

Public Comments

3-Splash Waterfowl Hunting Package

Dennis Lanpher

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Sir

I have been hunting Waterfowl for over 45-years, And when non-residents were not allowed to hunt ducks here, and when the Game Fish & parks has a point system on Ducks, There was years I hunted waterfowl and the season was close on shooting Reheads or canvas back duck and there was also years you couldn,t shoot pintails, If you run this 3-splash system what is to stop hunters from shooting the Blue bill ducks, which has been on the decline for over ten years and that is only the start, you have other duck breeds that if you go out shoot 3-of the same bird every day,The hunters now a days needs to learn and identify the birds ,I had to, I shot a hen mallard one day and I was done for the day as far as hunting

Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Season

Adrian Laurendeau

Mitchell SD

Position: support

Comment:

The addition of the rest of the eastern half of the state would be great. I would love the opportunity to trap one without having to drive so far.

Fishing Regulations

S.L. Stanczak

Council Bluffs IA

Position: oppose

Comment:

We enjoy coming up to Yankton twice a year and purchasing our three-day out of state fishing licenses. We do not mind paying the beautiful state of South Dakota for this opportunity. HOWEVER, an EXTRA \$25 HABITAT FEE for EACH of us is too expensive. We feel as if we are being gouged, and taken advantage of. South Dakota will LOSE MONEY on this new policy. We will be taking our fun and money elsewhere.

Other

Perry Cole

Birmingham AL

Position: other

Comment:

I am a deer hunter and long-time owner of 320 acres of crop land in Tripp County. Since it is so difficult for me to draw a deer license I was happy to see the SD Legislature enact a provision for nonresident hunters to obtain a deer license for hunting on their own land. Unfortunately the current requirement of 640 acres excludes me. I feel requiring 640 acres is unfair and I would ask that it be lowered to 160 acres, which I believe is the resident requirement. I would appreciate your consideration of this request and asking the Legislature to make this change. Thank you, Perry Cole, Nonresident Landowner.

Leo Flynn

Rapid City SD

Position: other

Comment:

Would be in favor of Sept teal season for west river sd. Similar to other surrounding states. As west river is not in the prairie pothole region and produces significantly fewer local ducks i think would be viable to offer this. High plains duck season doesn't open until Nov so we do not have any opportunities to hunt bluewing teal out here as they are long gone by opening day. Thanks for considering this idea.

Mike Peterson

Piedmont SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I have a real problem with the habitat stamp. On the sales pitch it lists bird watchers, kayakers, hikers. How will they pay their share? Why does someone buying one license have to pay a higher share and lower use of the "habitat" than someone with multiple licenses? Wouldn't it have been easier to just add a couple of bucks to licenses? This goes down the same vein as the ridiculous access permit. Would you please consider getting rid of both of them?

Sherry Smith

Gary SD

Position: other

Comment:

i feel that there should be a tag for disabled adults for hunting lg game deer and such.
paper work filled out by a doctor thank you for your consideration in this matter. Have a nice day.

Dominic Larive

Spearfish SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Habitat Stamp topic. My friend is a non-resident and was unsuccessful for the draw. He purchased the stamp with the application. He should not have been required to purchase the habitat stamp because he did not get a license.

Steve Stribel

Sun Prairie WI

Position: oppose

Comment:

I CANNOT believe the brood survey was discontinued this year. I have hunted SD pheasants on & off for nearly 20 years. How am I to gauge if it is worth the 11 hour drive to SD to hunt WITHOUT the brood survey numbers?! Unbelievable! Slight-of-hand B.S.! Stop publishing numbers when the counts continue to go down! Hiding the truth to deceive hunters. Either you are lying, or you don't have a clue. Deceitful to say the least. You should be doing something to increase habitat, real habitat that doesn't get plowed under. UNBELIEVABLE.

John McIlquham

Chippewa Falls WI

Position: other

Comment:

While increasing the hunting season and bag limit sound like a great idea to get more hunters to come that's not South Dakota problem. The problem is the decline in habitat. I have hunted South Dakota for 26 years and have watched it get worse every year. Until you start paying the farmers more for nesting cover and more importantly stop letting the road ditches be cut,. You are not going to get the pheasant numbers back . And hunters come to South Dakota to see birds. And driving 8 hours to hunt at a outfitters game farm is NOT real South Dakota pheasant hunting. That's why your hunters numbers are down and are going to get worse. Thanks for listening
John McIlquham johnmcilquham@yahoo.com

Kevin Postma

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please limit draws to preference points, so that people with the most points get a tag first before tags are made available to folk with 0 points.

Pheasant Hunting Season

Nancy Hilding

Black Hawk SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please increase hunting of pheasants around greater prairie chickens as the pheasant males drive off greater prairie chickens males and females lay eggs in greater prairie chickens, both which harm the chickens populations. The chickens are native and range shrinking across the country. Pheasants are introduced.

