

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission

**Will Meet at 10:30 AM
On Wed., March 16, 2022
Department of Natural Resources
Google Meet**

Meeting Agenda:

Approval for March 16, 2022, Meeting Agenda

Approval for Minutes from February 16, 2022 Meeting

Proposed 2022-2024 Hunting Regulations – Commission’s Vote (Associate Director Karina Stonesifer)

Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits – Commission’s Vote (Game Bird Section Leader Bill Harvey and Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack)

Break

2022 Legislative Session Update (Director Paul Peditto and Associate Director Tim Larney)

Natural Resources Police Update (Sergeant Bradley Lowe or Lieutenant Charles Fawley)

Maryland Farm Bureau Update (Colby Ferguson)

Old Business:

New Business:

Public Comment:

Adjourn

NOTE: Free Parking will be available on the Navy Stadium Parking Lot, which is the third entrance on right off of Taylor Avenue.

**The Proposed Schedule for the 2022 meetings
Of the Wildlife Advisory Commission is as follows:**

January 19th	Google Meet
February 16th	Google Meet
March 16th	Google Meet
April 20th	Google Meet
May 18th	No Meeting
June 15th	In-Person Meeting at Tawes State Office Building
July 20th	No Meeting
August 17th	Google Meet
September 21st	TBD - Google Meet or No Meeting or Field Day
October 19th	Google Meet
November 16th	Google Meet
December 22nd	No Meeting

***PLEASE NOTE THAT MEETING DATES ARE HELD
ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH***

Note: Unless notified otherwise, all meetings will be held via Google Meeting. When meeting in person, the meetings will be held in the C-1 Conference Room Department of Natural Resources - Tawes State Office Building beginning at 10:30 am. Available parking is located at the Navy Stadium Parking Lot.

NOTE: Free Parking will be available on the Navy Stadium Parking Lot, which is the third entrance on right off of Taylor Avenue.

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES
MARCH 16, 2022

Chairman Lou Compton called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. This meeting was held via teleconference and videoconference. Chairman Compton asked for a roll call of individuals on the “call.” Unfortunately, because of the anonymity of Google Meet callers, it was impossible to determine the identity of every participant.

Commissioner Michael Addressed the Commission

- Commissioner Michael was appointed to the Washington County Circuit Court by Governor Larry Hogan on February 17, 2022, and sworn in on Friday, March 11, 2022.
- Commissioner Michael cannot hold an executive position and serve on the Bench.
- Commissioner Michael expressed it is bittersweet because he has enjoyed his time on the Commission. Commissioner Michael added it had been a pleasure, and he has learned a lot serving on the Commission. Also, Commissioner Michael hoped that he had taught the members of the Commission and staff some things.
- Commissioner Michael commented on applying regulations statewide instead of county by county when possible to staff and the Commission. Commissioner Michael recognized it is challenging to fragment what has already started, but the Commission and staff should work towards making statewide regulations for wildlife management.
- Commissioner Michael requested to stay on the WAC contact list.
- Chairman Compton responded on behalf of the entire Commission and thanked Joseph Michael for his service and diligence on several issues, most notably the Pittman-Robertson Fund issue. Commission will continue moving forward with Commissioner Michael’s efforts in mind. It has been a pleasure working with Commissioner Michael. Chairman Compton's final words were congratulations on Commissioner Michael's appointment.
- Director Peditto offered his appreciation for Commissioner Michael’s time and service on the Commission. In addition, Director Peditto congratulated Commissioner Michael on his appointment as a Judge in the Circuit Court.
- Commissioner Michael concluded, “keep up with the great work, everyone.”

Approval for March 16, 2022, Meeting Agenda

- Motion to Approve the Agenda:
 1. Commissioner Gregor moved to accept the March 16, 2022, Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda.
 2. Commissioner Gulbrandsen seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval for Minutes from February 16, 2022, Meeting

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Keithley moved to accept the February 16, 2022, Meeting Minutes.
 2. Commissioner Schroyer seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Proposed 2022-2024 Hunting Regulations for the Commission’s Vote – Associate Director Karina Stonesifer and Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack gave the presentation.

