



**DELAWARE STATE SPORTSMEN'S
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To: DNRECHearingComments@delaware.gov
From: Jeff Hague, President
Date: January 4, 2024
Subject: Proposed Revisions to Wildlife Regulations

My first comment would be the lack of the opportunity for the public to provide input. To my knowledge, no public workshops were held over the last 6 years as these changes were being developed. We heard year after year that changes were in development, but no workshops were held. That lack on input from stakeholders does not foster trust from the public the department serves.

I would submit the following comments concerning the proposed regulations.

1.0 Definitions

Deer – With the potential for more sika deer to move into Delaware, consider treating them separately from white-tailed deer and creating separate seasons, limits, and harvest tags.

Direct Supervision. Parameters is to general of a term and should not be used in regulations. What are the parameters? What is special about 30 yards? Who decided that was the correct distance? There is no rationalization for that distance.

2.0 Method of Take

2.5 Pellet guns should not be banned for squirrel hunting, and the allowable pellet gun calibers should be modernized to include larger sizes.

2.12.2 This definition is confusing at best or flat out incorrect at worst. It is not constructed properly. Isn't a muzzleloader considered unloaded when there is no powder or ball/bullet/shot loaded in the bore?

4.0 Seasons

4.7.1 – Gray Squirrels – Run the squirrel hunting season through the last day of February.

4.9.1 – Pheasant – Run the pheasant hunting season through the last day of February.

4.10 – Quail – Do not prohibit wild quail hunting unless the state has a public plan with defined deliverables and milestones for removing the prohibition.

Any plan and decision to close quail hunting should be reviewed annually.

4.10.2 - Run the released quail hunting season through the last day of February.

5.0 Wild Turkeys

5.3.1 – Allow the use of 28 ga and .410 shotguns for turkey hunting.

7.0 Method of Take

7.3.2 Archery and Crossbow Seasons – Modify this to allow concealed carry license holders to possess their handguns while hunting.

7.3.3 Muzzle-loading Pistols – Modify this to allow concealed carry license holders to possess their handguns while hunting.

20.0 Game Bird Releases

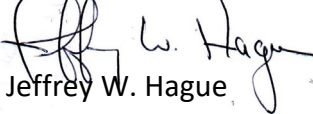
20.2 and 20.3 – Marking gamebirds according to proposed requirements and sharing information about private release locations, dates, and amount is an invasion of privacy and creates undue burden on Delaware hunters.

23.0 Non-native/Invasive Wildlife

In general there should not be a season on the taking of coyote. If they are listed as non-native/invasive why is there a season?

23.1.1.2 – Add to this section that coyotes may be killed with straight-wall pistol-caliber rifles and handguns by deer hunters while deer hunting.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeffrey W. Hague

President