

Commissioners:

I am writing in **OPPOSITION** to a majority of the proposed Spring Turkey changes. Please see my replies below in the **bold blue text**.

1. Modify the season dates for all spring turkey hunting seasons to begin on the third Saturday of April and end on May 31.

I support moving the firearms season back a week however I do not agree with removing the week earlier start for archery hunters.

2. Adjust the maximum number of licenses available in administrative rule from no more than 5,807 to 10,000 one-tag "male turkey" licenses and from no more than 600 to 2,500 two-tag "male turkey" licenses.

Oppose. If the goal of these changes is to grow/maintain the statewide turkey population, how does increasing the number of tags +10% by 2023/2034 help achieve that goal? I don't agree with increasing tags if we are consolidating the season into a smaller window of time. It will produce overcrowding on public land and potentially increase the likelihood of in the field firearm accidents, which sadly are becoming more and more common in turkey seasons due to increased interest in "fanning" or "reaping" turkeys with tail fans.

3. Eliminate Unit BST-BH2, which provides for a second Black Hills spring turkey licenses for resident hunters.

Support. Limiting tags in a unit where populations are declining makes sense. I would be happier if there would be a cap on Black Hills tags for both residents and nonresidents.

4. Modify the season dates for those prairie units with split season seasons.

No opposition.

5. Modify the valid time during the season when access permits are valid for Good Earth State Park and Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve.

No opposition.

6. Modify the valid time during the season when hunters can have uncased weapons within the boundary of Sica Hollow State Park.

No opposition.

While I am not excited about potentially losing two weeks of turkey season, I understand to a point the reasoning. My only concern is that shortening the season but increasing the number of tags will produce overcrowding on public lands and decrease overall hunter satisfaction and the quality of season.

Thanks,

Bill Schwarz

Pierre, SD