

Public Comments - April 1 to April 14, 2024

Nonresident Waterfowl

Greg Fischer

Lake City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Adam Frick

Yankton SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

We already deal with land access issues the way it is, why do we need to increase out of state hunter numbers? Specifically down here we deal with Nebraska out of state license holders able to purchase UNLIMITED numbers of licenses, which creates a HUGE access problem on the boundary water area that both states seem to turn a blind eye to. It is becoming harder and harder to secure land, and I'm afraid in the not too distant future, we will be paying to hunt land because of the actions of out of state hunters, making it harder for people to get into the sport, which I thought with the three duck limit, was a priority for the central flyway.

Joe Long

Aberdeen SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

During Daugaard's administration the commissioners held a public meeting in Pierre. There was over a 100 people in opposition to expanding NR licenses in SD, including 2-3 NRs from MN and ND. They talked about how the expansion of NR tags destroyed the waterfowl hunting in their states. Only a couple people were in support of it, namely guides and landowners who rent out their land to NRs. All the commissioner voted against the expansion. That meeting was taped by the GF&P. Maybe that tape recording can be found and watched by the current commissioners. Please stop the continued efforts to expand NR resident licenses, in the name of commerce.

John Simpson

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Also plan to attend open forum.

Jeff Olson

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

This is the third time I have commented on this issue but I have yet to see it in the comments posted for the meeting?

Aric Olson

Inwood IA

Position: oppose

Comment:

I strongly oppose raising the non resident licenses the quality of the hunting is great and think raising the licenses would hinder that. Also think it is one step close to commercializing duck hunting as other states have done

Mark Carda

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Quintin Biermann

Groton SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Jenece Holzbauer

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Dylan Herr

Huron SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Currently there is plenty of nonresident waterfowl hunters in the state. With the last couple of years being a drought the birds are in very few areas and there is multiple hunters hunting the same group. It makes landowners annoyed. This is a resource that should be protected. They are allowed to come in the spring with out limits and it is a nightmare. Let's not make the fall the same.

Eric Paulson

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Not sure why my comments didn't show up. I emailed them a couple weeks ago and submitted in the comments link. So let's try this again. Hopefully you get to read this before the meeting.

GFP Commissioners,

At the last Commission meeting, the GFP Wildlife director I believe it was said that most of the nonresident licenses are for duck hunting purposes. So let's look at the just the duck hunter numbers for South Dakota and cut out the goose hunters using GFP survey data. Here is the most recent duck hunter survey <https://gfp.sd.gov/UserDocs/nav/Ducks.pdf> from the GFP. According to data from the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks, from 2016 to 2021 the resident duck hunter numbers INCREASED! Total waterfowl hunters have dropped yes, but clearly that drop in the last decade or so is primarily goose hunters. Now consider residents hunt the peak migration and non-residents try to time their trip for peak migration, when you hit that peak duck migration each year there are 100 more resident hunters in 2021 than 2016 and over 600 more nonresident duck hunters. This doesn't include the 300 nonresident licenses added last year. Now you want to add another 315 non-residents to hunt for 3 or 10 days? Now you go from 100+ more residents since 2016, plus 600+ more nonresidents since 2016, plus 300 added last year, plus 315 more this year, that's over 1,300 more resident and nonresident duck hunters since 2016! You'll be just adding to the congestion and to the problems that people have been complaining about for years.

Another common message at the last meeting was issues with NR waterfowl hunters so I'll share some issues we've encountered. Multiple times the last few years nonresident hunters have hunted a state refuge in Brown County, they get turned in every time we see them and I hope other hunters in the area who see them turn them in as well. The illegal hunters always claim they thought the refuge was public land so they can hunt it even though its very very clearly marked as a refuge. That blows the area for miles around for everyone for probably 2 weeks. But what do they care? They are only here for 3 days or 10 days at most. The rest of us are around all year and get to suffer but hey at least the refuge hunters got a good hunt in right? And for \$125 fine the game warden takes their birds from them so they don't count against their possession limit and they can go out and shoot even more the rest of their time here!

