

# Public Comments

## 3-Splash Waterfowl Hunting Package

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**Andrew Ferris**

**Wall SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Leave the duck limit as is already at 6 and start season earlier in the high plains unit

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**Todd Scheuble**

**Webster MN**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

This is the icing on the cake of insane management practices.

You are losing hunters in SD because your refs and license restrictions for NR are so over the top that it's clear you don't want us there. 250 NR licenses? Really? And only 405 even cared to apply.... enough said.

My daughter (13) was drawn but I and two others we planned to hunt with were not, now they are not coming and I will be blowing my NR hunting budget on a trip only one of us can hunt.

Duck ID IS NOT a burden, it's part of learning the culture of the sport. Three splash (stupid name) will encourage shoot at anything at any distance because who cares as long as it only 3. That is not the type of hunters I want to be around with my daughter.

Try making licenses available& affordable, invest in habitat, work with landowners to allow walk-in access and quit encouraging/coddling big bucks estates and corporate retreats that monopolize opportunity.

Accept responsibility for missing the boat on what waterfowling is really about

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**Dennis Pugh**

**Akaska SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

last year there were huge number of pintails could only shoot 1 i see more again this year

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**Dana Randall**

**Akaska SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

This is not going to increase hunters! Give out more out of state licenses, use the extra funds to better our habitat. We have land that is covered in brome grass-doesn't raise any wildlife

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**Greg Knebel**

**Webster SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I do not think it is the kind of duck that is shot that is keeping hunters from hunting. It is more the cost of the hunt and the place to hunt. If they watch any of the outdoor shows you should have dozens of decoys a special gun ,cloths,amm0, ect. I think the mentor programs are doing a good job but might need to do more promoting of these programs and how to do them or some type of a reward program for taking them out and introducing them to waterfowl hunting!!

## Aeration and System Use

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**Rena Smith**

**Mccook Lake SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I agree to the proposal for requiring warning signs if there's an aerator in use on the lake. I would also like to suggest a permit requirement for people who want aerators to carry liability insurance. I would also like a clause that would protect neighboring homeowners so that the aerator does not block access to the ice in front of their home . Other states I have seen would require skirting placed around the aerator so it doesn't impact the neighboring properties. In my own experience there was a neighbor six houses down from my property that had an aerator that actually cleared the ice in front of and past my house so I could not access the ice in front of my home. Even when they put their aerator on a timer so that it removed less ice I still didn't feel comfortable going out on the ice because of the natural spring near my property. I felt that could have caused the ice to be thinner with the aerator moving the water. Having skirting around the aerator may help that. Thank you.

## Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Season

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**Cheri Nino**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

There's no need to let Bobcats be killed by the hundreds indiscriminately. It's a trophy hunt. And repulsive. Is South Dakota that desperate?

# Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Season

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**Mark Johnson**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think it would be a good idea to allow trapping for bobcats in all of east river. The population is expanding. The governor's office wants more people excited about trapping and doing more trapping. This would be another adventurous option of trying to trap a bobcat.

Also the link in the bobcat section of your email on July 24th doesn't work. It goes to an error page. I think you have the space hyperlinked after the word position.

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**Cody Pohlen**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think this would be a great addition to the South Dakota hunting and trapping enthusiasts.

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**Alexander Young**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the east river bobcat season and would like to see it open to the entirety of the East River, every county. This would be a great addition to the hunting and trapping community.

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**Brad Gates**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think that it's a great idea and I fully support the opening of all East river for a bobcat season. I believe that the population is expanding and as a trapper it would be great to be able to utilize this great resource! Thanks

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**Matthew Hayes**

**Letcher SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Open all East river bobcat trapping and hunting please.

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**Trent Hagen**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Steve Gates**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

With the population growing in eastern south Dakota, I support a season for trapping Bob cats.

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**Darrell Gates**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support opening all of eastern SD bobcat season. It will be great for hunting and trapping!

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**Cody Miles**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am for this season.

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**Jim Miles**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Jocelyn Nickerson**

**Omaha NE**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please find our letter and supplemental materials attached in opposition to the proposed bobcat hunting and trapping season. We ask that these be added to the official record.

Jocelyn Nickerson  
The Humane Society of the United States

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**Kandy Hastings**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

If I'm not mistaken, the SD Dept. of Game Fish and Parks is supposed to be preserving our game, fish, wildlife, and lands for our future generations. All I can observe is that you are in the business of 'trophy hunting' instead. Please stop this travesty now!  
With disappointment,  
Kandy Hastings  
Rapid City, SD

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**Sue Skovran**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I STRONGLY oppose the bobcat hunting expansion. I cannot fathom how anyone could so cruelly slaughter these beautiful animals. Please rethink this and show respect for Bobcats and those of us who love wildlife and pets.

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**Mary Hertz**

**Menno SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose the expansion of the bobcat trapping and hunting. This is unnecessary cruelty.

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**Carol Christianson**

**Belle Fourche SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Bobcats are essential in helping to control the number of feral cats that are lethal to ground nesting birds in South Dakota. The bounty system for small predators does nothing to eliminate the hunting pressure of feral cats on game birds. Feral cats are a much greater problem. Please address that situation before you eliminate one of the few natural measures available to control the feral cat population.

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**Kimberly Duke**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please do not extend the season. They have the right to be here too. There has to be a better way to live together.

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**Peggy Mann**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please STOP this inhumane practice. We need to be better stewards of Earth.

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**Jana Haecherl**

**Custer SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Bobcat trapping is cruel and outdated form of management.

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**Nicole Eller**

**Edgemony SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please just leave the cats alone. We are in their territory, and there aren't enough of them in the first place. If we keep destroying our major predator populations, we are going to be very sorry.

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**Debra Brandt**

**Rapid Coty SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

They are such beautiful & shy creatures. They are not commonly seen in the woods. Please do not allow the hunting and trapping of these animals.

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**Sheena Thomas**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Julie Anderson**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Killing an animal for fun and vanity is unacceptable. This commission is pandering to a select few, ignoring the will of the majority and deliberately inflicting pain on the wildlife of this state. This agency is out of control and abusing its power to enact state policy.

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**Jeanette Williams**

**Vermillion SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please quit killing these beautiful animals. There is room for all of us.

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**Coree Mccabe**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I don't feel it is necessary to expand trophy hunting for bobcats.

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**Kerma Cox**

**Custer SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

It seems people in power want to kill any animal they feel is not somehow beneficial to them. I urge you to prohibit the hunting of the bobcat. Mother Nature's design is perfect in as far as balancing the wildlife. We should appreciate all of nature and animals that grace our land. This is exactly why a lot of us choose to live here.

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**Suzann Stonerwyngaarden**

**Custer SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No reason for the bobcats to be hunted as they do not provide food source only a trophy hunt.

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**Valerie Wente**

**Custer SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am a lifelong avid outdoors woman who has spent years hunting and fishing. My husband has a bachelor's degree in Natural Resources with an emphasis in Law Enforcement. I strongly oppose this approach to wild life management and feel that the "over-harvesting" of predators for trophy hunting is a disgrace. Not only does it cause more of a problem and further create an imbalance in our ecosystem, the methods of hunting Bobcats and Mountain Lions are not sportsman like and do not provide a swift, dignified end of life.

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**Heidi Madsen**

**Carpenter SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Valarie O'day**

**Black Hawk SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please do not kill the bobcats. They harm no one and have as much a right to be here as people do. They are not a nuisance animal and are important to the ecosystem.



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**Gail Saxonis**

**Hot Springs SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am unequivocally opposed to the trapping and killing of bobcats as a source of trophy hunting.

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**Vicki Koebernick**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Margaret Culhane**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please leave the current season as it is. Thank you

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**Donna Watson**

**Lead SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please let's not drive another species to extinction in this state.

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**Kris Stapelberg**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I've lived and hiked in the state my whole life, and I have never seen a bobcat in the wild. To see such a thing would be an honor and thrill. But here goes backwards South Dakota, wanting to kill everything for the fun of it, so I guess I'll never see one.

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**Jamielynn Vanhoorn**

**Milbank SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Megan Daniels**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Debra Johnston**

**Hot Springs SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

ABSOLUTELY NOT!!!!

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**Chloe Anderson-Meier**

**Spearfish SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Kim Nordsiden**

**Winner SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Nearly doubling the area where bobcats can be hunted would result in trophy hunters killing an unknown number of bobcats; this could potentially be devastating to a species that already faces a multitude of threats due to habitat loss and climate change.

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**Melissa Martin-Schwarz**

**Hermosa SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

More tourists come to see SD beautiful diverse wildlife in their natural habitat than seeing them mounted on walls after being cruelly killed by trapping and dog/hound hunting. Remember, tourists mean money to SD.

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**Dawn Pesicka**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Diane Buche**

**Box Elder SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose the expansion of bobcat hunting throughout the state. We are in the midst of the 6th mass extinction on earth with approximately 30 to 50 percent of plants and animals disappearing by 2050. Let's not contribute to this horror for sport.

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**Mitchell Fee**

**Burbank SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Since these animals are at an all time low and feral cats and coy dogs are still running strong. Original native wildlife is struggling to survive. Through hunting and trapping and mostly from the loss of habitat due to top farmers taking more and more groves and wildlife habitat out and converting it into more cropland. Even less than the last ten acres is taken out routinely for more crops, causing wildlife to struggle and cross paths with man, vehicles, other wildlife and hunters. This causes our eco system to become unbalanced and some wildlife extinct. Let's give farmers incentives to stop being greedy and leave more habitat for our true wildlife.  
Thank you kindly

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**Priscilla Young**

**Canton SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Please provide your scientific research that supports your proposal.

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**Ramona Vanderzee**

**Harrisburg SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Please do not endanger Bobcats. Use wisdom and science to support any decisions made before opening up more hunting of these precious creatures.

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**Leland Degolier**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Theda J Gallegos**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

You all need to stop killing our animal life for personal means! Enough is enough!

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**Mary Hall**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

## Fall Turkey

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**Wolfgang & Kathleen Schmidt**

**Nemo SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

In the many years we have lived in the Black Hills, we have usually seen some turkeys in our area. This year, we have seen NONE. There are NO HENS, NO BABIES, absolutely NOTHING. We are AGAINST ANY FALL TURKEY SEASON. The numbers indicate that there is a less than 35% "success" rate. Why are you allowing a turkey hunting season when there are so few out there anymore? Does the research not tell you this should be put on hold until they increase in numbers?

## Fishing Regulations

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**David Madsen**

**Arlington SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Raising grandchildren to become fishermen, it is seriously complicated to comply with every size, species, lake, etc. regulation that they need to know and understand.

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**Joe Venosdel**

**Tea SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

The fort Randall tail race should be just like the other tail races regarding spear fishing of gamefish. I support the change.

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**Paul Cox**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Expanding hours for spearing is a good idea.

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**Chris Allen**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I would prefer to fish behind the dam w/o the added competition for fish and space created by spearfishing for gamefish.

I have had dive-boats pull up to where I was fishing in Mobridge and tell me to move along my flag is now out... This was BS then and has made me rethink my support of this activity overall. I know people who enjoy the activity and have a lot of fun doing it and they seem to have plenty of fish on hand...

My opposition to opening the area behind the dam to gamefish spearing due to the limited space. I'd like to be able fish w/o having to worry about some spear-fisherman or group of spear fisherman and their flag staking out chunks of public water.

I'd also ask the commission to check with the DNR Fishery Biologists on the proposed change to the reg. See if this will have a negative impact to game fish populations.

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**Lance Wheeler**

**Pipestone MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As an active bowfishermen in the state of South Dakota I am in support of the changes to the spear fishing season on the Missouri River from May 1st to March 31st. I am also in support of extending the hours of spear fishing game fish from one half hour before sunrise until one half hour after sunset.

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**Marc Schmitz**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Allowing walleye spearing close to the dams where the large females congregate is a colossal mistake. The Pierre area will see the effects of this in the next few years. In an attempt to increase license sales short-term, the agency is damaging the resource long-term. Please listen to the biologists.

## Other

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**Tyra Honomichl**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

It was brought to my attention that native americans should have free access to the river. I was talking to a tribal member and they have valid opinions and feelings. As you know most of the native population dont have a lot of financial resources, so to be able to help them in this way would be good for everyone. It will help build a bridge between cultural difference and build new connections with each other. With everything that is happening today with BLM movement, you would be able to support the movement. Which will also help you bring new visitors to this beautiful area which in turn gives you more business and revenue. I admit I dont know a lot about business but I know if more people visit the more money you yet. This is a win-win situation. Thank you for your time and hope to hear from you soon.

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**Matthew Provost**

**Seattle WA**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

"As long as the water flows and the grass grows".. We know where our Motherland is.

Would you pay money to visit your birthplace?

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**Jessi Jo**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Stefanie Morales**

**Wichita KS**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Tasheena Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Brenda Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Harlee Myers**

**Tripp SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Stefanie Morales**

**Wichita KS**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

We should not have to pay for what is already ours!!!! Yankton Sioux proud!!!!

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**Alex Davis**

**Windfall IN**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

As a non resident hunter, I figured I would at least present my view of how the commission could attract or draw people to South Dakota to pheasant hunt. I have been out there the past 8 or so years and the group I go with has been there since the early 2000s during the height of CRP and bird numbers. Money in my opinion would be best spent in reestablishing habitat to levels seen in those days. There are mainly pockets of habitat in the areas we hunt, and we only find birds in those areas. Many hunters that travel out there with minimal birds and minimal habitat to hunt vow not to go back. This is an issues that will not be solved by a marketing campaign. So it makes most sense to me to build the habitat and you will attract out of state hunters when the bird number increase. Thank you



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**Michael Jocks**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I support all of the Commissions proposed changes to the upcoming Pheasant hunting season with the exception of the proposed extension of the season for our native birds: Prairie Chickens, Grouse & Quail. Pheasants are able to be farmed and there fore can be repopulated reasonably easily while any over-harvesting of the native species cannot.

Thanks, Michael (Bert) Jocks

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**Eugene Opbroek**

**Gregory SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I read with dismay your approval of free park entrance fees for Native Americans in some of our SD Parks. I have a few concerns. 1. Will Native Americans be allowed to reserve 90 days in advance and will they be able to hold the reserved spot for 14 days?? If so, then, since it is FREE to them they could, and will if given the opportunity, actually live in the park for the whole camping season. It looks to me like this was passed with very little thought about the repercussions of the decision. It also looks like it has created a great agenda for continued racism in SD, not much thought there either!! Which tribe will be next?? YOU HAVE SET A VERY, VERY DANGEROUS PRECEDENT HERE!! Again not much thought. And my final question, what about Veterans???? You jump through hoops to accomodate Native Americans who currently get free housing, education, food, etc, etc. yet the Veterans who gave a part of their life to protect the freedoms and liberties of ALL South Dakotans and Americans, white, black, or brown get crapped on again!! Good Job Commission, hope you are proud of yourselves. This South Dakota Veteran and many of my fellow South Dakotans are NOT!!