- Chairman Compton announced that the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Maryland State Director Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, would be addressing the Commission on the expansion of the black bear season proposal. Chairman Compton reminded the Commission of the HSUS letter received on March 15, 2022, requesting to forego the proposed expansion of Maryland’s black bear hunting season. **[ATTACHMENT A]**

- Ms. Bevan-Dangel thanked the Commission for allowing HSUS to say a few words. She apologized for submitting the comments so late but has been trying to understand the available data for several weeks to determine the level of concern merited.
- HSUS analyzed hunter mortality of the black bear population, incidental mortality data, and mast crop data for the past few years.
- Ms. Bevan-Dangel highlighted points from HSUS' written comments.
 1. HSUS understood that the annual black bear hunting season is not showing an increase in harvest. Indeed, concern over bad weather could be a factor, but that does not explain incidental mortality is also incredibly low. Incidental mortality has been decreasing over the years.
 2. HSUS reiterated that HSUS does not support black bear hunting and that HSUS is not asking to end bear hunting. Instead, HSUS urged the Commission to be cautious and let science guide the Commission's decision.
 3. HSUS concluded that expanding the black bear hunt can reasonably wait until the black bear population study. The primary concern is that adding the extra week of bear hunting during the deer hunting season is a concern; overlapping bear hunting with deer hunting when baiting is legal for deer hunting and illegal to bait for bear puts hunters at risk of breaking the law. It is dangerous for bears and hunters.
 4. HSUS urged the Commission to vote not to expand the black bear hunting season proposal at this time.
- Chairman Compton thanked Ms. Bevan-Dangel for outlining HSUS's critical points to the Commission.
- Q&A Section:
 1. Commissioner Boyles Griffin communicated that she had several conversations and email exchanges with Director Peditto, Associate Director Stonesifer, Associate Director Spiker, and Game Mammal Section Leader Eyler about expanding the black bear hunting season and WHS's data.
 2. Commissioner Boyles Griffin reminded the Commission that she rarely brings topics like this up. Commissioner Boyles Griffin added that she does not try to micro-manage WAC and WHS. However, Commissioner Boyles Griffin represents a constituency that expects her to do her job. Commissioner Boyles Griffin educated the Commission that she is a scientist, and when she evaluated WHS's data that is trending in the wrong direction – she could not ignore it.
 3. Commissioner Boyles Griffin clarified a statistic that HSUS included in the comments on the forum in February. Commissioner Boyles Griffin thought in conversation with Game Mammal Section Brian Eyler and Associate Director Harry Spiker that the breeding female mortality rate was 78%. After HSUS posted the comments, Commissioner Boyles Griffin asked Game Mammal Section Brian again about the female breeding mortality rate. The correct female breeding mortality rate is 37%. Commissioner Boyles Griffin admitted a mistake in their communication and apologized for the miscue.
 4. Commissioner Boyles Griffin concluded that if the Commission decides to expand the black bear hunting season, and if the data demonstrates the trend is worst with lower hunter success and lower incidental mortality, then the only explanation for that is the bear population is declining. This scenario will give HSUS the ammunition to stop the bear hunt, which is something that Commission does not want. Commission Boyles Griffin expressed that is the reason for her bringing these comments to the attention of the Commission. Commission Boyles Griffin felt that she had an obligation to share this information with the Commission.
 5. Director Peditto thanked Commissioner Boyles Griffin and HSUS Director Bevan-Dangel for attending. Director Peditto indicated that he is very respectful and appreciative of the comments and concerns. Director Peditto added that Commissioner Boyles Griffin bringing this up to the Commission is appropriate, and it makes for a more robust outcome when we are challenged.
 6. Director Peditto suggested that it might save some time to have Associate Director Karina Stonesifer review the black bear hunt proposal. The proposal is a very conservative response and

may meet with HSUS and Commissioner Boyles Griffin's concerns.