Mark Heisinger

Parkston SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am opposed to the proposed changes to the pheasant season. Although I can accept, unwilling, increasing the daily limit to 4. I can even accept opening the season a 10 am which traditionally for decades has been noon. However, I cannot accept extending the season through the month of January. I have witnessed hunters flushing pheasants in cold temperatures (zero), wind and snow cover. Late in the season it is likely that 60-80% of the pheasants population are hens. By chasing these birds out of the cover they preferred and pushing them into less desirable cover is expending energy that they cannot afford to expend. It is time to think of the resource rather than revenue. You have already required a habitat stamp for any hunter or fisherman which in effect has caused an increase in hunting/fishing license. Our land will be off limits to hunting if the proposal to increase the season until the end of January is enacted.

Sheri Lindner

Watertown SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

My Pheasant Hunting started with riding along with my father & Frank Bramble at 93 years old. Frank Bramble was one of the FIRST to bring Pheasants to South Dakota . We use to stop 3 to 4 times in 1 mile to shoot 2 to 3 Pheasants per stop. My Brother & I now 67 & *1 years old continue Road hunting Tradition. Over the past years we are LUCKY to even see 3 to 4 Pheasants in a day . GF&P wants to STOP Bird counts now something we have ALWAYS used . Only to make it look better & bring in Out of State Hunters. I was SHOCKED to find out GF&P was going to INCREASE Bird limits to 4. This is more than I see ALL year. LONGER days is ok & Longer seasons is ok but NOT INCREASED Limits is NOT ok. Farming has changed , there is no more frnce lines , weeds & brush. Small wetlands have drained & every hill that you drop over only has small sloughs with some water . I do understand farmers do what they do & don't want unwanted hunters . Its either to wet or dry . I am ready to put my guns up but need to say this for my Grandson who has yet experience the kind of hunting I had as a child . Things keep going the way they are my grandson will NEVER see the hunting .

Tony Bender

Redfield SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

100 percent against the pheasant season proposal and limit change. I can't express how disappointed I am in GFP and the GFP commission over the last 2-4 years. You have done little for the average hunters/the majority. Deer, waterfowl and now pheasants. Please listen to the sportsman of SD. Pheasant season is long enough. It isn't all about selling more licenses and getting more hunters to lodges.

Kevin Leibold

New Cumberland PA

Position: support

Comment:

In favor of extending pheasant season to Jan 31 and increase daily limit to four/day and possession limit to 20.

Blaine Brakke

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the adoption of all three pheasant hunting season proposals happening together. I have tiered my responses based on ease of adoption, effect on operators, and hunter opportunity/satisfaction.

I think if something must be changed, adopting new start time would be a good, easy start. I think that it lines up with the rest of the year, and gives a little more opportunity.

If we must adopt two, changing the start time and extending the season would be best. Extending the season would create more opportunity and with that, more revenue, though at the expense of outfitters and operations, as many would release more birds and have to extend their working year. Of course, that would be their decision to make, though I think most operators would continue to provide opportunity, albeit begrudgingly. I think the satisfaction of hunts may decline based on tougher hunting from weather and stress on operators from the long season.

I am strongly against raising the limit to 4 birds starting December 1st. If hunters have already had trouble in the past few years getting their limit of 3, why raise it to 4? Satisfaction of the hunt will decrease if hunters that normally shoot 2 of 3 now shoot 2 of 4, without an increase in bird numbers. I think it also presents a perception that bird numbers must be higher than they really are(though they do seem pretty good so far). I think this combined with no brood counts have made many people wary - many operators do not know how many birds there are, and how many they might need to buy to keep up. I think until we can replace the brood survey and get a good idea of what the population is, we should hold off on something like this. I think I also heard in the last meeting the thought was that a few other states run 4 bird limits. I took a quick look after the meeting (and mistakenly didn't write it down), but I believe there was only 1 pheasant hunting state that had a 4 bird limit. (I think it was Kansas.) If you want to change the limit, why wait until December 1?

And why are decisions like these made some close to the season?

I am a former resident who moved back a little over a year ago, grew up hunting and help run a few pheasant hunts on the family farm. I can see both sides of the arguments, but I do think these are rushed. The operators will be the ones to bear the burden.

Thank you.

Robert Desutter

Red Wing MN

Position: support

Comment:

I own and manage 300 acres near Fedora for Pheasant and duck habitat hunting for me and family/friends (not a business); albeit i am out of stater. Avid bird hunter for 50 years.

1. Most important - extend the season to end of January as that is the best time of year for bird hunting. More time options/days trips in the field is the BIG draw for out state hunters.
2. Do not increase bag limits - three birds is a full take from nature per day. increasing limits is not a draw for bird hunters.
3. Indifferent on noon vs 10 am start time - might consider lean toward 10 am so as for Dog Safety to minimize over heating afternoon starts.