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**Dean Young**

**Custer SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

GFP Commission Proposes Electric Motors Only on Two Black Hills Waters; Trout Limit Change on Border Waters.

"United States Forest Service requested the same restriction on Bismarck Lake. These waters are utilized by kayakers and canoers and the regulation change would be for safety reasons".

This statement is totally nonsense and is playing on the old safety tactic, which in this case doesn't fly. Reason's are

1. Bismarck Lake has a sign at the gravel boat put-in spot that already says electric motors only (not true, again the public being misled). The only reason this is coming up is that I questioned the sign and found out that it was not true and invalid.

2. The so called boat landing, is not lend itself to large motorboats that would launch on this lake to do the waterskiing and other water sports that someone would have you to believe in order to get their (probably personal) agenda thru. So again there is no safety issue as the motors would be small and used for fishing. There isn't even a swimming beach on the lake to attract watersport type crafts and the problems they can attract.

3. If someone wants to cry safety for the Kayaks and Canoes, you would have to not allow any gas motors on any of the Black Hills Lakes (this is just a ploy to get their way). Let's look at Center Lake, which is, I believe smaller than Bismarck Lake, it has a beach a playground much larger lake use area than Bismarck and yet you can use a gas motor to help you fish. Is there, or has there been a problem with Center Lake, or any similar Lakes in the Hills with small motorboats (other that Stockade which is not similar to Bismarck)??? Soooooo don't regulate something that isn't a problem, and take away something that older folks use to enjoy activities. You know that the Public Lands aren't just for the Young and Healthy who can still even sit in a Kayak much less get out of one.

Side note: Had a Square backed canoe with a 3hp motor I used for fishing once.

4. Just being redundant but, a lot of folks who have certain agendas like to use the safety ploy when it isn't an issue and will not become an issue.

Also once agency's regulate something, it is difficult to get rid of whatever you regulated, sooo don't jump the gun just because it is someone's pet thing to do.

Could go on and on but you get the drift.

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**Richard Perkins**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

15 river otter should be caught and moved to where cobra mussels are. So they can each eat 10lbs of clams mussels a day forever. we're here you kill a renewable source that can reproduce zebra killers.

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**Melissa Savage**

**Santa Fe NM**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Dear South Dakota Department of Game and Fish,

I am writing to express an opinion on the introduction of a harvest on river otters that is proposed in your 2020 South Dakota River Otter Management Plan, 2020-2029.

The report details an increase in population numbers of rivers otters in the State, primarily in the easternmost portion of the state. Based on this increase, the Department believes killing a certain number of otters every year is justifiable.

I disagree.

Otters, like wolves and other apex predators, are keystone species, and structure an ecosystem, thereby maintaining a healthy and natural balance. And river otters are aquatic apex predators native mammals in North America. The ecosystems they structure are riverine and lacustrine. Since they were once native to most water systems in North America, otters played a crucial role in structuring the biodiversity across the continent.

One of their most important ecosystem services at the present time is the regulation of non-native species in rivers. In many US states where otters were overharvested to extinction, non-native fish and crayfish have devastated aquatic systems, overwhelming native fauna. This is especially noticeable in the impact of non-native crayfish on river systems, where they eat fish eggs, small fish and vegetation. The reintroduction of river otters to 22 states has clearly improved the health of those rivers.

Besides these important ecosystem services, river otters have been hugely popular with the public, in those states where they have been reintroduced, and increasingly everywhere throughout the US, as watchable wildlife. This trend is increasing, as we can see from Citizen Science programs and news outlets. People love otters. This is a large and growing constituency...one might easily believe it is a larger constituency than that of trappers.

Moreover, your decision is based on a perception that there are enough otters in South Dakota to justify a harvest, based on your monitoring statistics. But how do you assess how many otters are enough otters? There appears to be no estimation of what an optimum otter population is for the sake of wetland ecosystems. Your harvest may keep otter numbers at a steady number—a “sustainable” number. But you do not know if this is the right number of otters. They are, after all, a native mammal. In the past, they were able to regulate their numbers perfectly well.

Essentially, your argument is framed for the benefit of the trapping constituency. There is no ecological justification for opening a harvest season in South Dakota. And we know that fur trapping is an activity of the past, not the future. Perhaps if this were honestly stated, the assessment might reveal the gaps in the argument for a harvest.

I encourage you to wait to open a harvest season. If in the future, your otters may become so abundant that you have a problem. Until that time, I strongly encourage you to wait to open a harvest season on river otters in South Dakota.

Thank you kindly,

Melissa Savage

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**Jorge D. Vicuna**

**Huron SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I think that you should amend the requirement of 160 acres for a preference in deer hunting.

There aren't too many quarters of land that are short by a not significant amount because of the rectangular survey and also for rights of way and small parcels that have been sold off. Maybe an appropriate number would be 140 acres.

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**Mike Peterson**

**Piedmont SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Hi, can you explain when, how or mostly why you now came up with this stupid Habitat fee?! I thought the ridiculous \$40 we already pay covered habitat. Why not add a couple of bucks to every license instead of putting more of it on someone that only gets one tag? I am getting so close to quitting hunting.

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**Mark Nielsen**

**Yankton SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I am not very good on the computer but this is the biggest vmess i have ever seen no wonder the hunting #s are down you can't get to the page to apply

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## Pheasant Hunting Season

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**Ben Brettingen**

**Waconia MN**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I support the 10am start for the first week of the season and would even encourage an earlier 9am start. I however do not support raising the daily limit to 4. While it would bring more people to the state in the late season, which is great for tourism....the number of birds are well below the 10 year average. Although numbers largely depend on young of the year spring hatches, I don't support taking even more birds regardless.

Sincerely,

Ben Brettingen

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**Brock Heying**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I have a feeling this is only being done because it's what Kristi Noem wants. Just a scheme to attract more out of state bird killers (be honest, they don't "hunt" anything). I don't see bird numbers like I remember from my childhood. When I'm seeing birds like that, then we can think about increasing limits

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**William Sprinkel**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

With the low pheasant numbers the last ten years it seems rather ridiculous to increase season length and bag limits. I also thought you were going to do away with brewed counts since it does not have bearing on season limits and length. Seems to me you are only interested in out of staters money and not what is good for wild life. Funny how brood counts were going to be stopped because out of state hunters used this info to decide if they were going to come and hunt here or not. If rood counts are going to be used again I hope this information will be accessible to all to see so people can use it to make their decision to come or not. We who live here all know pheasant numbers are way down and decisions like this are not going to help the numbers. Just remember not all who come what to hunt tame birds on a preserve. As far as resident hunter numbers being down it seems to me that if there were more places to hunt that you did not have to pay to hunt more would be interested in going again not every one has 150 dollars to pay to shoot three pheasants. Please use common sense when you consider making this decision it will greatly influence generations to come. Money should not be the sole consideration of decision like this consider your children's futures in outdoor sports or the lack of if we keep selling off our wildlife to the highest bidders. In my option it is only a matter of time before we see the same thing with our deer hunting.

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**David Peck**

**Cherokee IA**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The reason that the hunter and harvest number have gone down since 2015 is because there are far less pheasants (West River). Without any real data these changes will hurt populations all for the almighty \$\$\$\$\$.

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**Joshua Weier**

**Windsor CO**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose early start and increased bag limits. Pheasant numbers have been down in recent years, if you try to bring in more hunters and increase limits... bird numbers would certainly get worse. Lower bird numbers would eventually drive hunters away even more.

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**Brent Schaap**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am opposed to 10 o'clock shooting time on opening weekendS of pheasant season. There is plenty of daylight to have a good pheasant hunt before time change. For those of us who also waterfowl hunt on those days and meet up with the rest of the hunting party for the pheasant hunt. you'll be cutting into our waterfall time.

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**Jacob Geis**

**Emery SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Extending the pheasant season to the end of January would be awesome! It would match Nebraska's season, a state which has seen pheasant numbers come back as of late, meaning the longer season has little effect on population.

Also, upping the limit in the later half of the season would be another great idea. By that point, for the most part only those of us hardy folks that actually live in the state are still hunting.

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**Jodie Schaap**

**Fedora SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

As farmers we are opposed to starting time of 10 o'clock in the early season. I've never had a hunter that could outlast the day light that time of year and increasing amount of time the hunting the early season which seems to be a lot hotter now days we just add to increasing problems with hunters caring for overheated dogs Plus it's nice to get 1/2 day work done before the hunt.

As for the increase bird limit and lengthening the season I would think this would be foolish at our current bird numbers. If we had a population of birds we did a decade ago I would be all for it

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**Troy Kirsch**

**Platte SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Pheasant numbers have been down the last several years, so it is proposed to shoot more? This has to be introduced by the pheasant farms I assume. We farm next to a big public hunting area and we have enrolled some land into "walk in program" I have been buying hens and trying to rebuild the population the last 2 years, for this? I strongly oppose these changes.

---

**Anthony Clark**

**Frankfort SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Fully support 10:00am start time for entire season. Also 4 bird limit should be for entire season, not just after Dec 1. We need to bring new hunters in & entice nonresidents to return in this rough economy. Our small towns need the revenue generated from nonresident visitors

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**Tom Kewley**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I have lived and hunted pheasants in South Dakota all of my life. It is very clear to me that pheasant numbers are historically low in South Dakota. I have hunted with roughly the same group of people all of my life, when I was younger opening day of the season to get a limit of birds with a 20 person group was a relatively easy accomplishment. The group I hunt with has not gotten a limit, or even close to it in well over 15 years. It is ridiculous to think that raising the limit and extending the hunting hours is in any way going to help the pheasant population. Between this and the decisions made earlier this year to spend more money on advertising for South Dakota Pheasant Hunting and stop the Brood counts, it is pretty obvious that this is just a big money grab. The only people that it helps is the pheasant preserves, while the rest of the state suffers. It has become harder and harder to find land to hunt due to the implementation of pay hunting/preserves and the current farming practices which have devoured most of the pheasant habitat. There is little that can be done about the farming as they need to make money too, but I do not appreciate state funding marketing for private industries such as pheasant preserves, stopping brood counts because when the low numbers are reported less people want to come to our state to hunt, raising harvest limits, and extending hunting hours. All of this will only hurt our pheasant population worse than it already has been and make it harder for the average person who loves to hunt and wants to get their children into hunting as there are important lessons about life that can be learned from it to pursue. The state needs to put less focus on bringing in out of state hunters and more on the needs of their own residents.

---

**John Christensen**

**Lake Benton MN**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Please consider changing how you do the Non Resident Pheasant license. It is no longer feasible for a group to take 5 days off to hunt. Most are only coming for 2 or 3 days as that is all the time people can get away from work and family commitments. Instead consider changing the 10 day format to 2 or 3 day time slots. This would increase the amount of time people spend in South Dakota. People would be coming out for 5 trips that is a lot more time and money being spent in South Dakota and could change the number of hunters willing to come back out and hunt.

Thanks,

John

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**Krysti Barnes**

**Murdo SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The birds in our area are stressed with high hunting already. The additional hours, length of season and bag limits will put higher stress on those numbers. In January, many birds tend to collect around tree shelters and buildings with the snow and cold increasing. Stretching the season into January will encourage hunters to also come to the protected areas where the birds are. I don't feel any landowner and or local hunters would be infavor of these changes. There are several reasons out of state hunters may not reach their bag limits which include the lack of birds, the increased growth of habitat areas and generally these hunters not securing hunting places and putting in the time you need to hunt those areas. I've experienced too many non-local hunters who want to drive to roads and hunt the easier areas and then complain they didn't limit. I've lived all my life in a community where pheasant hunting draws large numbers of hunters and I've hunted for 40 years and I don't see these changes being good for the hunters and especially not for the pheasants. PLEASE reconsider your actions on these changes!

---

**Josh Luckett**

**Wessington Springs SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I do not think we need to up the limit of birds when we are all ready down numbers. yes might look good this year but i think we need to think about that an worry about it years down the road. an for making the season longer i think they should started it more the first part of november an then u can go longer.

---

**Jason King**

**Belvue KS**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

As an out of state hunter that has been coming to South Dakota for a while now I hate to see you change things for the opening week. I like the hunt at noon for that first week. I do however like your idea to increase the limit to 4 later in the season. I think making that change earlier would increase hunter numbers even more though. Maybe increase it starting the 3rd or 4th weekend of the season.

---

**Craig Oberle**

**Mellette SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am opposed to the proposed 10:00 am starting time for the pheasant opener and first two weeks. Lets stay with tradition. Noon openers work very well and most groups like not being rushed in the morning. Especially the first weekend. I am also opposed to not doing the brood surveys. It seems like all our game department is concerned with is working with tourism to bring in the out of state hunters and money. No thought anymore for the local hunters. Thank you for your time.



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**Will Hettinger**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

These ideas are nothing more than a pursuit of money. I can think of no better way to hurt the birds than by stressing them in Jan. As a land owner who has habitat for wildlife, most of it by choice, I dread an additional month of hunters hanging around. A small number of them causing problems, but enough that it gets real old, real fast. Stay with what has worked. Think of the birds, the landowners. Stop chasing money at their expense. Until you figure out a way to increase wildlife habitat, you can propose as many ideas as the Dept. Of Tourism comes up with they won't work.

---

**Michael Kerns**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I support the earlier shooting hours and extending the season. I do NOT support increasing the bag limit to 4 roosters, especially in light of the fact there is no roadside count this year so we don't even have an approximate idea of how the population looks going into Fall. Thank you for taking my comments into consideration!

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**Bill Barnett**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Support 10 am start time. Both residential only and state seasons  
Oppose an increase in daily bag limit and lengthening the season.  
Opposition is due to avoid sending the message to youth and general public that more is better.

---

**Jacob Nyenhuis**

**Harrisburg SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I've been pheasant hunting in my home of South Dakota for as long as I can remember. The last several years have been beyond disappointing for the pheasant numbers. While I understand a lot of this has to do with the weather (the drought followed by the devastating floods) I can't possibly fathom how increasing the bag limit would help the resident hunters. It's been very difficult to even find a couple of pheasants on public land the last few years, much less 4. The only thing I see this accomplishing is bringing in more money for the preserves and the state bottom line. It does not help the resident hunters who have to march through 20 terrible public fields to find a single bird. If anything there should be a reduction in bag limit to allow the pheasants to recover. Disappointed that this is even being proposed.

---

**Brent Schoulte**

**Presho SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The numbers are not there to lengthen season and up the limit to 4. If anything, the limit should be lowered. Until the number CRP acres go back in like they did in the 80s and 90s the bird population will stay down. 10 am start is fine. The noon for the first week was just confusing anyway.