7. Chairman Compton moved the DNR's Expansion of the Black Bear Hunting Season Proposal up on the agenda. Associate Director Stonesifer explained that staff offered several to extend the black bear season. The options were as follows:
 - a. The weekend ahead of the established season.
 - b. The intermediate follows the established season.
 - c. The second week of the firearms deer season.
 - d. Based on the comments received, the staff's recommendation is to move forward with the advancement on the second Saturday following the established season.
 - e. Instead of the bear season running from Monday to Friday, it will be Monday through Saturday.
- Q&A Section:
 1. Commissioner Jenkins asked if there would still be a lottery and a selected number of permits issued to hunt.
 - a. The staff did not advance any other changes to the black bear hunt.
 - b. The proposal is an extension to the black bear season only.
 - c. The black bear hunt will remain lottery-based and with a limited number of hunters.
 2. Commissioner Gulbrandsen asked if staff had an idea of the number of bears that would be taken on the extra day.
 - a. Weather contributes to the number of hunters and time spent in the woods.
 - b. Staff members do not expect a dramatic increase; however, there will be some additional take.
 - c. If Maryland had a regular hunt last year, the harvest numbers should have been around 120 bears, putting Maryland in the total mortality estimates within the conservative range.
 3. Commissioner Schroyer commented that being from Garrett County and living with bears pretty much daily. Commissioner Schroyer mentioned that Garrett County borders other counties in other states: Preston County, West Virginia, has increased its bear bag limit to three bears. Preston County's population is thriving and continuing to grow, which presents a problem for us in Garrett County. Commissioner Schroyer added that farmers and property owners continue to experience damage. Bears have every right to be in the forest with everything else, but we need to be conscious that bears have reached the cultural capacity for people in Garrett County. Commissioner Schroyer concluded that these other bordering counties are expanding their bear harvest, trying to do what they can to control the population.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Schroyer moved to accept the expansion of the black bear hunt to include a Saturday at the end of the current Monday-Friday October Season.
 2. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 3. Motion passed with one opposition.
 4. Commissioner Boyles Griffin acknowledged that this option is better than all other options and thanked the WHS team and Commission for what they considered a modest proposal.
 5. Commissioner Compton thanked Commissioner Boyles Griffin and Ms. Bevan-Dangel for their professionalism and for correcting the error presented during the public comment period.

Continuation of the Proposed 2022-2024 Hunting Regulations for the Commission's Vote – Associate Director Karina Stonesifer and Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack gave the presentation.

[ATTACHMENT B]

- Concept Proposal: Shorten the bobwhite quail season in the Eastern Zone (private lands) by one month so that the season would end on January 15. Staff recommended moving this proposal forward as presented. The staff did not receive a lot of comments on this proposal. Comments received were favorable. Staff received the recognition that anything the team could do, either habitat or regulating the season, would be a step in the right direction. WHS's recommendation is to move this proposal forward as presented.

