



Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen & Conservationists

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On the Front Lines – So You Can Be in the Woods, On the Water or At the Range!

PFSC Supports SB 67 - Sunday Hunting Regulatory Authority Opposes Attempts to Mandate Wildlife Management Regulations Via Legislation, Including the Rifle Deer Season Opening Day

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The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen & Conservationists, representing over 70,000 sportsmen, sportswomen and conservationists in the Commonwealth, has always appreciated efforts that provide additional opportunities for Pennsylvania's hunter-conservationists, particularly our youth. The PFSC believes that allowing the Game Commission the full regulatory authority over Sunday hunting and changing the long-time Monday rifle deer season opener to a Saturday opener is a step toward offering increased opportunity.

Change is hard and not often readily accepted by Pennsylvanians who cherish their traditions. We acknowledge that not everyone was happy with the Saturday rifle deer season opener change, and there are still some vocal opponents, but that doesn't mean it wasn't necessary or good. We continue to hear stories from members who are excited to hunt with their school and college-aged kids and some who, because of work priorities, are ecstatic to hunt on opening day, something they hadn't been able to do before the change. Allowing more Sunday hunting opportunities will only increase a family's time afield with their kids.

Over the years, one thing hasn't changed - PFSC's consistent opposition to the legislature mandating seasons and bag limit issues via legislation. This includes the Saturday opener, setting Sunday hunting days, harvesting antlerless deer by seniors, or any other attempt to legislate issues currently under the regulatory authority of our wildlife agency, including control of the agency's finances.

Regardless of personal opinions on what day someone prefers as the opening day of any season, **the Federation's membership is adamant that what we hunt or trap and when we hunt or trap (the opening day and length of all seasons, including Sundays) are wildlife management regulatory issues dealing with seasons and bag limits. Thus, these decisions are and should remain under the regulatory authority of the subject matter experts - the Pennsylvania Game Commission.**

The PFSC believes that "Ballot Box Biology" IS the greatest threat to hunting and wildlife management in Pennsylvania and nationwide. Anti-hunters use it to try to get their foot in the door, and now a few short-sighted disgruntled hunters who don't like decisions made by the Game Commission, our wildlife experts, are asking legislators to set season dates and even control the agency's purse strings.

History tells us this is NOT a smart move!

In a world in which our culture is increasingly removed from wild places, and hunters make up only 6% of the general population, "ballot box biology" is a terrifying monster and a slippery slope. Anti-hunters, special interest groups and simple ignorance can easily drown out our voice and sound wildlife management decisions, allowing emotions, personal agendas and politics to rule.

The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen and Conservationists supports the Game Commission's science-based and led resource-first model and process. The ability to set seasons and bag limits is crucial to the management process. Any other system or interference threatens the management of Pennsylvania's wild birds, wild mammals, their habitats and our hunting heritage for current and future generations.

As older hunters age out of the license-buying system, the Commission must be able to utilize new ideas to keep the next generation of hunters engaged. The Federation's board of directors understands that some of these changes may not always make everyone happy, sometimes shaking things up and causing us to create "new traditions."

If these changes allow for maximum opportunity for Pennsylvania hunters without negatively impacting the resource, we must give it ample time to become the new tradition. Based on feedback and the increased opportunity additional Sunday hunting, along with the Saturday opener, has provided, PFSC believes this is one of those times.

The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen & Conservationists supports SB 67 (Sunday Hunting Regulatory Authority). It opposes HB 495 (Monday Deer Season Opening Day Mandate) and any legislative attempts to mandate wildlife management decisions via legislation.

Please contact your Representative and ask them to support SB 67 and vote "no" on any amendments to the bill.