---

**Theresa Glissendorf**

**White Lake SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Why would you extend, length and add to the limit when we have not upped our pheasant numbers.

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**Jamie Worrall**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I don't think our population is at a level that justifies increasing the limit.

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**David Madsen**

**Arlington SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Having hunted pheasants for 50 years in SD, I see no reason for raising the bag limit, or extending the hours or length of the season. Leave things as they are. I believe more habitat cover, and better access to land is key.

---

**Jason Labrie**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I am ok with starting early at 10am from opening on.

I strongly disagree with increasing the limit to 4.

Pheasant hunting is one of SD's main hunting attractions. We have struggled for awhile with numbers in Spink county and likely throughout the state. If the numbers are up let them get higher. We need to rebuild what we once had with numbers so we can reclaim our pride/tourism/\$for the state rather than turning it over to surrounding states whom are becoming more and more known for good pheasant hunting.

---

**Mark Lindstrom**

**Shakopee MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I understand there are several proposed changes for Pheasant hunting in 2021. The noon start time is a relic that needs to go. I would prefer 8 AM but 10 AM all season long would be great. I also like 4 birds after Dec 1.

---

**Dean Cristman**

**New Egypt NJ**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in favor of the proposed changes to the Pheasant season. 10am start ALL season and increase bag limit to four. I think thinning the rooster population will help the survival rate of hens over the winter.

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**Lucas Nogelmeier**

**Watertown SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

See uploaded file for comments.

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**Michael Schnipper**

**Oxford OH**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose stopping the bird counts and I oppose involving marketing to attract attempt to attract more hunters. My letter is attached.

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**Laura Tolzin**

**De Smet SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I'm in favor of the season extension to January 31.  
Neutral on the 10am start right from the beginning of the season since in the early season I don't hunt until late afternoon anyhow  
Also neutral about the change from 3 birds to 4 birds limit.

---

**Clint Assman**

**Winner SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Pheasant numbers are at a 50 year low in our county. All of these measures being proposed put additional pressure on the bird population, placing a recovery of the population in further jeopardy. If anything, the daily rooster limit should be reduced to two birds per day and hunting should start at noon through the entire season. Extending the season deep into winter will also put undue stress on population.

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**Ronald Glissendorf**

**White Lake SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

We do not have the population to up the limit. This is all about money.

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**Paul Rystrom**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think all the proposed changes are a great idea.

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**John Rystrom**

**Lead SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Jason Malsom**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Please change to the proposed pheasant hunting season. It would give more opportunity to hunt, without really making a big dent in the population.

Jason Malsom  
2202 primrose dr  
Brookings Sd 57006

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**Steve Johnson**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Landowners will not want to deal with an extended season and trespassing etc

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**Wayne Booze**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Bottom line up front: I support extending the pheasant season til the end of January, but I oppose increasing bag limits on pheasants.

South Dakota has, in my opinion, taken several missteps regarding managing pheasant hunting. We know that numbers are down compared to the days of the early 2000's due in large part to the loss of CRP acres and small grains. Without the habitat, the numbers are going to be much more susceptible to weather fluxuations.

Now we've canceled the brood count so we can't even get a good idea of how the birds have done. Without that data, how on earth can anyone justify increasing the daily bag limit? It's not like there are more birds out there today than there were a decade ago when I could be done hunting in an hour. We have to stock birds on our farm now for our family hunts.

For those who only have public lands to hunt, an extra bird a day means one fewer for someone else on those heavily-hunted public grounds.

Without the brood counts, how can we prove the nest predator bounty program is working and worth investing taxpayer dollars.

I don't have a problem with extending the season. There aren't a ton of us out there anyway. But wow there seem to be some pretty silly proposals out there based on no evidence.

---

**Branson Tolliver**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I wanted to take this opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed updates to the pheasant hunting season. I work as a pheasant hunting guide in Charles Mix county every fall for several out of state groups. I believe these updates are a short term solution to a much bigger issue. I can see that the GFP is trying to bring more pheasant hunters to South Dakota, but by lengthening the season and increasing the bag limit, they are going against everything they have been working towards. We claim to be working to increase bird numbers. How does lengthening the season into the toughest time for these birds to survive help those numbers? Anyone who hunts pheasants late season knows it is much easier as the birds are bunched up and pushed out of CRP fields due to weather conditions. I know I don't hear many 15 man limits before December, but I sure hear a lot of them in late December. I believe increasing the season and bag limit will have a detrimental impact on the population. Not only from harvest, but from increased stress when the animals are having the hardest time surviving. If we really wanted to work towards increased out of state hunter numbers, we should be focusing on habitat and public land acquisitions. It doesn't matter how long the season is if the out of state hunter can't find anywhere to hunt.

Thank you for your time and I really hope you rethink this initiative.

Branson

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**Cory Bratland**

**Willow Lake SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please do not increase the bag limit to 4 per person. We simple do not have the population to support that. Yes in areas we have lots of birds. Instead the GF&P should invest in a lot more money into their habitat. If the State folks and the Federal folks would seriously work together that would help but tearing out all the shrubs on the WFP land was a terrible idea. Also, open up the checkbook even more to those folks that will plant foodplots.

---

**Rick Bartels**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I support the idea of a 10am start for the season opening and even extending the season until later in January, but do not support the increased bag limit to four. We've seen the past several years of decline in numbers without an increase in bird population, it does not make sense to increase limit.

---

**Nicholas Kniffen**

**Tyndall SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I appose starting at 10AM &any changes to the daily limit. I heard the commission wants to to change to a 4bird/day limit. I strongly oppose this. We have a limited number of birds & this will have a negative impact on the pheasant population. I do agree with the lengthened season through January but please do not increase the daily limit.

Thank you, Nicholas Kniffen, Tyndall

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**Mark Kaiser**

**Mobridge SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I just read an article stating the daily limit may be raised to 4 birds and the possession limits raised accordingly. I strongly oppose raising the daily limit. I support raising the possession limit and adjusting the non-resident license lengths accordingly. 3 birds a day is plenty and it has been a few years since I've heard of mostly limits per day anyway. Allowing possession of an extra day's limit gives nonresident the option to lengthen their stay by one day each trip they make to our state.

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**Brad Siebler**

**Greenwood NE**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

This will eventually lead to fewer and fewer birds year over year. Keep it like it is.

---

**Skyla Nicholas**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I don't think there is enough birds out there to increase the limit from 3 to 4. I know it's a short time but I would not do that.

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**Ron Stroucke**

**Roscoe SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

If 3 birds aren't enough 4 won't be either. Dont extend season but 10am start OK Too often he has witnessed NR flushing birds before a storm who don't return to cover and die of exposure

---

**Todd Martell**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I, as a trapper, already wait until pheasant season is over to pursue my chosen pastime. Extending the pheasant season until January 31st would lead to more conflicts between dogs and fur harvesters.

---

**Adam Gutzmer**

**Excelsior MN**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I support the 10 am start time, and the season extension through January. However 4 birds per day is not a smart move for the long term future. We need habitat to draw more birds, and the hunters will follow. to confirm- I support the 10 am start, later season but not 4 roosters per day limit. Please reconsider the 4 rooster per day limit and keep it at 3.

---

**Jeffrey Martin**

**Lititz PA**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

It would be nice to have other non resident pheasant hunting license options. Needing to buy multiple licenses per year if you want to hunt multiple weeks keeps me from coming back more often. Example I hunt 6 days in early season and have to use both of my 5 days time periods and that license is then done. Here in PA we charge more for a NR license but then get same hunting periods. If you want more hunters in SD change the NR pheasant licensing rules. I would favor that over more pheasants per day or earlier start times or later dates. I am not in favor of the later dates as disturbing pheasants in late season when they are dependent on conserving energy is likely to decrease their wintering survival. Let later season hunting be available to states like Kansas that don't have the same winter weather conditions.

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**Beuce Pieper**

**Yankton SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

There is not enough birds to support a 4 bird limit I do support the 10:00 am start time for early season residents season but I oppose the longer season I own 280 acres in Bonn Homme county I manage to keep a good population of birds because we don't over harvest



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**Howard Goetsch**

**Cotopaxi CO**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Good projected changes on SD Pheasant Season parameters! Appreciate your efforts on our behalf! Howard Goetsch, Cotopaxi, CO.

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**David Drake**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

with the low number of pheasant it to me make sense to extend the season or to raise the daily limit.

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**Jason Haskell**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I'm not sure if I agree or disagree with this stance. On the surface it appears to just be a money grab. I would like to see the scientific evidence that the increased take of wildlife won't negatively impact the overall population. It sells well as "increased Opportunity," but if it's just to add huntable days, sell more licenses and ends up negatively impacting the resource then I am against it.

---

**Gregory Hubbard**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Are you kidding me!!! Pheasant populations have continuously declined over the past several years and you want to EXTEND the season and INCREASE bag limits. You're only going to push pheasant hunting to the rich that can pay to shoot dizzy birds on preserves!!! Raising license fees, adding Sportsman Stamps and now this??

---

**Brandon Kottke**

**Clark SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

As correctly stated in the July 16, 2020 press release, many hunters do hang up the hunter gear by Thanksgiving, however it has nothing to do with the length of season or daily bag limits. It is directly related to the lack of habitat and access to hunting land. Those are the 2 key factors that are contributing to the reduction of pheasant hunters and harvested birds stated in the press release. That should be the primary focus of the commission to address the concern with lost revenue. Not promoting increased hunting days and limits that will place unnecessary stress on a species when that are at the most vulnerable stage of the year. Whether its December 2 or January 24, doesn't matter what the limit is or how long a person can hunt if they have no place to hunt or no habitat that will support the species in the first place. While the intent may be to balance out the rooster to hen ratio the extra pressure placed on hens while they get continuously flushed from thermal cover will not result in increased population in the following spring. I would encourage the commission to look at other avenues to increase revenue that is generated from pheasant hunting. I do support the standard season start time of 10 am for the duration of the season.

---

**Kevin Hansen**

**Zell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I would like to voice my STRONG opposition to extending the pheasant season thru the end of January. Can you show scientific proof that extending the season is in the best interest of the wildlife affected by this extension? Without that proof it appears to me that the only benefits are economic. Again, I oppose lengthening the pheasant season.

Thank you for reading my comments.

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**Jay Spaans**

**Armour SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I'm against the 4 bird limit at the end of the season. Most hunters are not bagging a limit of 3 as it is. I feel numbers are down and this isn't necessary, but i also didn't understand the benefit to the game preserves? Maybe that explanation would change my mind.

Thanks

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**Ron Freeman**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Extend the pheasant season on an already decimated wild pheasant population? What a half baked idea. All you are going to accomplish is force pheasants out of their winter survival habitat (sloughs which are already in short supply due to drainage) and put more stress on an already depleted population. Leave the season and its limits where they are.

---

**Thomas Steele**

**Lake Preston SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Whoever is recommending these changes is not a recreational "not-for-profit" hunter because us recreational hunters know chasing pheasants around for 79 days is more than enough time to pressure the birds. I am totally opposed to the thought of increasing pheasant limit to 4 birds as 3 is more than enough. also totally opposed to pressuring birds after the 1st week of January as no one knows the pressure they will experience with the severity of the winter weather to come. If you are going to increase season then why in the world would you increase it by 28 days- 35%. I love to pheasant hunt but this is way overboard. This seems all driven by dollar bills. Lets give the birds a chance.

---

**Todd Youngbluth**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose the lengthened pheasant season as well as the increase in daily limits later in the season. The number of pheasants has been low for the last several years and I do not believe there are so many that the limit should be increased. In addition, hunting pheasants until the end of January will put additional strain on the birds that have a hard enough time making it through the toughest part of winter. Thank you.

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**Dana Rogers**

**Hill City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Commissioners and Staff,

I am commenting on the proposal to extend the pheasant hunting season well into and in 2022 the very end of January. As well as the late 4 rooster limit.

The move to increase opportunity and hunter days afield is often a good and noble goal and endeavor. However, in a case like this I have to point out the severe weather and it's impact upon our wildlife. Not just the non-native cash cow but all SD wildlife. Recently, I fully supported the closure of all January archery and Muzzleloader antlerless deer seasons. That was directly due to our significantly lower deer numbers in most areas and the reasoning that wildlife needs to rest and recuperate after being pursued during our fall hunting seasons.

This proposal will NOT JUST effect pheasants, but all of our wintering wildlife. The increase in bag limit to 4 roosters during the late season may well have limited biological effects due to upland game birds being polygamous and being able to successfully breed with far fewer males to females. That point I am less concerned with.

Another point in addendum here is the mentioning and heightened reliance on the "Pheasant Marketing Group". I continue to be VERY concerned that our GFP is being lead and steered by tourism groups and politicians with only an eye for Non-Resident and commercial tourism interests VS. our SD resident Sportsmen and what I feel should be priority #1...Our SD Wildlife.

Please consider what is best for SD's wildlife, their health and longevity, followed by SD resident Sportsmen's interests before making this decision. Preserves have separate seasons and can certainly accommodate any well heeled NR hunters that wish to pursue pheasants earlier and later with an eye for a larger bag.

Please vote NO on this proposal. Thank You for your time and involvement.

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**Dennis Ulvestad**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

As a landowner I strongly oppose extending the season length to the end of Jan. What few hunters that would go afield at that time of the year would more than likely disturb as many deer as pheasants (hens as well as roosters), all of which need their reserves to make it thru the winter. The balance of the "hunters" would probably just end up road hunting and create unnecessary travel in the rural areas.

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**Stephen Sanders**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Randall Stewart**

**Spearfish SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

SDFG to a big financial hit in license sale last year but please don't try to fix it by changing rules. Leave things alone.

How about getting rid of the current out of state licensing

Allow oos hunters to by a license good for the whole season. If there are plenty of birds they will come back and bring their \$\$

---

**Chuck Schroder**

**Brandon SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

With the pheasant count down and the number of hunters that are hunting, we don't need to increase the daily limit on birds. Yes, birds do dye if we have a bad winter, but they do comeback. We are again helping and inviting more out of state hunters.

We are getting more private preserves all the time. More and more individuals are charging people to hunt and out of state people are buying and leasing more land each year.

I feel we need to leave things the way they are.

Thank you.

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**Rick Hearn**

**Millington TN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Extending the hunting season would be beneficial in planning based on weather issues for out of state hunters.

---

**William Axlund**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

As a lifelong S.D. resident pheasant hunter, landowner & pheasant hunting outfitter I am strongly opposed to the proposed changes to the pheasant hunting season. Under Kelly Hepler the SDGFP has switched from an agency concerned over preserving our pheasant resources to one who represents the marketing interests of all those non conservation entities like hotels, restaurants, & travel agencies. Any real hunter knows that the brood counts were great indicators of pheasant populations & why does the current Commission & Secretary suddenly know more than all those preceding them & decide to eliminate them; "because they didn't like what they were telling us". Opening earlier the first week, extending the season, & increasing the daily bag limit only puts more pressure on an already dwindling resource. These are the absolute opposite of what we should be doing to preserve our pheasant resource. January hunting pushes concentrated pheasant numbers out of prime winter cover into areas where they are more vulnerable to predation from hawks & owls and to winter cold & snow.