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Keithley moved to accept the shortening of the bobwhite quail season in the Eastern Zone (private lands) by one month to end the bobwhite quail on January 15 proposal.
 2. Commissioner Wagner seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Concept Proposal: Close the bobwhite quail season on public hunting lands east of the Susquehanna River until populations improve. WHS's recommendation is to move this proposal forward as presented.
- Q&A Section:
 1. Commissioner Gulbrandsen asked if there were any concrete or tentative plans for putting in more habitats and doing things to increase the population besides closing the season.
 - a. Staff acknowledged public comments about doing more habitat projects for quail and grouse.
 - b. Staff are working on habitat projects on public and private lands.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to accept closing the bobwhite quail season on public hunting lands east of the Susquehanna River until populations improve.
 2. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Concept Proposal: Shorten the ruffed grouse season by one month so that the season would end on December 31. WHS's recommendation is to move this proposal forward as presented.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Gregor moved to accept the shortening of the ruffed grouse season by one month so that the season would end on December 31.
 2. Commissioner Wagner seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Concept Proposal: Add an additional day to the established antlerless white-tailed deer firearm season in Region A on private and public lands, including the second Saturday. WHS's recommendation is to move this proposal forward as presented.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Keithley moved to add an additional day to the established antlerless white-tailed deer firearm season in Region A on private and public lands to include the second Saturday.
 2. Commissioner Schroyer seconded.
 3. Motion carried with one abstention.
- Concept Proposal: Allow hunters on public lands to leave their tree stands in place throughout the hunting season. Staff received overwhelmingly negative comments; therefore, the staff recommendation was not to move this concept forward.
- Discussion Section:
 1. Commissioner Schroyer commented that most of the public's input was disapproval. Commissioner Schroyer expressed satisfaction and said his goal was to bring the tree stand concept through the process before it ended up during the legislature.
 2. Commissioner Schroyer added that it is alarming how commenters view hunters in general. If a person were to buy into many of those comments, you would think we are all standing in the woods, ready to fistfight and shoot our brother or sister hunters, which is not the case. Commissioner Schroyer asked if NRP wanted to comment on hunter conflicts. Commissioner Schroyer reminded the Commission that he spoke with local NRP officers, and their responses were indifferent. When staff and the members of the Commission are reviewing the public online comments, individuals look for negative input, and others follow suit. Commissioner Schroyer gave a word of caution as staff, and the Commission moves forward in future years. Commissioner Schroyer mentioned that it is vital that the Commission maintains in-person meetings.
 3. Commissioner Gulbrandsen agreed with Commissioner Schroyer. Also, Commissioner

Gulbrandsen acknowledged that the tree stand proposal did not have much information about how the stands would be identified, etc. Therefore, Commissioner Gulbrandsen suggested that the tree stand proposal be revisited in the future.

4. Commissioner Gregor informed the Commission of what she was told when Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge tried the tree stands usage, which did not work out well.
 5. Commissioner Schroyer responded to Commissioner Gregor's comment by saying that he spoke with a staff person who explained that Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge has limited trees because it is primarily marshes. Staff members at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge did have some tree stands left after the season; tree stands did not have identification on them. However, other federal lands allow tree stand usage.
 6. Commissioner Schroyer reported that local NRP officers claimed that tree stand usage on public land would give the officers a leg up on baiting violations on State ground. In addition, it would be easier for the officers to see the tree stands instead of a pile of corn.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Schroyer moved to accept the staff recommendation to not go forward with the tree stand proposal.
 2. Commissioner Gulbrandsen seconded.
 3. Motion passed.
 - Concept Proposal: Add a third bear management option for farmers experiencing bear damage to receive an Agricultural Bear Crop Damage Permit to use when they are experiencing damage (outside of the bear hunting season). WHS's recommendation was to move this proposal forward as presented.
 - Motion:
 1. Commissioner Schroyer moved to accept the proposal to add a third bear management option for farmers experiencing bear damage to receive an Agricultural Bear Crop Damage Permit to use when they are experiencing damage (often outside of the bear hunting season).
 2. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 3. Motion passed with one abstention.
 - Concept Proposal: Expand the legal shooting days permitted under the authority of a Deer Cooperator Permit operations from January 15 through April 15.
 - Q&A Section:
 1. Chairman Compton asked to clarify that this proposal applies to individuals with the Deer Cooperator Permit (DCP).
 - a. That is correct.
 2. Commissioner Keithley asked to be clear about this proposal to allow nighttime shooting of deer.
 - a. Yes. It is for those with operational plans who request the nighttime shooting of deer, which is all of the current DCP plans.
 - b. Currently, the DCPs are allowed to shoot in February and March, which was a compromise in 2018 with the Maryland Farm Bureau and hunters. In addition, it allowed a window when hunting season was over and the spring and summer fawning season were not in play, and the issue with having mature crops in the fields made it less safe for nighttime shooting with the vegetation in the way.
 - c. It was an original ask from the agricultural stakeholders to extend the nighttime shooting to six months, January through July. However, at the external stakeholders' meeting, staff heard that most DCPs would not use the nighttime shooting during the summer months. Therefore, since that meeting, the agricultural stakeholders suggested they would use the nighttime shooting during the winter and summer. The January 15 start date would put the shooting during the archery season and the waterfowl season; along with that, the small game hunting would still be open. Staff felt that this proposal was a compromise. The team recognized that no matter where the nighttime shooting landed, there would be individuals who would not be happy.
 - d. To sum it up, staff had two months window of six months asked; we ended with a three-month proposal submitted to the Commission for approval.