Please extend season to end of Jan - would do wonders for So Dak top of mind destination.

Travis Schuld

Plankinton SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Cody Warne

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Extending the season and bag limits when pheasant numbers are going backwards is a terrible idea. Putting this added pressure on all wildlife that is trying to survive the brutal winters is a bad idea. If birds are pushed out of late season cover before these tough late season storms, it can wipe out what few birds are left. I have seen it happen. Get the state trapping program back to the way it was back in 2009 before the state let the coyotes get so out of control and maybe this state would have a great population of birds again. Landowners do not want to put up with the slob road hunters trying to shoot the birds in their yards and feedlots for another month, 2 and a half months is plenty. This is simply an excuse to try and sell more licenses and generate money while license sales crash at the expense of the wildlife, it has nothing to do with an over abundance of late season roosters that simply doesn't exist on property that is open to hunting late season. The reason you aren't getting as many hunters in the field is really simple, the pheasants are not here like they used to be. People are not going to hunt all day to see nothing. I strongly urge the commission to throw out these bad proposals.
Thanks

Thane Badger

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I wish you would leave the pheasant season alone. Those birds are having a hard enough time of making it that time of year.

Paul Nikolas

Sioux Falls SD

Position: support

Comment:

I support the 10:00 am start for pheasant hunting. I also support the 4 bird limit and extended season.

Ryan Rurode

Fort Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am strongly opposed to the suggested changes to the pheasant season. I view it as a disgusting attempt to prioritize making more money in the short term for the Noem administration and GFP at the expense of the long term health of the small game hunting in South Dakota. I am against moving the pheasant hunting start time to 10am. I am against increasing the daily limit. Another problem with this idea is that it was suggested to also lengthen the grouse season to "round out" and "coincide with the extended pheasant season." Grouse and Partridge are not sex distinguishable when hunting so hen grouse and partridge are shot just as much as the males. This will hurt the grouse and partridge numbers if we let people hunt them all January because they will be shooting female grouse and female partridge. I also strongly, vehemently oppose the Working Lands Program. It is nothing more than an attempt to funnel dollars from the average income or low income hunter buying a license, to then give to the rich landowners. There is no requirement that the landowners leave the land for the birds and wildlife. They are free to hay it or graze it and there is no requirement that they allow ordinary people to hunt their land. So we are just giving our money to rich landowners who don't really have to leave the tall grass for the birds and they don't have to let anyone hunt it. Of course, they may leave the grass stand just long enough to let their 20 family members come blast all the pheasants in it the first weekend so we all paid for their nice private, rich guy hunt. I am strongly opposed to the \$10 Habitat Stamp. It is too big of a rate increase and it is going to be going to all the wrong places by the looks of it. Shame on this Game, Fish, and Parks leadership and shame on Governor Noem. Whether it is ending most of the length limits on Bass in small lakes or increasing the pheasant daily limit, or the Working Lands Program...all of their actions seem to be geared toward making money for the richest people in our state--businessmen and landowners. The Game, Fish and Parks priority should be long term CONSERVATION!!!

Duane Hallman

White Lake SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

With the pheasant population so low I don't think it is the time to lengthen the season or raise bag limit.

Mark Lindstrom

954 Vista Ridge Lane MN

Position: support

Comment:

I see absolutely no downside to allowing shooting to begin at 10 AM year round. More hunters would likely opt to stay in a motel the night before instead of driving in for a noon start. Other businesses will also benefit when hunters stop hunting earlier in the day.

Francis Schaffer

Redfield SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I don't believe that the pheasant limit should be increased just yet. The population of birds needs to increase visibly. I also think this year is not the year to lengthen the season, because of the pandemic.

Jon Heintzman

Aberdeen SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

The season is fine the way it is, there is not an abundance of birds.

Pete Jarvis

Leclaire IA

Position: oppose

Comment:

My brother and I Pheasant hunted in SD for 10 years we quit going to SD 3 years ago due to low bird numbers and because you allow run hunters/ditch bushwhackers my brother and I hunt traditional style walking with dogs, it really upsets me when we have birds running ahead of us we push them to the road ditch and a car flies up in front of us door open up 4 people hop out and start shooting the birds . I understand people with disabilities have rights but it should be no more than 2 people and one gun per road hunter vehicle and limit them to 1 bird per day, PS please keep the brood survey , The state should supplement the wild birds the pay places do it why not the public land.

Nathan Keck

Spearfish SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I recently read the proposal for "improvements" to the pheasant season. As a long time pheasant hunter, a hobby wildlife biologist, board member on our local chapter of Pheasants Forever and strong beliefs in conservation, I am personally disappointed to hear this proposal. I do not believe that this supports wild pheasant populations. In fact, I believe an increased season length and bag limit would only further reduce South Dakotas already dwindling wild pheasant populations.

