? Did removing those licenses out of the "bucket" make the proposal more palatable for the uninformed masses and/or selfish hunters? Is it because they have private land to hunt? Is it because they are willing to spend the extra money needed for the special buck license? In my opinion, none of those are valid reasons to justify giving a group of hunters additional opportunities at first choice licenses over another. I would be interested in the honest answer. At the same time, I do understand the politics behind that decision as well. Wrong, right, or otherwise.

Secondly, I predict that more hunters will now apply for the special buck license for the option of double dipping. All the while, potentially tanking the future drawing odds for the special buck licenses. Unfortunately, human nature can be inherently greedy. I believe "hate the game, not the player" applies here.

Lastly, I predict it will also increase the amount of people that abuse the special buck license by not having private land lined up to hunt. Not that I am all knowing, nor that I even have a lot of friends; but I have never heard of the SDGFP checking the legitimacy of the private land permission from any of the special buck applicants that I personally know. The SDGFP doesn't have the time or resources to spend validating every special buck license holder, or rather, understandably those limited resources are better spent elsewhere. It is more of a honor system than anything. I understand there is nothing you can do at this point regarding the special buck licenses. None the less, I wanted to share my two cents. Time will tell the tale!

I supported the last proposal, and you have only improved upon it! I fully support this proposal as well. This proposal will allow a increased number of individual deer hunters the opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors each fall in South Dakota. This proposal will give more opportunities to our youth hunters. At the same time, this proposal will also undoubtedly increase drawing odds. Please prove YET AGAIN why you were awarded the Commission of the Year by supporting this proposal as well.

In closing, I want to thank each of you for taking on the responsibility and commitment of such a thankless position. I'm sure this topic has reinforced the thanklessness of the masses. I would venture to say the NR topic you will be tackling next will be even worse. I wish you the best in making the very difficult decisions yet to come!

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**Quintin Biermann**

**Rapid City SD**

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**Comment:**

With all the opposition the first go round please take a hint and let this die. We south dakotans want the opportunity to enjoy as many resources as we can on a yearly basis. I am all for youth involvement but there is a better way to go about it

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**Dan Doyle**

**Colman SD**

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**Comment:**

I attended the state fair forum and watched South Dakota Focus on public TV regarding the proposal. At both events it was asked how the proposal was doing approval wise. At both events the hunters who opposed the proposal outnumbered those in favor of it. At the state fair Tony Leif stated several times that hunter satisfaction was the main priority of the gfp. Since then hundreds of emails against the proposal have been sent, and the legislative committee turned your proposal down. You're proving that you don't care what the people you represent have to say, and hunter satisfaction is the least of your concerns. I'll ask this? Why can't you take no for an answer, rather than keep going until you've shoved this down every hunters throat in the state? Just to say "we win"??

And if your amendment to the proposal is giving kids preference points so they can shoot bucks, you've all lost what hunting is about and the principles behind it. Shut off the outdoor channel and listen to the people signing your paychecks. Prove me wrong, and leave the system alone.