The only possible reason to support any of these three proposals is in the name of marketing on a short term. It in no way does anything to help preserve our proud pheasant hunting heritage.

There is a reason our license numbers are down & that is because our pheasant numbers have plummeted since 2009 due to greatly reduced habitat (CRP). Hunters are currently experiencing first hand far fewer pheasants & are choosing not to return for that single reason. Spinning the results today that "we're still your best option" is the marketing strategy of a desperate GFP. That strategy will lead us down the path of our neighboring states that "used" to have pheasants.

I urge you to reject all 3 proposals & instead implement sound pheasant habitat restoration measures in order to restore our pheasant numbers. When that occurs the hunters will follow just like they did before.

---

**Cheryl Wilson**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose the change of extending the pheasant season until Jan. 31st. I am concerned about the pheasant population along with ALL of the other animals that will be pushed out of cover during the brutal S.D. January weather. Every animal is in survival mode! This change will have a negative impact on all wild life.

---

**Dick Muth**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I'm basically in agreement with all the proposed changes with the General pheasant hunting season except I would like to see the shooting hours end at 3:00 instead of sunset starting in January. If hunters are hunting right up to sunset there could be birds chased out into the open and may not survive the night if they don't have enough time to get back into cover. Late in the season most of these birds are hens. I make these comments based on almost 60 years of in SD. Thank you for your consideration.

---

**Robert Jane**

**Martin SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Randall Stewart**

**Spearfish SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

This is a follow up on a comments I made earlier on this subject

Had a great visit with g&p staff regarding season changes and reasons for changes.

Personally I'd like the start hunting times left as they are. It works ok and does let the birds get back to cover after feeding

I don't care one way or the other about season length. Some years crop harvest is extremely late so extra hunt days would help

Daily limits should stay the same. Possession limits the same. Let controlled shooting preserves Set their daily limits if they hunt on designated private preserves. Let them do whatever they want. If they guide paid hunters on state or federal or non preserve indicated land then follow state rules

The proposed idea I have would be to allow out of state hunters the option of a say 5 day permit or the option to buy a season long permit. Let them decide weather permitting when to hunt. ALSO allow them to be able to hunt waterfowl! Many times while pheasant hunting we will come into a flock of ducks. I can shoot and my nonresident brother has to watch. We have a wealth of waterfowl that can be hunted. Give nonres hunters the option. Thanks for your time and good luck Randy. 509-929-4060

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**Dan Isaak**

**Boise ID**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

As someone born and raised in SD that looks forward to the long drive from Idaho to hunt pheasants most falls, I support the proposed season changes as they will provide more hunting opportunities without harming the population. However, because the fish&game department has terminated pre-season pheasant brood counts, out-of-state hunters will have little reliable data to rely on for trip planning and the added uncertainty this creates will probably decrease the number of hunters willing to make the trip and spend money in SD. The best option is to implement the new season changes and reconstitute the brood surveys. The latter are not only valuable for pheasant hunters and game&fish department biologists that manage the population but provide invaluable data for many of the state's other wildlife species. Dan

---

**Dana Randall**

**Akaska SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I hope this BS of increasing the bag limit and extending the season is just a ploy to attract more hunters.

Why did you cancel brood counts? Because the numbers are Down!

The only reason to extend the season is so hunters can shoot 3 birds in the whole season.

Quit screwing around wasting money! Find out why our pheasants died! Improve our habitat!

---

**Gregory Pauley**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

THE ONLY REASON YOU ARE EXTENDING THE SEASON AND THE BAG LIMIT TO 4 IS THAT YOU NEED THE MONEY. MAYBE YOU ALL SHOULD SELL YOUR GRANDMOTHERS INSTEAD, I AM SURE IF YOU CAN SELL OUT THE PHEASANT SEASON FOR MONEY, YOU CAN SELL GRAMMA

---

**Mark Widman**

**Tea SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I am writing to comment on the Pheasant Hunting proposal. I don't have a problem having an earlier starting time, although it breaks with tradition. I do oppose the increase bag limit from 3 to 4 roosters and extending the season through the end of January. There is no science behind these proposals. In my opinion, you aren't going to get more people in the fields, because they can shoot one more bird in late December and January. I also don't believe that you're going to get more people hunting in January than you already have hunting the last few days of the season now. Have you lived in South Dakota in January? Besides being damn cold and very windy for hunting, the science should be used to determine if more pheasants should be taken instead of how money can be made.

---

**John Meyen**

**Rosholt SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose extending the Pheasant season in January. This proposal will not just effect pheasants, but all of our wintering wildlife. This is a time of year when Pheasants other small game and big game like deer need to conserve their energy. Depending on the temperature and weather they struggle to take in enough food to maintain their body condition. Having an extended Pheasant season would most likely interfere with small game and big game's daily foraging for enough food to survive.



---

**Craig Olson**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

As an agricultural rural landowner in South Dakota I would not be in favor of extending the pheasant season to the end of January because of the practice of people being able to drive around with fully loaded shotguns, slam on the brakes, jump out and shoot pheasants on the ground, including pheasants sitting on the ground on private property, even shooting through fences causing property damage. Pheasants tend to come out on gravel and dirt roads looking for grit and food in the winter increasing the potential for this problem I mentioned. Agricultural rural landowners have to look after their own land for law breakers and trespassers. Extending the season would just make the burden longer.

---

**John Anderson**

**Maple Grove MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a MN resident, I have hunted SD Pheasants every year since 1989 and I average 3-5 trips per year. I own 2 houses in Tolstoy SD and I have leased a family farm to hunt pheasants and ducks for over 25 years. I have invested well over \$200,000 into my passion over the last 25 years and I believe these are all excellent proposals which will benefit Non residents hunters and the citizens of SD. I strongly encourage approval of these amendments.

---

**John Dady**

**Mobridge SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose extending the season. January is winter time. Many animals need to conserve energy for next 3 months before spring. There are a lot of idiots out there that will be getting stuck on section lines and getting buried in ditches. The season is long enough. If the state cant make enough money off out of state hunters in Oct. Nov. Dec, maybe they should look at other sources of funding or cut back spending.

---

**Dennis Mann**

**Piedmont SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

These comments are from the Greater Dacotah Chapter of Safari Club International, Paul Vinatieri chapter president

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**Clayton Larson**

**Selby SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

You already messed up the deer applications for the tax paying residents, to favor the out of state hunters. Now you want to mess up the pheasant season for the out of stater too. Leave well enough alone its all part of our heritage.

---

**Joseph Oro**

**Watertown SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**David Grossklaus**

**West Des Moines IA**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I wholeheartedly support the proposal for the extension of the pheasant season. I certainly would prefer a January hunt in South Dakota over a hunt in Kansas. This would add two more trips for to South Dakota. Thank you for a state that values increased hunting opportunities.

---

**Joanne Hegg**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

There is no earthly reason to have a longer pheasant season when the bird count is WAY down. Why can't you people setting in Pierre in an office get it right once?? Ask a farmer about this ridiculous suggestion? We feed, water, have food plots for them ,and try to keep this great South Dakota beautiful tradition going. Why in heavens name do you want to destroy it..ALSO stop messing up the fishing we have here, and don't have the Minneasotans fish here before their season opens. Well hope you hear us and don't just put this situation aside..... Also some of the farmers just might close any hunting at all.....

---

**Cj Lapp**

**Eureka SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am a rancher and avid hunter strongly oppose changes by longer season and increased bag limits seems crazy to even think about these changes ! Don't do it!

---

**Randy Saager**

**Dakota Dunes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Having the entire season open at 10am makes sense. I never understood the noon start. Also, increased daily bag and extending the season would be helpful for our tourism.

---

**Martin Vanderploeg**

**Martin SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Once again, hunter opportunity trumps wildlife management. Moving hens out of cover in January stress the birds and exposes them to predators.

Raising the limit will reduce hunter satisfaction as "getting a limit" has been shown to correlate strongly to hunter satisfaction, where the number of the limit has little correlation.

It is amazing how history and facts are ignored to create more hunter opportunity which has been shown not help to help bolster hunter numbers or license revenue. Focus on hunting quality and overall quality of the experience if you want to try to get young people in the field.

Marty Vanderploeg

---

**Richard Kangas**

**Glenwood MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support extending pheasant season through January 31. I will buy additional license to hunt in January.

---

**Pam Kohnen**

**Hitchcock SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

10 am start good idea

---

**Raymond Scharrer**

**Kinsman OH**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

hi, no different than our perch fishing on lake erie in ohio, you can increase the limit to whatever you like.... the population isnt what it was but you cant harvest what isnt there. spend more time money on habitat

---

**Steve Halverson**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

My name is Steve Halverson. I am a Pierre resident and a Lyman County Farmer and Rancher. I have also operated a commercial hunting operation on my farm since 1985. We host 400+ clients annually.

I am opposed to changing the start time for hunting season to 10am. My reason for saying this is it will hurt our rural businesses. I cannot tell you how many of my clients arrive at the farm with a brand new shotgun, hunting gear, etc. that was purchased on the morning of opening day because of the excitement. This will not affect my business. However, our rural main street businesses need all the help they can get in these trying times. Keeping the hunters in town for a few extra hours can have a huge impact.

I support lengthening the season to January 31. In my opinion, it will not have a negative effect on the pheasant population and may provide a few more opportunities for local and out of state sportsmen and women. In my opinion, late season hunts are the best!

Finally, I oppose changing the bird limit to 4 birds in Dec. of 2021. Our 3 bird limit has served us well for generations. Anyone who wants to shoot more than 3 has plenty of opportunities at area preserves. Ten years ago I would have supported this proposal. However, given our dismal pheasant numbers since 2012, we need to focus on improving pheasant numbers first.

Thank you,

Steve Halverson  
118 Terri Ln  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-222-0270

---

**Jeremy Hadrava**

**Laporte MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

For a non resident hunter the increased daily limit and possession limit are a nice addition. I would also like to see additional opportunities with maybe a trial of having the opening time adjusted to 9:00 AM for a trial period also. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

---

**James Swenson**

**Chamberlain SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I do not think it is a good idea or even a good thought to raise the bird limit this year !! I have seen less birds out in the fields this year than I have in the past !! Its great to have people that come to our state to hunt or fish and they can go home and say we got our limit !!! With that being said I think it would be a much better idea to LOWER the limit to two birds that way at least they MIGHT have a chance to get a limit !! 4 bird limit ar you kidding me ????? Also your going to stop the bird count ?? Is that just so you do not have to say how few of birds are REALLY out there ???

---

**Lee Grabau**

**Smithville MO**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support and appreciate the proposal to extend the season to Jan 31 and increased bag limits late season. This means 2 more trips to SD on weekends for hunting AWESOME !! You will get even more \$\$ from me lodging, eating and shopping. I would really like SD to have a "Out of state annual license choice" vs the 2-5 day choice . Even if its \$300 (I buy 2 per year now and probably 3 this year if proposal passes). One annual license for those of us that frequent would be handy and probably promote more trips and spending.

---

**Brent Bargmann**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I want to comment on the proposed changes to the pheasant season.

I am a landowner and avid hunter. I spend a significant amount of time, effort & personal expense on creating and maintaining pheasant habitat. This habitat includes annual food plots & creation of wooded habitat. I participate in NCRS & GFP programs.

The reason I marked "Oppose" to these changes is primarily based on the process used to propose/make these changes. If there is sufficient data which supports making these changes, please present it!!!

I think the average South Dakotan is capable of critical thinking and if presented with scientific data and analysis which supports these changes, we will agree. But just dropping the brood count because you don't like the numbers and then not providing another source of data to justify your position is simply irresponsible.

Here is a direct quote from the most recent article I have read on this topic; "South Dakota's hunting season is roosters only and the state knows from its data in the spring that it's going into the hunting season with plenty of roosters, Travis Runia, a senior upland game biologist with GFP, told the Argus Leader."

So, show us this data, show us the historical trend line, perform some statistical significance analysis to convince us that the decision is based on sound principles.

I and many other private citizens of this state work very hard to support pheasant numbers. When decisions like this appear to be made in a vacuum, or worse, are made only with financial benefits in mind, it really leaves a bad taste in our mouths.

Brent Bargmann

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**Leigh McMasters**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

After three years of the worst pheasant numbers the state has ever had, I cannot believe you are even talking about this. I have been hunting the public lands around the Pierre area and the numbers have diminished every year to the point of seeing NO BIRDS as often as seeing a couple of birds. Please, stay at three birds and also start putting in food plots again.

---

**Mark Peterson**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose the extension of the season into the months when pheasants are extremely vulnerable.

I also oppose the elimination of the brood county survey as it was a way for out of town hunters to hunt areas where the bird counts were still good. Elimination of this may keep this year's hunters coming, but when they show up to areas where there are minimal birds they will probably never return.

The only way to "fix" the pheasant issue is habitat. Habitat isn't road ditches its all the outlying ground that has been put into production which has eliminated nesting and brooding habitat where young chicks can grow and feed on insects. Current production with chemically resistant crops eliminates and sterilizes fields so even on crop ground there is limited habitat and food. Herbicides and Pesticides appear to also have an impact on mortality of the young pheasants, from comments I have gotten from multiple family farmers I know, stating they don't see the young birds anymore after late spray applications, especially on soybeans.

Also, with the decline in hunting the areas where pheasant hunting is good are limited. This pushes more to either give up hunting or pay for their hunts. Paying for hunting or fishing eliminates much of our youth from participation in the outdoor sports, especially when you factor in that a weekend 3 day pheasant hunt for a father/child can cost as much as a 1/2 of beef.

Fix those issues and you fix the pheasant number & hunter issues. The answer isn't to kill more and extend the season all while eliminating any information regarding current pheasant populations.

---

**Benjamin Brown**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I strongly oppose the proposal to extend the season another month and increase the limit to 4 birds per person for the last 2 months of that season. The pheasant population has been on a downward spiral for the last decade and it's not looking promising that they will bounce back anytime soon. This is the last thing that we need to do, and hunt them when they're most vulnerable in tough weather conditions and in concentrated areas. Then to boot were going to kill more of them as well? This doesn't make any sense and it's all about the mighty dollar and getting more nonresidents into the state to spend money. The GFP has even mentioned several times that they're working with the Department of Tourism on this proposal. I know that these comments are all in vain, as we all know the SDGFP did NOT listen to the outdoorsmen and women of South Dakota on the deer proposal and they're not going to listen on this either. Please use a little common sense and reject this proposal.