3. Commissioner Jenkins asked what WHS is going for here. In addition, Commissioner Jenkins questioned WHS's goal with this proposal since Maryland's deer populations have been down at least a third over the past 15 years.
 - a. Staff explained that the DCP for nighttime shooting is used in areas that typically struggle to control the deer populations with hunting.
 - b. Staff clarified that a DCP could be issued to anyone. However, the process is lengthy and requires a written test, a shooting test, and a substantial operational plan. A farmer could get this permit, and several currently use them.
 - c. DCP is not like a Deer Management Permit. Yet, any farmer with deer damage may obtain a Deer Management Permit and a DCP.
- Discussion Section:
 1. Chairman Compton commented that the deer season does not end on January 15; Chairman Compton opposed the January 15 date. The nighttime shooting should start at a later date; so that nighttime shooting does not impact the hunters. If the start could be adjusted, Chairman Compton would entertain that proposal.
 2. Commissioner Gregor agreed with Chairman Compton, opposing the January 15 start date. Commissioner Gregor expressed that the January 15 start date takes away hunting opportunities during regular hours. However, Commissioner Gregor would be okay with a date after the hunting season.
 3. Commissioner Jenkins verified that it seems like the staff is adding more time to take more deer when, in a 15-year window, Maryland went from 300,000 deer to 200,000.
 4. Commissioner Boyles Griffin emphasized her opposition to the expansion of the legal shooting days permitted under the authority of a DCP because the people impacted by this proposal live in more densely populated suburban and urban areas. Commissioner Boyles Griffin added that is one of the reasons DCP holders want to extend it. Commissioner Boyles Griffin pointed out that she receives complaints from people who begrudgingly have accepted the two months when these animals are being hunted near their homes, but any expansion will be viewed negatively.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Keithley moved not to accept the proposal to expand the legal shooting days permitted under the authority of a Deer Cooperator Permit to permit operations from January 15 through April 15.
 2. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Concept Proposal: Require crossbows to be uncocked when transported in a licensed vehicle. Staff members do not recommend moving this proposal forward.
- Q&A Section:
 1. Commissioner Gregor did not understand why individuals would want their crossbow uncocked in a licensed vehicle as there is no data to suggest this is a problem.
 - a. Public input received illustrated that there was no need for it, so the staff's recommendation is not to move it forward.
 2. Commissioner Keithley asked if NRP commented on this proposal.
 - a. NRP did not provide a comment on this proposal.
 3. Chairman Compton asked if uncocked and loaded are defined in law.
 - a. It is already illegal to have a bolt on a crossbow or in a motorized vehicle.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Jenkins moved not to accept the concept proposal to require crossbows to be uncocked when transported in a licensed vehicle.
 2. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 3. No action was taken.
- Discussion Section
 1. Commissioner Gulbrandsen asked for clarification as to what the Commission is voting on.

Commissioner Gulbrandsen raised that the Commission is asking WHS to make a rule to allow crossbows to be uncocked when transported in a licensed vehicle, or is the Commission in line with the WHS not moving forward with crossbows to be uncocked as outlined in the presentation?

- a. Chairman Compton verified that the Commission is voting not to make a rule to move forward with the crossbow proposal, which does not include off-road vehicles.
- b. Staff clarified that WHS's recommendation is not to move forward with this proposal. It does not change, and a person can still carry a crossbow cocked with no bolt.
- c. Lt. Fawley added as a crossbow hunter; most modern-day crossbows cannot be discharged without having a bolt in them. Therefore, a safety feature requires that a bolt be inserted before discharge, ultimately making it more dangerous to require crossbow hunters to discharge a bolt every time.