Now also take habitat into consideration. Yes, South Dakota has a lot of public land, but not all public land is created equal. In the northeast part of the state for example, walk in fields that are all grass or sloughs bottoms with little to no water is pretty much worthless when it comes to hunting ducks. Great for nesting and for deer and pheasants but not good for duck hunting. Take bean fields that may be walk in too. Very rarely will you see ducks choosing bean fields over corn fields. So, removing those categories of public land and you have now drastically reduced the amount of quality duck hunting land/water with, statistically increasing numbers of duck hunters since 2016.

If duck populations were at their peaks this might not even be a discussion. But as in my previous comments for the March meeting, duck numbers have been drastically dropping the last 10 years. Dropping from 49.5 million in 2013 to 32.32 million in 2023, according to Duck Unlimited. Couple quickly dropping duck numbers with increasing resident and nonresident duck hunters since 2016 and you have a mess and a lot of frustrated hunters!

It sure doesn't seem, based on reading comments and listening to comments at the GFP meeting last month that there is much if any resident or non-resident support for this increase. Maybe from outfitters but they want as many non-resident hunters as possible because that's how they make their money. Even the GFP staff saw no need to propose it in February. South Dakota is one of the last great destinations for duck hunting. Making the licenses like an open checkbook with 5% annual increases will make it just like every other state and in the long run very well could hurt overall hunter numbers coming to and hunting in South Dakota. I would urge you to deny this proposal and leave the numbers as is.

Thanks,
Eric Paulson
Pierre, SD

Michael Pistulka

Deer Creek MN

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Tyler Frick

Yankton SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please do not increase the NR waterfowl tags. Nebraska has made enough of a problem in the Appletree area already. Have hunted there for over 20 years now and have seen what the competition has done to the area. I rarely go there anymore because of the population of hunters. The birds are hunted all day long. These hunters get up and out there by 2 am on some days and if you get there by 4 am, you are not likely to get a good spot. This past year was the worst waterfowl year of my life. At least with the number of NR tags in South Dakota, we are still able to enjoy waterfowl hunting off of the boundary waters without too much crazy competition. There are definitely guide boats out in the Springfield/Appletree area as well.

John Wrede

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

State Versus Kemp is still good law. I am vehemently opposed to this non-resident license increase.

Michael Undeberg

Rochester MN

Position: oppose

Comment:

Regarding the proposed changes to non-resident waterfowl regulations, I stand in opposition. I feel South Dakota has a reasonable and equitable system which provides ample opportunity, while maintaining a quality experience. The proposed changes will inevitably lead to further private monetizing and monopolizing of a precious public resource. This in turn will reduce access for the average hunter, and have a detrimental effect on hunters numbers in general. This is short term gain for the few, at the expense of the resource. Additionally, as waterfowl numbers have proven to be difficult to increase artificially, I believe this would have a negative effect on waterfowl numbers. Please retain the current system to protect the resource, and support the average hunters who are the backbone supporting fish and game management and the businesses which benefit from their participation. Thank you for you consideration.

Ryan Elliott

Watertoen SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Justin Goodroad

Brookings SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

We have plenty of non resident hunters as it currently stands. Non residents have additionally lowered the amount of private land opportunities due to poor respect of grower land and abuse of hunting permission.

Other

David Holthus

Woonsocket SD

Position: support

Comment:

Dear commissioners, I am a member of the Jerauld county Fish and Game club. We had a meeting and discussed the development of campgrounds And the fishing in the Missouri river. With the new electronics we will need to change the limit on walleyes from 4 to 3 per day until further notice. David Holthus

Brian Pauly

Woonsocket SD

Position: support

Comment:

Prairie Grouse Season Extension - I know this comment is late, but I support the extension of the prairie grouse season to close the same time the pheasant season closes.

Darrel Reinke

Ft. Pierre SD

Position: support

Comment:

Support making partridge, quail, and grouse end the same day as pheasant. Thank You

Rick Kuchta

Yankton SD

Position: support

Comment:

My crossbow permit expires this year and I would like to apply for another one.