---

**James Chance**

**Smith Center KS**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I think South Dakota should put more emphasis on habitat. When it comes down to it, it's the habitat that keeps birds alive and reproducing. Crp is the important thing I hope you consider. Dont be like kansas down here where the habitat is disappearing at an alarming rate. I hunt 60 plus days a year during pheasant and quail season. I see first hand of what good habitat will bring and I also see the habitat disappearing, along with the bird numbers. I remember when I was a kid when it wasn't nothing to kick out 50 plus birds in one spot. That's not the case anymore. Habitat is what keeps birds alive and reproducing. No habitat equals low number of birds, which then means low numbers of hunters. It a trickle down affect.

---

**James Chance**

**Smith Center KS**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

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---

**Dennis Pugh**

**Akaska SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

why not last 2 weeks be SD hunters only

---

**Thomas Oines**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I believe that increasing bag limits and hunting season lengths are a huge mistake. Our wild bird numbers are still way off from where they should be. If land owners need the extra season the current hunting preserve lawsgive them that option.



---

**Christopher Lupo**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Public lands that hold birds already get hammered every weekend for 10-11 weeks straight (add another 4 weeks if including grouse). Extending adds another 3-4 weeks of pressure during one of the coldest months. Policy makers are likely mistaken if they think extending the season into January will draw more out-of-state upland hunters/money.

If all you're after is out-of-state money, I do agree ending the brood surveys will help tremendously because those reports can be deceiving with how much error is associated with the calculations/methods - I'm sure many hunting trips hinge on those data.

---

**Doug Leschisin**

**Eden SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

As a resident of South Dakota, I oppose the proposal to increase the daily bag limit of pheasants to four birds. The goal to increase the number of pheasant hunters by increasing the bag limit will place additional stress on already reduced populations. Lack of habitat is the problem of reduced populations, and the disinterest of out-of-state hunters. Increased habitat will result in more birds and more hunters will show up. Increasing bag limits when habitat is lacking is the absolutely dumbest idea I've ever heard of.

---

**Michael Duncan**

**Aberdeen Sd SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

This is a fantastic idea to extend the hunting season longer into January. Myself and a lot of friends always wish we had more opportunities to hunt late season. I also have a lot of out of state family that would love the chance to hunt later into the year which will continue to help bring additional revenue into the state. Would love to see shooting times start earlier in the morning before 10 for the last couple weeks as well.

I don't believe we should increase the limit of roosters to 4. 3 roosters per person per day is more than enough to continue making South Dakota pheasant hunting successful. This will really only help pheasant preserves allowing their hunters to shoot more birds. 3 is plenty for people out hunting public land or private not preserve hunts.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this.

---

**Melissa Oberle**

**Mellette SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I believe start time should not be till 12pm for the whole season. Especially opening weekend. To put it bluntly you have a lot of parties the night before, and no need to put them out in the fields early. Also late season hunts disturb habitat and make all animals anxious. Need to focus more on CRP and keeping habitat to get bird numbers back up.

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**Tod Johnson**

**Norfolk NE**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I would propose that you go from two periods of five day non-resident license to a three periods of three day license.

Personally this would be more appealing to me a non resident.

---

**Damon Opp**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Strongly oppose extending pheasant season dates, increasing daily bag limit/ possession limit. With reduced pheasant numbers, reduced CRP, reduced habitat and increased hunting pressure the season should be shortened if anything.

---

**Curtis Kline**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Normally I think the GFP does a good job managing wildlife and people for the maximum benefit of both. However these new pheasant season proposals are nothing more than a money grab.

The state is trying anything and everything to entice more out of state hunters to come and hunt pheasants. This includes getting rid of the august counts so they wont know the bird numbers are down.

Extending the season until Jan 31 is irresponsible and will cause undue burden on the resource. Nebraska and Kansas can get away with it because those climates are no where near as harsh as a South Dakota winter. The stress on pheasants they will receive by being pushed out of sloughs, using up stored fat to avoid hunters will kill more pheasants than hunters will. This will lead to poor hatches and less pheasants the next year.

Also this will effect winter deer survival as deer use the same sloughs the pheasants do to survive the harsh winters.

Its not a hard concept to grasp. Habitat is the one factor that will exponentially restore pheasant numbers now and in the future. Year after year I see ditches mowed before the legal date but have never seen or heard of any enforcement action against this. In dry years the first thing out the window is the prohibition of haying walk in and crep lands. 750,000 dollar advertisement campaign, how about putting that money into permanent habitat. Paying 5-10 dollars for coon tails from Minnehaha county which does not have any pheasants any way is a waste of money. Put that money into permanent habitat.

Your not going to get more pheasants by creating a government task force. All you need is permanent habitat. Permanent habitat will produce more birds, winter more birds and provide more hunting opportunity for pheasants. With this hunters will come.

---

**Patrick Teal**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I don't believe extending the season and bag limit is going to increase the number of hunters, resident or nonresident. Most hunters that continue to hunt late season have already purchased their license and have been hunting the earlier season. The number of wild birds in the state needs to be addressed. Today's farming practices, which I understand to be necessary, and the decreased number of acres in CRP have decimated the habitat and without additional habitat bird numbers are not going to increase substantially. The CREP and Walk in land that is available, for the most part is poor hunting ground and is not managed for birds. Money must be invested in food plots on these program lands if you want to increase the number of birds available to the hunters that are not pay to hunt nonresident and residents. If you want to excite hunters and increase the number of hunters in South Dakota, be choosier about the ground that you allow into the programs and initiate food plot programs and you will make a statement and increase your numbers. I am in the field 5 days a week during the season and can tell you that there is a lot of Dead Sea in the CREP and Walk in parcels. Focus on the programs you have and enhance the Land and market it and you will see a difference. Thanks for your time.

---

**Jason Schuldts**

**Spearfish SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Where I grew up (west of Stickney in Aurora County), it used to be easy to get three pheasants in a half hour of hunting. In the last three seasons, I have taken a grand total of two birds. The population simply isn't there anymore. Making the season longer, and especially increasing the bag limit seems to me more like a tactic to sell more nonresident licenses and less like a plan to help turn the population trend around. Pheasants need good habitat and weather, with a minimum of predators to flourish. The habitat is still there, but if the population can't be increased, it certainly shouldn't be hunted harder.

---

**David Oliver**

**Waubay SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Who are you kidding raising the limit to 4 birds a day when the average harvest on non preserve hunting is less than 2 birds. It's also not much of a change allowing earlier shooting times when it's already 10 am two weeks after the season Opens. Extending the season is also meaningless as very few people hunt after Christmas. It's no great mystery that to increase license sales you need more land access and more birds. The increase in preserve hunting which most people can't afford is leading to the demise of resident pheasant hunting. Also, I wouldn't publish brood survey either with the dismal trend in the pheasant population.

---

**Ethan Cole**

**Langford SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Regarding the proposed extension of the pheasant season. I am a predator trapper, i never set snares until pheasant season has closed due to the fear of possibly catching someone's hunting dog. January is a big month for predator hunters because of prime fur. Extending the pheasant season through January would be taking opportunities away from people like myself who enjoy more than just pheasant hunting. Not to mention in the case of a hard winter, deer and pheasants often congregate in similar locations. If people are out chasing pheasants in -20° temperatures they will also be putting stress on the deer herds. My suggestion would be leave the season dates and bag limits as they are and raise the non-resident license fee. If they want to open the season at 10am i don't see a problem with that.

---

**Greg Morgan**

**Mellette SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

As a landowner and pheasant hunter, I am against extending the pheasant season to the end of January. There is no good reason to be pushing wildlife out of their cover during the hardest month of winter for survival. I support your other proposal's.

---

**Kenneth Labrie**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

What additional good will moving a time for 1 week for the resident hunt from noon to 10? No way this will help with any issues. Brood counts should continue so you know what should or shouldn't be done with the harvest/production of more birds. You don't need to publish the counts. It doesn't have to be public information. Showing a huge decrease in bird population then advertising it is a real problem. CRP coming out has undoubtedly impacted the population therefore I believe more public hunting ground would help, and maintaining better food plots in the public ground would assist. Water drainage is a problem with the farm tiling occurring....raising an issue with water supply for birds. You are concentrating on issues to increase the hunting licenses without concentrating on the real problem that is the underlying reason the license sales being down. Do something to increase bird population and the license problem will solve itself. Raising the limit to 4 isn't going to work if there's no birds to be found anyways!

---

**Chuck Crompton**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am writing in regards to the pheasant season proposal by game fish and parks. The time change WHY the seasons changes after the first weekend now. Hunters don't stay away because it opens at noon. Extending the season is OK. Very few hunters will participate, only the die hearts. The weather will dictate the season any ways. Changing the limit NO. There is no reason to shoot more birds. Three is plenty. Late in the season the birds will be bunched up and will be slaughtered. I feel the end of the brood survey was in deed done to get more hunters to come to South Dakota no matter what. Two years ago, the count was way down in our area, Ipswich. The next year the count was up 47% . 47% of nothing is still nothing. The GFP says it wants to be transparent. Maybe there should be a question on the bird kill survey that asks, of the birds shot, how many were shot on "canned" hunts. the GFP takes credit for the all the released birds that are shot as wild birds. This inflates the bird count, just like a good brood count in the spring.

---

**Adam Karst**

**Watertown SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the extension of the season to January 31st to encourage more hunting participation.

I would also like the commission to consider opening the pheasant season 1 week or 2 weeks earlier to encourage more hunting participation.

Thank you,

Adam Karst

---

**Denny Brahmer**

**Wittenberg WI**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I totally support the 10 AM opening rather than noon. The scenting conditions are so much better as well as the cooler temperatures for the dogs. In addition, you wouldn't have to waste the morning sitting around waiting for hunting to start. Thanks, Denny

---

**Jeff Ball**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a resident South Dakota pheasant hunting please register my support for the proposed season changes currently under consideration.

---

**Joanne Hegg**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

You cannot even think of extending the pheasant season when the bird count is way down...do you want to do away with our great wonderful tradition of a bird hunt in SD...?? I will work to get a lot of our hunting lands to be closed to hunters..

---

**Tim Plimpton**

**Beaver Creek MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

The out of state hunting fees could be addressed with the season as well. All neighboring states allows the out-of-state- hunter access to a full season. South Dakota limits the season to 10 days and you have to select your 2-5 day periods. Open the entire season to the out of state hunter and you will easily recoup the 10,000 you lost just in one year. The amount lost in license fees is \$1,300,000.00 in revenue. Open up your season to the out of state hunter and you will see revenues triple in the next 2 years, Tim Plimpton.

---

**Alan Downen**

**Mcleansboro IL**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I very much support the extension of the season to 1/31 and the increase in the limit after 12/1. In addition, I would suggest a start time in line with other states (30 minutes before sunrise). I see no purpose in the 10 a.m. start time and when the time changes you lose another hour of hunting. We drive a long way to hunt your great state and would like more hours in the field. Thanks for your consideration.

---

**Leslie Smith**

**Albion IL**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Please let the hunting time start at sunrise

---

**Gary Hoelsing**

**Boise ID**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

As a former resident of SD., (from 82 to '89) and still an avid bird hunter, I believe SD holds a special place for Pheasant Hunters because you have held firm on solid laws regarding your bird season. I have hunted SD (last year), Nebr. Iowa and Kansas in previous years. All other states have fewer birds because of longer shooting hours, longer seasons and less good habitat. If you want to change anything, increase the 2 - 5 day periods to 3 for non residents. Maybe reward loyalty for those who are repeat / return hunters and/or bring a new hunter to SD. Do not mess - up a good thing by copying other places that have fewer birds!!

---

**Jerry Awe**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Cody Miles**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

we are finally getting pheasant numbers to come back. why would we increase the limit and extend the season? I would rather see the limit go down to 2 and get the numbers where they should be

---

**Jim Miles**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Mark Nixon**

**Frederick SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Todd Sundvold**

**Clark SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

while i love to hunt pheasants,i dont think we need to extend the season.i dont think we need to keep pushing the birds out of the little cover thats left that time of year,exposing them to the elements

---

**Kit Hart**

**Spokane WA**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I am a non-resident pheasant hunter and annually hunt in one or more of the prime pheasant states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska or Kansas. I am writing to let SD decision makers know that cancelling the brood survey should be reconsidered. Many hunters use this information to see that South Dakota often has the most birds per mile of survey route. The survey is also used to determine the best areas of the state to hunt. It was the brood survey that originally attracted me (and at least 10 other non-resident hunters in my group) to South Dakota (and away from North Dakota) during a down population year for both states. Frankly to dispense with the survey without first replacing it with another population index is foolish. There is great value in the survey results other than informing the pheasant hunting regulations, which was never the purpose. I believe not providing the information will put SD at a disadvantage.

The proposed changes in the SD pheasant hunting regulations will help attract non-resident hunters. Changing the daily start time to sunrise after the first two weeks of the season would also help and would provide the same opportunity available in the other states.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



---

**Rick Jackson**

**Maple Grove MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

What is the reason you will not be doing the counts this year, \$90,000 invested to make 200 million seems lie a light investment. No I do not change where I will go based on the road side survey, but I do keep tract and when the birds are up I try new places when they are down I go to the same old places that produced bird in the past. I have hunted SD for 46 yrs, was born and raised in SD and now live out of state. This seems to be a stupid move, guarantee not motivated by the cost to do it.

---

**Fred Hart**

**Britton SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The proposed season for January is the most difficult month for wildlife in South Dakota. Chasing hens, deer out of cover can be a death sentence for them. I strongly oppose this change.

---

**Kyle Nehowig**

**Clitherall MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support extending the pheasant season.

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**James Berg**

**Papillion NE**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I was born and raised in SD and return every year to hunt pheasants. A 12:00 start is tradition and should be kept for the opening week. A 3 bird bag limit is more than sufficient. Numbers are down and most hunters I know come for the camaraderie and hospitality, not the bag limit. We get plenty of shooting trying to bag 3 birds. Don't change something that works.

---

**Rodney Mendel**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose the lengthing the of the pheasant season.

---

**Cooper Garnos**

**Presho SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Dear SD GF&P Commissioners:

We are in support of the proposed changes to the SD Pheasant Hunting Season.

- 1) 10:00 am Start on opening weekends. Strong support.
  - 2) 4 bag limit after December 1st
  - 3) Extension of season through January
- Thank you for the consideration with these important matters.