- Motion:

1. Commissioner Keithley moved to support WHS not moving forward with the requirement that crossbows be uncocked when transported in a licensed vehicle proposal.
2. Commissioner Gulbrandsen seconded.
3. Motion carried with one abstention.

- Concept Proposal: To retain the Sea Duck Zone to allow hunting opportunities throughout its geographic extent during the regular duck season was presented. WHS's recommendation is to move this proposal forward as outlined.

- Q&A Section:

1. Commissioner Wagner asked what the difference is between the Sea Duck Zone and the Offshore Waterfowl Hunting Zone.
 - a. There are two waterfowl zones: Sea Duck Zone and the Offshore Waterfowl Hunting Zone. These zones overlap in large portions of the tidal waters of the State. However, these zones do not overlap perfectly. There are some cases where the Sea Duck Zone is more extensive than the Offshore Waterfowl Hunting Zone. Some notable locations include the mouth of the Chester River, Eastern Bay off of the Choptank Bay, the mouth of the Little Choptank Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean. A hunter has always been allowed to hunt sea ducks in these locations, but a hunter has never been allowed to hunt any other waterfowl species in these areas.
 - b. A hunter could hunt all legal waterfowl species in the Offshore Waterfowl Hunting Zone.
 - c. The only change is the Special Sea Duck Season which had a separate 60 days duck season from the regular duck season. If staff were to eliminate the Sea Duck Zone right now, we would lose hunting opportunities for any waterfowl species in the mouth of the Chester River, Eastern Bay off of the Choptank Bay, the mouth of the Little Choptank Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean.
 - d. The Sea Duck Zone is the only place hunters can pursue crippled ducks under power, a safety issue for the hunter. The hunter does not want to shut his motor off in big water.
2. Commissioner Gulbrandsen asked how the zone's existence is tied to the season's presence. Commissioner Gulbrandsen also wondered if it seems that action is needed to keep the zone in the absence of the season, was that the case or was it a public relation, clarifying that the zone still exists.
 - a. The purpose is both public relations and to tweak some State regulations to clarify that the zone still exists. For example, the regulation language links to the Sea Duck Seasons instead of the Sea Duck Zone. In doing so, the regulation language would read correctly. Additionally, the clarification will assist NRP officers.
 - b. Suppose the staff does not retain the Sea Duck Zone; in that case, hunters will lose hunters opportunities in the areas mentioned above and lose the ability for hunters to pursue cripples with power anywhere in the State.

- Motion:

1. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to endorse WHS's proposal to retain the Sea Duck Zone as presented.

2. Commissioner Wagner seconded.
3. Motion carried with one abstention.
- Staff recommended that the Commission approves the Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons as presented.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to endorse the Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons as presented.
 2. Commissioner Wagner seconded.
 3. Motion passed with one abstain.
- Staff summarized general public comments.

2022 Legislative Session Update – Associate Director Timothy Larney gave the presentation.

- The list of the Summary of 2022 Proposed Legislation Wildlife and Heritage Service as of March 15, 2022, was sent to the Commission before the meeting. [ATTACHMENT C]
- Associate Director Timothy Larney summarized the changes from the last meeting. [ATTACHMENT D].
- The Commission members could track the bills online at the Maryland General Assembly website at <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/>.
- Q&A Section:
 1. Commissioner Boyles Griffin asked if the staff knew the motivation behind HB1452 Female Deer Hunting Contests – Authorization.
 - a. Staff suggested that it may be to reverse the Office of Attorney General's opinion. Two years ago, Anne Arundel County Executive put what was deemed a bounty or a monetary incentive that violated the existing statute in 10-411 that said you cannot pay someone for the deer meat and cannot pay someone for each deer killed. The Office of Attorney General found that all these things counted as incentives and contests.
 - b. HB1452 is a statewide bill.