Sadly South Dakota once held the reputation of the state to go to and hunt these wild birds. Now that reputation has turned to, "come to South Dakota if you want to pay to hunt pen/farm raised birds." This is the resounding echo I hear in many different circles of avid bird hunters and hunting dog enthusiasts. Unfortunately, South Dakotas wild bird populations have decrease in proportion with habitat decreases, leading to lower hunter success and less returning hunters (tourism dollars). I can understand the states desire gain these tourism dollars back by marketing to and encouraging out of state hunters to come here and hunt. However, this new proposal of "improvements" does nothing to address the root cause of the issue, which is decreasing pheasant populations due to habitat loss.

On many of the public areas that I have been hunting for years it can be difficult to find a rooster past the 3rd or 4th weekend of the season as there is often not enough habitat to keep bird populations high enough to handle the hunting pressure those area get. So, by making the bag limit higher and the season longer it does nothing to improve this situation. Frankly it is very sad and frustrating to me to see how poorly the state is managing one of our most prized (publicly owned) natural resources, the pheasant.

First the state did away with the brood counts on pheasants as they said, "when pheasant brood numbers are down, those reported numbers deter both residents and nonresidents from pheasant hunting." I see this as great way to naturally regulate hunting pressure to keep hunter pressure lower on years when the pheasant numbers are low and bring in more hunters with the pheasant numbers are high. To me this should be motivation for the state to ensure proper pheasant habitat and keep these numbers as high as possible.

Now the state wants to further disregard proper conservation and instead "win" the marketing game of "come to our state where we have a longer season and can shoot more pheasants than any other state." When in reality the state registered hunting preserves/farms already experience a longer season (September to end of March) with no bag limits on pen raised birds. So, in reality this new proposal does nothing to benefit many of these hunting lodges/preserves as they don't care about these traditional season dates or limits since they operate by a different set of rules.

Since, these proposed "improvements" offer no real benefit for many of these preserves/lodges, this would only serve to increase the hunting pressure on wild bird populations. Therefore, making our already diminishing wild pheasant population less stable and ultimately drive it towards extinction.

I have lived in states that poorly managed their once wild pheasant population, such as Indiana, and are now forced have a state-run released pheasant hunts which few people get to do and very few if any non-residents participate in. If this is the future state that South Dakota desires to be in, then I support the decisions being made by the state. And as such I will happily move to a different state which will manage their wildlife in a responsible and conservation minded way. Afterall a big part of my motivation to move to South Dakota was because I wanted to hunt wild pheasants (and I know I'm not the only one) and if this is going to be mismanaged then I'm just as happy to move to a state that takes this seriously.

So I urge you to look at the big picture and start getting creative on ways that the state can improve pheasant habitat on public lands, partner with farmers and rancher to teach them about wildlife conservation and healthy land management, do not do road side mowing along gravel roads until late summer, implement state run habitat incentives for land owners, etc.. And by doing this, embrace a long-term solution that will help to bring wild pheasant numbers back towards the historic highs that we would all love to see again.

Private Shooting Preserve Bag Limits

Teri Schmidt

Sioux Falls SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.



September 2, 2020

State of South Dakota
GFP Commission
523 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Commissioners:

Each year, one of the events Experience Sioux Falls looks forward to the most as a convention and visitors bureau is our hunters welcome at the Sioux Falls Regional Airport. We are proud to be the gateway to South Dakota for many of these hunters and offer the first of many warm welcomes during their time in our great state. Dozens of volunteers and sponsors carve out an entire week because we realize the importance pheasant tourism has in South Dakota.

As a native of the Winner area, I grew up knowing firsthand the importance of hunting to South Dakota heritage as well as its economy. Especially during a time when the hospitality and tourism industry is suffering more than any other time in recent history, it is important for all levels of government to allow the private sector the latitude and regulatory climate to innovate and do what is best for their operations.

This is why I support the optional waiver of the arbitrary limit restriction placed on private shooting preserves (ARSD 41:09:01:03.01). These private preserves play an important role in sustaining hunting lands and pheasant populations in South Dakota. They offer a world-class experience for hunters and help create lifelong memories that leave travelers yearning for future trips to South Dakota. The hunting tourism industry also provides hundreds of jobs in rural communities, helps sustain small towns, and even means economic boosts for larger cities like Sioux Falls, Mitchell, Aberdeen and Pierre.

As the pheasant hunting capital of the world, it is important for South Dakota to remain competitive with the states entering the pheasant hunting industry. I urge you to support this proposal to help hold South Dakota's standing as the world epicenter of pheasant hunting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Teri'.

Teri Schmidt
Executive Director