Best Regards.  
Cooper Garnos

---

**Frank Russell**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the present time change to 10:00 AM at the beginning of the pheasant season, I also support raising the bag limit to four per day. We need to get more young people involved and pheasant hunting on public land. Being a disabled hunter Every little bit helps. Thank you

---

**Scott Olson**

**Corsica SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The Department of Tourism is only interested in exploiting our pheasant hunting resources. These resources are dwindling and instead of trying to bring more people to hunt public or private lands by adding more length or a four bird limit, we need to increase the number of birds in the state. Increasing our birds is the only honest way to sell more licenses, gasoline, lodging and increase sales tax revenue. The most untapped resource SDGFP has is the waterfowl hunting that should be given to the nonresident. Our state lands offer fantastic opportunity as well as the same economic benefits the Department of Tourism wants to achieve without exploiting already over tapped Pheasant hunting.

---

**Jeffrey Bangma**

**Lake Elmo MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Excellent idea to start at 10 AM on opening weekend. We can then more comfortably stay an extra day before heading back to MN. We've been hunting the opener for the last 35 years and would not miss it for the world. Thanks to all of you and we want Gov Noem for president!

---

**Kent Siemonsma**

**Humboldt SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

What a joke. Less Pheasants so lets shoot more? All this is for is the almighty dollar.

---

**John Mills**

**Volga SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

In general I support the season changes being considered, with 2 exceptions.

1) I think we should retain the current noon start for the beginning of the season.

Reason: The largest influx of non-resident hunters occurs in the first couple weeks of the season. Giving them additional time to explore the Main Street of our small towns increases business sales and sales tax collections.

2) I like the idea of extending the pheasant season through January, in fact I might even prefer it go even longer -with a caveat. I think that after January 1, the season should be able to be closed on short notice depending on the weather.

Reason: The stress on hens is the concern. With lots of snow, the birds are confined to limited remaining cover. Forcing them to exit that cover to avoid a hunter or dog increases the stress and calories used by hens and will increase hen mortality. Hen mortality is also increased under heavy snow conditions, as any dog owner knows, because dogs are much more likely to catch a hen before it flushes under these conditions. If we want to increase our bird population, we must try to give hens the best chance of surviving.

---

**Steve Chilson**

**Watertown SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The grass Lake Conservation club recently voted to oppose the 3 proposed changes to the pheasant season. We strongly oppose extending the season to Jan 31. Chasing birds out of what little cover is left during the coldest and harshest weather of the year, will kill more birds (including hens) than the hunters will. The few nice days we have in January (which is when most people will hunt) the birds need those days to look for food and not be chased off those food sources by hunting. Winter mortality could increase and hurt the struggling population. Increasing the bag limit to 4 will give out-of-state hunters a false idea that the population is higher than ever. They will be very disappointed when it isn't and may decide not to come back next year after being "fooled" this year. Our club members have not heard of a single person in the last 30 years saying we should have a higher bag limit. (If its not broke ....) One member commented it would be a nightmare to enforce if you change the bag limit during the season (former gfp regional CO). We hear from biologists that you cannot hurt the population by killing too many roosters. Then why do we have any limits in the first place????? If you have to change it, start out with 4 for the whole season. On the shooting hour change, let the birds have a chance to feed. AT 10 in the morning there will be more birds in the roads that will lead to increased road hunting which will cause more problems with trespass, etc. ( is "road hunting an ethical way to hunt in the first place????) After all its about the hunt-working the dogs, good times with friend and relatives in the field, NOT ON THE ROADS. Thanks for hearing the publics input. Grass lake Cons. Club is a small group made up of landowners and sportsmen located in the Watertown area. We have a membership of around 25 longtime members. thanks again Steve Chilson, President.

---

**Kenneth Johnson**

**Yankton SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

see attachment

---

**Jere Hieb**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

see attachment

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**Derek Schiefelbein**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

see attachment

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**Jeffrey Clow**

**Harrisburg SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Game Fish and Parks Commission

I would like to comment on the proposed changes to the 2020 and 2021 Pheasant Season. Changing the start time to 10 a.m. for

the whole season along with ending all of the upland hunting on the same day simplifies the regulations which is a good thing.

The item that I have a problems with is the 4 bird limit. With no size limit to group hunting, birds bunching up when the weather

turns cooler and a bag limit of 4 birds I can see no other way to describe this but as being greedy. 3 birds per hunter is great

plenty, 3 birds make a big meal and 3 birds is what the surrounding states have as a bag limit. If the only way non residents will

come to hunt late season pheasants is with a 4 bird limit I'm not so sure that's the type of hunters that we want in our state. Just a

side thought if you wanted to do some thing for the resident hunters of this state increase the resident only season to the week

before the traditional opener instead of just 3 days a week before.

Thank You for your time

Jeff Clow

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**Justin Allen**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I'm opposed to lengthening the pheasant season as well as raising the limit from 3 to 4 at any point in the season. Does thinning out some additional roosters help the remaining birds over the winter? In high densities with hard winters it might. But doing so in Jan. I think does much more harm than good. Pushing birds continuously out of winter cover does in fact stress the birds and reduce fat reserves. So while you might kill a few more roosters you will be putting the remaining hens behind the 8 ball going into another 3 months of winter. This is especially true when we get early snow in December and much of the cover is blown in by Mid December. These birds already have a long tough winter ahead of them as is. They don't need to be pushed out of cover for another month. I like to think I'm as avid pheasant hunter in the state as they get and live for late season hunting in the snow but I think the proposal is a bad idea. My biggest concern isn't the concept but who is likely pushing the proposal. It isn't GFP but the governor's office and Dept. of Tourism. It isn't by chance this proposal is in the same year we have dropped roadside survey while spending \$750k of out of state advertising instead. This proposal is all about selling more out of state licenses and lodges making some more money, Nothing more. Pretty sad. The season is already 11-12 weeks long. Leave the limit and season length as is.

Thank for your time.

---

**Mike Burr**

**Huron SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I vehemently oppose the proposed new Pheasant regulations of extended season, earlier time start, discontinuation of Pheasant count, and bag limit of 4 birds. This is such a blatant move to make more money at the expense of the pheasants. Whoever thought of these couldn't have been a biologist but a bean counter trying to keep the budget propped up. Come on are you seriously going ahead with these cockamamie proposals. No one I have discussed this with thinks the GFP should go ahead with these disastrous proposals.

---

**Kevin Cromer**

**Las Vegas NV**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Letting the Grass Grow in the Ditches would be a very great help to the population of Pheasants! Have the farmer leave a buffer around their land for the birds and other animals! Stop stripping every square inch of land of crops and CRP! Thanks I Love your State but have seen it decline over last 10 years! Maybe put a bounty on coyotes! Thanks Kevin C

# Private Shooting Preserve Bag Limits

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**Bill Mullium**

**Volga SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Come on GFP, you are supposed to be a state wildlife agency that supports ethics and manages wildlife in this great state. If rich hunters that come to our great state want to drink, have a good time, and shoot roosters until the chickens crow, let's tell them to go somewhere that condone such behavior. In our great state, we respect wildlife and value the harvest, not buying a service where we disgrace it. If someone what's to shoot that many birds, have them shoot clay pigeons or shoot targets and retain the respect that wildlife deserves. This proposal is a disgrace to ethical hunters.

---

**Tom Covey**

**Winner SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

It has come to my attention that at least one game cleaning contractor has to throw away hundreds to thousands of birds every year because the lodges do not pick them up. And then these birds can not even be donated to food banks. I am sure this is not an isolated incident. Until there is a solution to this, I can not support more waste of our natural resources.

---

**Patricia Braun**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

do NOT allow unlimited pheasant hunting on private reserves. Good grief, it doesn't make sense wild or farm raised! It is obscene to shoot as many as you wish!

---

**Mike Carlbom**

**Interior SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

More revenue for the pheasant farmers verging on wanton waste of game. Most out of staters don't take home and eat the pheasants they get now. As bad of idea as using the bighorn sheep high dollar license money to support the pheasant farmers. Regular SD hunters can't even find a place to hunt pheasants anymore.

---

**Bob Waterbury**

**Herrick SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

South Dakota Game Commission, I have been a shooting preserve operator for over 30 years And I have seen a lot of changes. But, offering hunters a license to shoot an unlimited number of birds on a shooting preserve makes me worry about how the public and anti hunters will view us. With the current limit of 25 birds per hunter I think this should be plenty of birds for anyone to take in one day if they choose. Also, how much more pressure will be put on the wild bird population if hunters are allowed to shoot an unlimited number of birds? We, as preserve operators, need to look at what presumptions will be made by the general public. We want to get along with the general public And work very hard To hunt ethically and protect habitat and the wild bird population. We want to keep our preserves. A lot of public hunters see preserves as taking away the rights of the general population, in allowing preserve hunters to harvest an unlimited number of Birds are we confirming these very misconceptions? In closing, I hope that you will look at what I have to say carefully and not pass this unnecessary proposal.

## Public Waters

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**Bill Barnett**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

East River mirranding water continues. Please revisit land owner opposition to public use. Mindsets are changing. Small farms are facing critical financial status would welcome new water access leases.





**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
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August 12, 2020

Gary Jensen, Commission Chair  
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks  
523 East Capitol Ave  
Pierre, SD 57501

Tony Leif, Wildlife Division Director  
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks  
523 East Capitol Ave  
Pierre, SD 57501

**Re: Comments on the proposed bobcat hunting and trapping season**

Dear Chairman Jensen, Director Leif and Members of the Commission,

On behalf of the Humane Society of the United States and our South Dakota supporters, we are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed expansion of bobcat hunting and trapping in the state.

Most states, including South Dakota, do not have a firm grasp on their bobcat population sizes, densities and demographics because they heavily rely on anecdotal data, such as hunter surveys.<sup>1</sup> Bobcat population density is largely determined by the availability of prey<sup>2</sup> and, competition with other carnivores,<sup>3</sup> among other limiting factors. As such, sport hunting and trapping is wholly unnecessary for keeping their populations in check. Beyond unnecessary recreational hunting, South Dakota's bobcats face a multitude of other threats, including loss of habitat and climate change. Despite these concerns and uncertainties, hunters and trappers in South Dakota kill approximately 350 bobcats every year. With no quota in place, nearly doubling the area where bobcats can be killed would allow an unknown number of additional bobcats to be taken.

Bobcats can live up to 15 years in the wild<sup>4</sup> but face a variety of threats over that time—most from people, including hunters, trappers, poachers, vehicle collisions,<sup>5</sup> and predator-control agents (for perceived or real livestock losses).<sup>6</sup> Yet, economic analysis shows that these rare, native cats are worth far more alive than dead. Trappers in South Dakota make up less than 0.5% of the population and those who trap bobcats typically sell their furs to overseas markets, such as to China and Russia.<sup>7</sup> In comparison, wildlife-watchers – those who enjoy catching a bobcat on film – vastly outnumber and outspend those who wish to catch them in a steel-jawed leghold trap.<sup>8</sup> In addition to income generated through wildlife watching, bobcats benefit farmers by preying on rabbits, mice and other small rodents that may damage crops.

For further information regarding our position, please see the attached appendix, which includes a comprehensive analysis as to why expanding bobcat trophy hunting and trapping in South Dakota is irresponsible and goes against the best available science. For all of these reasons, I urge the Commission to not approve the proposed bobcat trapping and hunting expansion and, instead, protect these small native carnivores from unnecessary killing.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn Nickerson  
Nebraska and South Dakota State Director  
The Humane Society of the United States



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<sup>1</sup> Elbroch et al., "Contrasting bobcat values."

<sup>2</sup> D. B. Lesmeister et al., "Spatial and Temporal Structure of a Mesocarnivore Guild in Midwestern North America," Article, *Wildlife Monographs* 191, no. 1 (May 2015), <https://doi.org/10.1002/wmon.1015>, <Go to ISI>://WOS:000353896300001.

<sup>3</sup> J. S. Lewis et al., "Contact Networks Reveal Potential for Interspecific Interactions of Sympatric Wild Felids Driven by Space Use," *Ecosphere* 8, no. 3 (2017); J. Witczuk et al., "Niche Overlap between Sympatric Coyotes and Bobcats in Highland Zones of Olympic Mountains, Washington," *Journal of Zoology* 297, no. 3 (2015); Hias Melville et al., "Prey Selection by Three Mesopredators That Are Thought to Prey on Eastern Wild Turkeys (*Meleagris Gallopavo Sylvestris*) in the Pineywoods of East Texas," *Southeastern Naturalist* 14, no. 3 (2015); D. B. Lesmeister et al., "Spatial and Temporal Structure of a Mesocarnivore Guild in Midwestern North America," *Wildlife Monographs* 191, no. 1 (2015).

<sup>4</sup> Luke Hunter, *Carnivores of the World* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Alisa Ellsworth et al., "California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Inland Deserts Region: Eastern Sierra Nevada Bobcat Study: Annual Report," <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=135918&inline> (2016); S. A. Poessel et al., "Roads influence movement and home ranges of a fragmentation-sensitive carnivore, the bobcat, in an urban landscape," Article, *Biological Conservation* 180 (Dec 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2014.10.010>, <Go to ISI>://WOS:000346211700022.

<sup>6</sup> The Humane Society of the United States, "Government data confirm that cougars have a negligible effect on U.S. cattle and sheep industries," [https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/Cougar-Livestock-6.Mar\\_.19-Final.pdf](https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/Cougar-Livestock-6.Mar_.19-Final.pdf) (2019).

<sup>7</sup> Bobcat: *Lynx rufus*. Threats. <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/12521/50655874#threats>.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation



## Appendix

### I. Bobcat density estimates vary and are poorly understood

A bobcat's home range is a fixed area that includes necessary resources for life, such as sufficient prey, water resources, and denning sites where mothers can rear their kittens.<sup>1</sup> Male and female bobcats establish home ranges with considerable overlap. Male bobcats generally occupy larger home ranges than females – typically two to three times the size.<sup>2</sup> The average range size for a female bobcat is from 1 km<sup>2</sup> to 86 km<sup>2</sup> while the average range for a male bobcat is from 2 km<sup>2</sup> to 325 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>3</sup> Bobcats' home range size is strongly correlated with their population density, which is dictated by prey availability.<sup>4</sup> But unless an intensive study has been undertaken, states have a poor grasp on their population sizes, densities and demographics.

Bobcat density estimates vary widely, including 4 to 6 bobcats per 100 km<sup>2</sup> (e.g., in Idaho, Minnesota, Utah) and 20 to 28 per 100 km<sup>2</sup> (e.g. Arizona and Nevada).<sup>5</sup> Most states have neither reliable statewide population nor trend data; wildlife managers are wholly reliant on untrustworthy anecdotal data including from states' hunter surveys, sightings and vehicle collisions.<sup>6</sup>

### II. Bobcats' preferred habitat is vanishing

Bobcats' ability to adapt to many different natural habitats increases their survival. Bobcats have a wide habitat tolerance and can live in almost any natural habitat that provides cover, which they require in order to hunt. However, bobcats are sensitive to human activities,<sup>7</sup> including human development and disturbance.<sup>8</sup>

Bobcats avoid urban and exurban (that is, low density housing in formerly pristine areas) lands,<sup>9</sup> and deep snow.<sup>10</sup> Alarming, exurban areas are gobbling up wildlife habitats and are many times greater in size than all suburban and urban areas combined.<sup>11</sup> Studies show that adult females avoid urban areas and fragmented habitats.<sup>12</sup>

Subadult bobcat transients need safe passages in order to find new habitats and establish home ranges. Yet, bobcats are threatened by habitat fragmentation and can become locally extinct in habitats that are highly fragmented.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hansen, K. 1992. *Cougar: The American Lion*. Northland Publishing, Flagstaff, AZ.