Natural Resources Police Update – Sergeant Bradley Lowe gave a presentation.

- Sergeant Lowe outlined the NRP activity for February. NRP statewide issued 173 citations and 651 warnings. In addition, there were 97 wildlife violations, 67 boating, 162 public lands, and 206 fisheries. Traffic violations total was 293. To further the wildlife breakdown: 68 laws, 28 regulations. In addition, there was one spotlighting case in Frederick County.
- Lt. Fawley drew attention to a citizen's complaint that involved 16 deer carcasses in Carroll County.
 1. The suspected shooter was tracked down. The person was issued 4 citations and 8 warnings for their violations. The citations involved hunting without permission, exceeding the antlered bag limit, violating antler point restriction, and false reporting information when reporting deer harvest. The warnings issued were the removal of hide and meat before check-in, exceeding bag limit in Region B, antler point restriction, failure to field tag, failure to record the confirmation number on the harvest record, exceeding the firearms season bag limit, harvesting more than one antler deer on the same day, exceeding the bonus antler deer bag limit, and failure to check-in within 24 hours. The person had one prior violation.
 2. Chairman Compton asked Lt. Fawley a series of questions related to the case.
 3. Lt. Fawley agreed to keep the Commission informed on the outcome of this case.

Maryland Farm Bureau Update – Maryland Farm Bureau Director of Government & Public Relations Colby Ferguson left the meeting early.

Old Business – No Report.

New Business

- Commissioner Wagner requested that the Commission discuss representation about Wildlife and Heritage Service-related bills at a future meeting. Commissioner Wagner suggested that something in writing should be delivered to the Department about the lack of testimony from the Wildlife and Heritage Service.
- Commissioner Wagner raised that Sunday waterfowl hunting should be discussed at a future meeting.
- Commissioner Wagner hoped to help the Department and the hunters resolve these issues.
- Chairman Compton deferred these topics to April 20, 2022, meeting for Commissioner Wagner to raise.
- Commissioner Keithley asked Director Peditto about an idea from Colorado related to vehicle registration. Commissioner Keithley admitted that he did not know much about it and requested further information.
 1. Director Peditto shared popular material that was given to him. The idea has raised a lot of money for Colorado. It is an annual pass to enter Colorado's parks at a significant discount. It would be a little tricky to implement for Wildlife Management Areas because Maryland does not charge a fee for those properties.
 2. Director Peditto submitted sources of information from different states to the Commission.
- Director Peditto reminded the Commission of their support of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act moves in Congress as bipartisan. The states are looking at around 1.3 billion dollars annually and in perpetuity.
- Director Peditto reminded the Commission about the status of the term on the Commission, mainly if you want to continue to serve on the Commission.
- Chairman Compton suggested Director Peditto sends us a term report in January. Director Peditto agreed to do so.

Public Comment

Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

The next meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, using Google Meet.

Attendance

Members:	L. Compton, T. Gregor, S. Boyles Griffin, E. Gulbrandsen, T.J. Jenkins, S. Keithley, J. Schroyer, and C. Wagner
Resign:	J. Michael
Absent:	
Guest:	J. Bevan-Dangel, C. Ferguson, and M. Sawyer
Staff:	B. Eyler, C. Fawley, B. Harvey, J. Homyack, T. Larney, B. Lowe, J. McKnight, P. Peditto, T. Spencer, H. Spiker, K. Stonesifer, and G. Timko



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

March 15, 2022

Mr. Luen N. Compton, Jr., Chair
Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission
Maryland Department of Natural Resources - Wildlife and Heritage Service
580 Taylor Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401
wac.dnr@maryland.gov

Re: Request to table the proposed expansion Maryland's black bear (*Ursus americanus*) hunting season

Dear Chair Compton and Members of the Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission:

On behalf of our supporters and members, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) thanks you for this opportunity to provide the Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission (WAC) with our perspectives on the Maryland Department of Natural Resource's proposal to "slow the growth of the statewide bear population" and to "limit expansion of resident bear populations in eastern counties" by expanding the current hunting season. Based on black bear mortality data the HSUS received from the DNR, we respectfully request that any proposed increase in bear-hunting opportunities be curtailed until an empirical count of Maryland's bear populations is conducted.