<sup>2</sup> Hunter, L. 2015.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> D. B. Lesmeister et al., "Spatial and Temporal Structure of a Mesocarnivore Guild in Midwestern North America," Article, *Wildlife Monographs* 191, no. 1 (May 2015), <https://doi.org/10.1002/wmon.1015>, <Go to ISI>://WOS:000353896300001.

<sup>5</sup> Hunter, L. and P. Barrett. 2011. *Carnivores of the World*. Bobcat *Lynx rufus*. Princeton University Press, p. 34.

<sup>6</sup> Elbroch et al., "Contrasting bobcat values."

<sup>7</sup> Erica Goad et al., *Habitat use by mammals varies along an exurban development gradient in northern Colorado*, vol. 176 (2014).

<sup>8</sup> J. S. Lewis et al., "Interspecific interactions between wild felids vary across scales and levels of urbanization," Article, *Ecology and Evolution* 5, no. 24 (Dec 2015), <https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.1812>, <Go to ISI>://WOS:000368136600018.

<sup>9</sup> R. N. Larson et al., "Food habits of coyotes, gray foxes, and bobcats in coastal southern California urban landscape," Article, *Western North American Naturalist* 75, no. 3 (Oct 2015), <Go to ISI>://WOS:000365250700010.

<sup>10</sup> Hunter, L. 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Goad et al., *Habitat use by mammals varies along an exurban development gradient in northern Colorado*, 176.

<sup>12</sup> Seth P. D. Riley et al., "Effects of Urbanization and Habitat Fragmentation on Bobcats and Coyotes in Southern California," 17, no. 2 (2003), <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1523-1739.2003.01458.x>, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1046/j.1523-1739.2003.01458.x>; Seth Riley et al., *A southern California freeway is a physical and social barrier to gene flow in carnivores*, vol. 15 (2006).

<sup>13</sup> Lesmeister et al., "Spatial and Temporal Structure of a Mesocarnivore Guild in Midwestern North America."; Lewis et al., "Interspecific interactions between wild felids vary across scales and levels of urbanization."



Because their habitats and corridors are in decline, South Dakota's bobcats should not endure expanded hunting and trapping.

### **III. Bobcats are limited by available prey, competition, predation, excluded from small urban habitats, and susceptible to disease**

Sport hunting and trapping is wholly unnecessary to keep bobcat populations in check, as they are self-regulating and limited by other factors. For instance, bobcats also compete for food resources with coyotes, gray foxes and even birds of prey such as great horned owls, and to a lesser extent, with mountain lions.<sup>14</sup> They also face competition with other carnivores for prey and may be killed themselves by coyotes, domestic dogs and mountain lions.<sup>15</sup>

Researchers found that coyotes and gray foxes enjoyed omnivorous diets that included mammals, fruit and seeds, invertebrates, and birds.<sup>16</sup> But bobcats were not detected in small urban fragments, because they, as obligate carnivores, required a more specialized diet. Because of bobcats' food specialization, they were excluded from small urban areas, unlike more opportunistic carnivores.<sup>17</sup>

In a Colorado study, authors found that bobcats and mountain lions shared the same habitats, but in wildlands bobcats avoided areas where lions had been for a few days.<sup>18</sup> In exurban areas, however, bobcats did not avoid mountain lions and were more likely to come into contact with them—risking deadly strife. Lewis et al. (2015) conclude that human development has a potential to alter felid communities with its associated changes in ecological communities.<sup>19</sup>

Opportunistic hunters, bobcats consume a wide variety of prey, but their main foods of choice include lagomorphs (e.g. snowshoe hares, cottontail rabbits and jackrabbits) and rodents (mice, voles, squirrels and beavers).<sup>20</sup> Bobcats are an “obligate” carnivore – meaning that they require an all-meat diet.<sup>21</sup> Prey populations generally far exceed the biomass of their predators, and the number of prey generally determines the numbers of their predators.<sup>22</sup> But in a ground-breaking 2015 study published in *Science*, biologists reviewed more than 1,000 studies and came to a

<sup>14</sup> J. S. Lewis et al., “Contact Networks Reveal Potential for Interspecific Interactions of Sympatric Wild Felids Driven by Space Use,” *Ecosphere* 8, no. 3 (2017); J. Witzuk et al., “Niche Overlap between Sympatric Coyotes and Bobcats in Highland Zones of Olympic Mountains, Washington,” *Journal of Zoology* 297, no. 3 (2015); Hias Melville et al., “Prey Selection by Three Mesopredators That Are Thought to Prey on Eastern Wild Turkeys (*Meleagris Gallopavo Sylvestris*) in the Pineywoods of East Texas,” *Southeastern Naturalist* 14, no. 3 (2015); D. B. Lesmeister et al., “Spatial and Temporal Structure of a Mesocarnivore Guild in Midwestern North America,” *Wildlife Monographs* 191, no. 1 (2015).

<sup>15</sup> M. J. Cherry et al., “Coyote diets in a longleaf pine ecosystem,” Article, *Wildlife Biology* 22, no. 2 (Mar 2016), <https://doi.org/10.2981/wlb.00144>, <Go to ISI>://WOS:000377803600005.

<sup>16</sup> Larson et al., “Food habits of coyotes, gray foxes, and bobcats in coastal southern California urban landscape.”

<sup>17</sup> Larson et al., “Food habits of coyotes, gray foxes, and bobcats in coastal southern California urban landscape.”

<sup>18</sup> Lewis et al., “Interspecific interactions between wild felids vary across scales and levels of urbanization.”

<sup>19</sup> Lewis et al., “Interspecific interactions between wild felids vary across scales and levels of urbanization.”

<sup>20</sup> C. C. Hass, “Competition and coexistence in sympatric bobcats and pumas,” Article, *Journal of Zoology* 278, no. 3 (Jul 2009), <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7998.2009.00565.x>, <Go to ISI>://WOS:000267173900002; Oregon State University, “Species at a Glance: Nutria,”

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjV3cyUic7hAhUPcq0KHct\\_DAgQFjAAegQIABAC&url=https%3A%2F%2Fseagrant.oregonstate.edu%2Ffile%2F1341%2Fdownload%3Ftoken%3D-q6VIsqk&usg=AOvVaw3ivkVuXjFVEb5z8YiB\\_f\\_d](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjV3cyUic7hAhUPcq0KHct_DAgQFjAAegQIABAC&url=https%3A%2F%2Fseagrant.oregonstate.edu%2Ffile%2F1341%2Fdownload%3Ftoken%3D-q6VIsqk&usg=AOvVaw3ivkVuXjFVEb5z8YiB_f_d)

<sup>21</sup> Kitchen, A.M., E.M. Gese, and E.R. Schauster. 1999. Resource partitioning between coyotes and swift foxes: space, time and diet.” *Canadian Journal of Zoology-Revue Canadienne De Zoologie*. 77(10).

<sup>22</sup> Barbara L. Peckarsky et al., “Revisiting the Classics: Considering Nonconsumptive Effects in Textbook Examples of Predator-Prey Reactions,” *Ecological Society of America* 89, no. 9 (2008).



different conclusion: Even as prey biomass increases, predator numbers do not necessarily follow. That is because predators mainly eat the young and old prey animals, and prey animals who live in crowded conditions breed more slowly, leaving fewer animals for carnivores to eat.<sup>23</sup> For example, on the Kalahari, Hatton et al. (2015) found 200kg of prey (buffalo, impala etc.) per square kilometer, but only 4kg of lions and hyenas in that same space.<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, bobcats do not pose a credible threat to livestock. Data show that farmers and ranchers lose nine times more cattle and sheep to health, weather, birthing and theft problems than all carnivores (including domestic dogs) combined.<sup>25</sup> Bobcats are opportunistic hunters. They may kill livestock such as sheep, goats, piglets and poultry, but data show that those attacks are miniscule.<sup>26</sup>

Bobcats are susceptible to disease, including from domestic cats. If domestic cats do not receive regular veterinary care and are free-roaming, they become the source for numerous diseases to wildlife including rabies, feline leukemia virus and numerous parasites.<sup>27</sup> Researchers have documented the transmission of diseases from domestic cats to wild felids.<sup>28</sup> In urban areas, mountain lions and bobcats are susceptible to feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) from domestic cats.<sup>29</sup>

#### **IV. Bobcats reproduce slowly, and the species is harmed by recreational hunting and commercial trapping**

While females are sexually mature at about one year of age, they do not breed until after they are two years old.<sup>30</sup> Males can start to mate at two years of age, but most do not until they become territorial residents after they are about three years old.<sup>31</sup>

Bobcats can reproduce year-round but typically breed during winter and spring, with most young born during the spring and summer months.<sup>32</sup> Females prefer secluded den sites to raise their litter of one to six kittens (the

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<sup>23</sup> I. A. Hatton et al., "The predator-prey power law: Biomass scaling across terrestrial and aquatic biomes," *Science* 349, no. 6252 (2015).

<sup>24</sup> Marc Montgomery, "Predators, prey, and the mathematics of nature," *Radio Canada International* (<http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2015/09/09/predators-prey-and-the-mathematics-of-nature/>) 2015.

<sup>25</sup> The Humane Society of the United States, "Government data confirm that cougars have a negligible effect on U.S. cattle and sheep industries,"; The Humane Society of the United States, "Government data confirm that wolves have a negligible effect on U.S. cattle and sheep industries," <https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/HSUS-Wolf-Livestock-6.Mar..19Final.pdf> (2019); The Humane Society of the United States, "Government data confirm that grizzly bears have a negligible effect on U.S. cattle and sheep industries," [https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/HSUS-Grizzly-Livestock\\_6.Mar..19Final.pdf](https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/HSUS-Grizzly-Livestock_6.Mar..19Final.pdf) (2019).

<sup>26</sup> Hunter, L. and P. Barrett, 2011.

<sup>27</sup> R. W. Gerhold and D. A. Jessup, "Zoonotic Diseases Associated with Free-Roaming Cats," *Zoonoses and Public Health* 60, no. 3 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1863-2378.2012.01522.x>, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1863-2378.2012.01522.x>.

<sup>28</sup> Gerhold and Jessup, "Zoonotic Diseases Associated with Free-Roaming Cats."

<sup>29</sup> Lewis et al., "Interspecific interactions between wild felids vary across scales and levels of urbanization,"; Gerhold and Jessup, "Zoonotic Diseases Associated with Free-Roaming Cats,"; Ashley Gramza et al., "Understanding public perceptions of risk regarding outdoor pet cats to inform conservation action," 30, no. 2 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.12631>, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/cobi.12631>.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*; V. Segura, "A three-dimensional skull ontogeny in the bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) (Carnivora: Felidae): a comparison with other carnivores," Article, *Canadian Journal of Zoology* 93, no. 3 (Mar 2015), <https://doi.org/10.1139/cjz-2014-0148>, <Go to ISI>://WOS:000352214400008.

<sup>31</sup> Hunter, *Carnivores of the World*.

<sup>32</sup> Crowe, D. M. 1975. Aspects of Ageing, Growth, and Reproduction of Bobcats from Wyoming. *Journal of Mammalogy*, Vol. 56, No. 1, pp. 177-198; Fritts, S. H. and J. A. Sealander. 1978. Reproductive Biology and Population Characteristics of Bobcats (*Lynx rufus*) in Arkansas. *Journal of Mammalogy*, Vol. 59, No. 2, pp. 347-353; Lawhead, D. N. 1984. Bobcat *Lynx rufus* Home Range, Density and Habitat Preference in South-Central Arizona. *The Southwestern Naturalist*, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 105-113.



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

average is three kittens per litter), and will often move their kittens around between multiple den sites to prevent detection from other predators.<sup>33</sup> Birth intervals vary, with some bobcats having one litter per year or even one litter every two years.<sup>34</sup>

Bobcat kittens depend on their mothers for survival for eight to ten months.<sup>35</sup> They are weaned at approximately two to three months of age, after which they follow their mothers on daily hunts to master the craft of survival. By wintertime, kittens make their own kills.<sup>36</sup> When kittens are self-sufficient, typically nine to 24 months of age, these subadult transients disperse from their natal areas (the area where they were born) in an attempt to find their own home range and mates. Dispersal distances vary widely among young bobcats.<sup>37</sup>

Hunting and trapping bobcats orphans dependent kittens, leaving them to starve or die of predation or exposure.

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<sup>33</sup> Arizona Game and Fish Department. Bobcat Fact Sheet: Understanding Bobcat Management in Arizona. Retrieved from <https://www.azgfd.com/PortalImages/files/hunting/Bobcat%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>. Segura, "A three-dimensional skull ontogeny in the bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) (Carnivora: Felidae): a comparison with other carnivores."

<sup>34</sup> Hunter, *Carnivores of the World*.

<sup>35</sup> Hansen, Bobcat: Master of Survival Segura, "A three-dimensional skull ontogeny in the bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) (Carnivora: Felidae): a comparison with other carnivores."

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Hunter, L. 2015



## **GFP commission proposed changes to upland bird hunting regulations for 2020**

Increasing the bag limit on a diminishing game population is certainly counter to enlightened game management and reduces the value of the resource. It usually creates more dissatisfied hunters with unreasonable expectations of increased harvest and reduces the hunting experience to just killing more game. Do you have any statistics on how frequently public land pheasant hunters limit out, and how many of those harvested birds go in the freezer on the way to the landfill? From what I have experienced since moving to SD four years ago the majority of "hunting" effort involves driving around county roads and shooting birds off the road right-of-way while the walk in areas remain unused.

Additional pressure on the birds at the end of the season when they are vulnerable to extreme weather, avian predators, and insufficient winter cover is absolutely the wrong thing to do and can produce devastating reductions in hen pheasant numbers. It is really disappointing to see the resource managers only focus on increasing license sales at the expense of the public resource they are supposed to effectively manage.

In contrast to this type of management look at the stream restoration programs occurring across the country. These programs focus on improving habitat and water quality to enhance fisheries by cooperative projects involving government agencies, private land owners, resource user groups, and school kids. Involving those who will ultimately inherit and cherish the resource they helped improve is critical to true resource management. It is imperative to involve the general public in caring for and about our natural resources instead of just taking.

Robert T. Jane  
Martin, South Dakota

To the members of the SDGFP Commission,

Upon reading the proposed changes to pheasant hunting hours, limits and season dates, I felt compelled to reach out with my perspective. I am a 4<sup>th</sup> generation pheasant hunter and typically enter the field to hunt this amazing bird 25+ times each fall. I grew up in Florence and live in Watertown, and while I have access to excellent hunting opportunities on private land, I do the bulk of my hunting on public land in this area. Sometimes I shoot a limit, sometimes I get skunked, but most of the time I harvest a bird or two. From 12:00pm on the resident opener to sunset on the first Sunday in January, my four-legged hunting partner, Sage, and I are out there. All this to say, I am more than a casual hunter and the time logged on public ground is more representative of what the DIY non-resident hunter will experience. I will address my thoughts on the three major changes that I read in the Keloland article. I'm hopeful that my tone will convey respect and understanding for your position on the commission as I can only imagine the pressure to increase license sales and hunter numbers, however, I am in opposition to the proposed changes.

Regarding the 10:00am start time, I could live with this change, but there is something deeply cultural about the noon start time. Opening Day is a family reunion of sorts for my family. Grandpa, aunts, uncles and cousins all come out to the farm between 10am and 11am. We eat, visit, shoot clay pigeons, etc., until its time to load up and head to the first spot. I understand that we could still do this with a 10am start, but it wouldn't be the same. A lot of bars and restaurants have a greater reason for opposing the change, so I think careful thought should be put into all of the effects a change like this would bring.

Regarding the change in limit to 4 roosters (after December 1<sup>st</sup>, if I recall correctly), I am adamantly opposed to this proposal. While I think it would be fair to argue that an increase in harvest would be compensatory (versus additive), my concern is quality of hunt. As I mentioned, I do most of my hunting on public land. It should come as no surprise that the numbers I see early in the season dwindle as the season progresses. Which would make sense when hunters are harvesting the roosters. While I'm satisfied with a hunt where I don't harvest anything, folks travelling from out of state to enjoy South Dakota are going to be a little different as they come here to see and harvest pheasants. Public land is challenging to hunt regardless, but an increase in allowable harvest simply means a less satisfactory hunt for those who come along after.

Regarding the consideration to move the season close to the end of January, this is the one that generally causes me the greatest concern. In my younger days, there was nothing I loved more than hunting just as a blizzard was setting in. The birds would hold tight and there was something deeply reverent about it. As an adult, I no longer hunt these conditions as I know that the pheasants are soaked in and busting them from their roost could very well be the difference between life and death if they aren't able to find adequate protection from the storm. As I alluded to in the opening, I live in northeastern SD. January here is different from January in Scotland or Winner. To have hunters continually flushing hens from their roost for an additional month at a time when cold temps, limited daylight and, typically, snow covered food resources is providing a great amount of stress would be devastating. Hens have a brutal challenge in the winter to only have a short recovery time before they have to begin nesting. Let's continue to protect them by keeping the bipedal predators out of their homes as winter truly sets in.



As I talk about hens in the winter, I will acknowledge that too many roosters do put pressure on hen survival as they compete (and win) for vital winter resources. But this isn't the case on public land. The pockets of large pheasant numbers that survive the winter (numbers that can handle a 4 rooster limit and could handle the extended season) are on private ground. The only way we will ever increase hunter numbers is to expand access to high quality hunting ground. Which is easier said than done, but that is where the commission needs to focus their energy – Gaining access to high quality habitat or producing high quality habitat. License fees, limits, season dates, etc., are short sighted, secondary attempts that I think we all know deep down are not going to bring the pheasant hunters back to South Dakota. The only thing that is going to bring them back is more pheasants.

It is with the “more pheasants” notion in mind that I want to talk about the perception of South Dakota on social media. There are a few pheasant hunting pages, but the most frequented is Pheasant Hunting Junkies and it is interesting to see the comments about our state and its pheasant hunting. Some is good, a whole lot of it is not. And, yes, we are the best state for pheasant hunting and you'll always have detractors simply for being the best, but there is a common theme that pheasant hunting in South Dakota equals pen raised birds and exorbitant fees. While we all know that the pen raised birds are going to be limited to preserves and perhaps a mile radius around them, that doesn't mean anything to folks who grab onto stereotypes and misinformation. The truth is, I've been hunting pheasants for nearly 30 years and can count the flared nostril pen raised roosters I've harvested from public and private land on one hand. Wild roosters are present in abundance. They are often wily and hunting should never be easy, but this is one image piece that I feel the SDGFP should work to dispel the myths.

One other good thing about social media is, as noted, people love to air their grievances. One of the big ones is how the non-resident license works as far as allowable hunting days. I think considering adjusting how that works would be a good start. Like the fact that I no longer hunt pheasants in blizzards, I also have come to the realization that we need non-residents to hunt in South Dakota. Both for revenue and to perpetuate the culture and tradition of hunting. While I might not want to see Minnesota plates parked in front of my favorite public hunting spot, I'm willing to accept it for the survival of pheasant hunting.

Lastly, bring back the brood survey. I get that people only see the declines and don't see the overall health of our pheasant populations, but it was a valuable tool. And if you want to get the numbers from the early 2000's, we all know what needs to be done. Do that and we won't have to worry about hours, limits and longer seasons. Or long, drawn out letters from pheasant hunters like me. 😊

Anyway, thank you for your time. I used a lot of words to simply say “no”, but the reasons for my opposition are not merely emotional. They are based on what I have seen and continue to see each fall when I don the blaze orange, and Sage and I team up to put a rooster or two in the vest. The parameters for South Dakota's hunting season are successful and well defined. Let's keep them that way.

Lucas T. Nogelmeier



Greater Dacotah Chapter SCI  
PO Box 9455  
Rapid City, SD 57709

SD GFP Administration-Commission  
Proposed pheasant season revisions  
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks  
523 East Capitol Avenue Pierre, SD 57501

Director Kirschenmann

The Greater Dacotah Chapter of Safari Club International (GDC-SCI) prepared response to GFP Commission proposals for the pheasant season. SCI and the Greater Dacotah Chapter are science-based conservation organizations based on scientific wildlife management and not emotionally driven agendas. These changes are biologically sound since winter surveys indicate that rooster/hen ratios are higher than the 1 rooster to 10 hen ratios supported by past pheasant research in South Dakota and other states. The Greater Dacotah Chapter is proud of the support we have with SD GFP in the projects we have partnered with over the years to improve wildlife, habitat management, and research in South Dakota! Our organization is in support of the following changes:

1. The 10:00AM start time for the residents only pheasant season.
2. The Extension of the 2020 pheasant season to January 31, 2020. This will allow more hunters more time to hunt the most popular upland bird in the state.
3. In addition, GDC/SCI also supports increasing the daily bag limit to 4 birds and increasing the possession limit from 15 to 20 rooster pheasants after December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 through the end of the season.
4. GDC/SCI also supports the Departments alignment of other upland bird seasons (prairie grouse, quail, and partridge) to end on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

We ask that the Department of Game, Fish and Parks continues to keep us informed on additional opportunities to comment on revisions!

Safari Club International is the leader in protecting the freedom to hunt and in promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. The Greater Dacotah Chapter achieves this mission in part by evaluating the principals involved in proposed public actions that affect wildlife and habitats. Our Chapter goals and objectives are more clearly outlined at: <http://greaterdacotahchapter-sci.org/main/>

Respectfully Submitted

*Paul Vinatieri*

Paul Vinatieri  
President GDC-SCI

To: SD Game Fish & Parks  
From: Kenneth Johnson 2205 Burleigh St. Apt 109 <sup>Yorkton 57078</sup>  
Subject: Increasing Pheasant Limits  
Date: July 22, 2020 (605-661-5500  
Phone #)

Raising Pheasant limits from 3 Birds to 4 Birds and lengthening the Season is not a good idea - (Just BS.)

It is all about MONEY not about the birds. You could care less about the Pheasants. I am a retired farmer who has been around the birds all my life (74 years) I visit with ranchers, farmers and sportsmen all the time, they think the same way I do.

The out of State Hunters numbers was down last year now you are trying to get them back to South Dakota it is all about the Almighty DOLLAR. Maybe the Season should be closed for 1 year to build the Pheasant population up.

I trapped the predator bounty program for tails, I do believe that program has helped.

Maybe try lifting Federal Law that protects the HAWKS. You see hawks everytime you take a drive in the country. The hawks are hurting the bird population.

We can not built up the Pheasant population by killing more birds.

Kenneth D. Johnson

South Dakota Game Fish & Parks Commission Meeting  
September 2-3 2020 Meeting

Dear Commissioners:

August 11, 2020

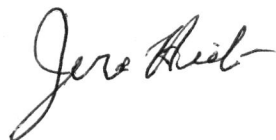
I am writing this letter in regards to the proposed pheasant season extension and increased bag limit to 4. I am very much opposed to both and will give you my reasons why.

I believe the pheasant season dates are long enough. These birds are hunted from early October through early January (three months) with one season or another. I am concerned the birds are continually pushed from cover and sanctuary, especially the later cold weather part of the season. Even if none are shot, which is difficult as they have become terribly wild by then, they are pushed or harassed and use up precious calories in escaping and are more vulnerable to predators. This is the same reason I oppose an early start time to 10:00 until later in the season, well into November in my opinion. Give these creatures time to feed, rest and move into cover. I have hunted pheasants for 50+ years and I believe the seasons and bag limits are plenty liberal already. Why do we keep tinkering with this matter in the name of hunting opportunity when the real problem is lazy hunters who don't use the opportunities they already have. Give it a rest. Think of the wildlife first.

In regards to the 4 rooster limit later in the season, I am opposed as this is nothing more than a misleading ploy to attract non-resident hunters. These hunters will believe that there must be an enormous amount of birds out there when we can shoot 4, "wow, let's go". This will again lead to over pressure and be detrimental to the pheasants as mentioned above. I've heard all the arguments about pheasant hunting (you can't shoot too many roosters, they only compete with the hens for food, the mortality rate is high anyway, you can't stockpile wildlife), yada, yada, yada. I appreciate the work the wildlife biologists do but sometimes a degree in common sense is useful too. I am more than a little tired of the push by the GF&P for catering to the out-of-state hunter. Every fall we hear about all the money they will spend in South Dakota, they are met at the airport with greeting bags and hats, TV interviews, etc. What about the poor shmoe resident that supports the sporting goods stores, gas stations and restaurants year around? Is it any wonder the resident hunting license sales continue to plummet?

I don't have a problem with non-resident hunters with limitations, some of my family come back for a couple days each year. But this seemingly endless scenario of pretending we have unlimited resources, unlimited access and room for thousands more hunters is false. Let's put the wildlife first and give them some breaks please. Groups like *Pheasants Forever* are no help either in my opinion, as their statements and actions are geared to commercialization. They don't get my support. I would not be opposed to an increase in license fees if it stays in South Dakota for more WIAs and predator control, but that's a whole another subject. Thank you for your time and efforts to make South Dakota a great place to live.

Jere Hieb  
3620 Pleasant View Dr.  
Brooking, SD 57006  
605-690-7315





## Comes, Rachel

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**From:** Comes, Rachel  
**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2020 9:29 AM  
**To:** Comes, Rachel  
**Subject:** FW: Pheasant proposal

**From:** Schiefelbein, Derek <[Derek.Schiefelbein@state.sd.us](mailto:Derek.Schiefelbein@state.sd.us)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 5, 2020 8:32 AM  
**To:** Hepler, Kelly <[Kelly.Hepler@state.sd.us](mailto:Kelly.Hepler@state.sd.us)>  
**Subject:** Pheasant proposal

Good Morning Mr. Hepler,

I thought I would reach out for what its worth.

\*I am in support of a 10 am start all season.

\*I am in support of 4 rooster limit from December 1st through the 1st Sunday in January. Harvesting an extra rooster won't hurt and may increase hunter participation in the late season. Great idea without biological harms.

\*I and many are NOT in favor of extending the season from 1st Sunday in January to January 31st in the harshest time in winter. Winter cover is limited (we know habitat loss is an issue)pheasants and other upland birds struggle that time of year the most. They need time to rest and maintain their bodies. Strong/Health birds will nest stronger in the spring. Harvesting roosters is not an issue but to harvest roosters you have to push all birds out of the winter cover and expose them to the harshest of winter and predators. January is usually the harshest time of year. The mortality rate on the hen pheasant is the concern. After that being said, hunter participation that time of year has always been low as conditions are tough for hunting (walking) and transportation through fields.

Thank you for your consideration.

Derek Schiefelbein  
29504 Marble Rd Pierre  
605-280-2519

The bottom line to this is that we find the pheasant surveys extremely important to our plans and not having that information will be a large factor as to whether we decide to hunt SD in the future. Without it, we are already prejudiced to NOT hunt SD.

Let me give you a little Kansas back ground. When I started hunting Kansas we were still using spears and rocks. No, it just seems like that long ago. Anyway, there was the Kansas Department of Wildlife, or KDW. Hard working honest people that would give you a straight answer to a straight question. They would return calls and would respond to your written requests on what the upcoming season may hold. Then they rolled Parks into the mix and it became KDWP. Still pretty good and at about the same time, the walk in areas were really taking off, so a hunter almanac became part of the mix. The almanac includes an upland bird forecast by region.

Then Tourism got involved and it became KDWPT, and things went to shit. All tourism wanted to do was get hunters to come to Kansas and bring their wallets. It did not matter what the bird forecast was, Tourism said they had to lock the doors to keep them out of the house. At the depth of the most recent drought, when estimated statewide rooster harvest was the lowest since the counts started in 1955 at only 155,000 birds, Tourism said they had 200,000 acres loaded with birds statewide. They kind of forgot to mention that it was all shooting preserve land.

So now SD, is going to go the same way. You can hunt earlier, longer and take more birds. Oh, and we are not going to publish the bird counts that have been used since 1949. I am betting that Tourism will take care of the forecast, and it will always be rosy. On two occasions, having those numbers made the difference in our deciding to go to SD. Tom and I were going to make our first trip in 2013, but based on the counts, the population was down badly from the previous year, and we canceled. Last year was the same, combined with weather and bad road conditions.

And I am sure Tourism will do a great job in attracting more aging hunters. We are a declining population. Tourism cannot change that. Tourism cannot change the weather, and Tourism cannot produce more birds.

There is a place you can offer comments, and I urge you do to so. <https://gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions/> The changes to timing, bag limit and season length are no big deal. Kansas has been doing that same thing for decades. The loss of data and the inclusion of marketing is what bothers me. If you really dig into the way SD has done it in the past, they had it broken down to how many dollars each hunter meant to the local economy, and they obviously know that their budget is tied to the number of licenses sold. But do not become a whore and do what Kansas has done, which is "we don't care if there are birds or not, just bring your wallet"

Your turn.

Michael L Schnipper  
Oxford, OH