The last bear count was conducted in 2011—eleven years ago—and only in Garrett and Allegany counties. Data from the DNR since 2016 show:

- **The numbers of bears killed by hunters has trended downward significantly. Fig. 1.** (This potentially signals a decline in the population—**particularly since the acorn mast crops have failed or have been generally poor since 2017.**) Figs. 1 and 4.
- **The number of bear permits the DNR issues far exceeds the number of bears hunted.** (For example, in 2016, the DNR issued 750 permits and only 167 hunters killed bears; and in 2021, the DNR issued 950 black bear permits and only 54 hunters killed bears.) Figs. 1, 2 and 3.

In the absence of current empirical data on the status of the state's black bear population, downward trends in both hunting and non-hunting black bear mortality create enough uncertainty that it warrants a more prudent and conservative approach until the DNR has more data to explain these trends and confirm that the black bear population is not, in fact, declining. Because black bears hold immense social, intrinsic, and ecological value to the Maryland public, and current data trends indicate a potential decline in Maryland's bear population, we strongly oppose the proposed black bear hunt expansion and recommend that the WAC table the proposal until an empirical count is completed.

A. The DNR must census Maryland's black bears using sound science

Garshelis and Hristienko (2006) caution that many state wildlife managers fail to adequately investigate population sizes and trends, but rather rely on guesswork to estimate bear numbers.¹ Population trends must be determined using reliable methodologies; however, sightings, predation events, and kill levels are not reliable means to indexing a population.² Using the numbers of bears hunted and killed as a proxy for counting the live population of bears – has no public accountability associated with it and is also not based in sound science. In their study, Welfelt et al. (2019) found bear densities range widely by region, and that managers had overestimated the population of bears in



western Washington—including cubs—by 50%.³ The implications for Maryland are particularly salient, given that black bear habitat is also widely varied by region, and black bears are a forest obligate.⁴ Density estimates from studies conducted in optimal quality habitats where animals are abundant can be extrapolated only cautiously to larger areas with similar habitats and landscape characteristics.⁵ Figure 2 shows the numbers of bear permits the DNR has issued since 2014 compared to the number of bears hunted in Maryland. As permits surged, the number of bears hunted declined. This could indicate that even though ample opportunities for bear hunters exist, the numbers of permits are not in sync with the current Maryland bear population. Figure 2 also shows the numbers of bears who died in Maryland since 2014. Most died from illness, disease, vehicle strikes or were killed by poachers.

Females generally give birth to litters of cubs only every 2-3 years. Cub survival in one study was about 55%.⁶ Cubs die from many factors including vehicle collisions, predation or starvation. The intervals are dictated by both bear biology and weather and climate. Bears will keep their cubs to 15-24 months (or longer if they are underweight). But if there are droughts or frosts, bears' foods can be unavailable to them—which both reduces reproduction potential and increases the intervals between litters of cubs and cub survival itself.⁷ Thus, bears reproduce slowly,⁸ and are highly susceptible to overkill.⁹

Large-bodied carnivores such as black bears are sparsely populated across vast areas, invest in few offspring, provide extended parental care to their young and reproduce slowly. Bears are capable of self-regulation¹⁰ and are regulated by habitat and climatic conditions. Considering these biological factors, they rely on social stability to maintain resiliency.¹¹ Without social stability, bears can experience sexually selected infanticide; that is, when a resident, adult male is removed, subadult males vie for his home range and mates. These newcomers kill the adult male's offspring to spur females back into breeding so the newcomers can pass on their genetic materials.¹² Gosselin et al. (2015) state: "In species with sexually selected infanticide ("SSI"), hunting may decrease juvenile survival by increasing male turnover." This study and others show that hunting mortality can harm social organization of species, because it promotes male turnover and thus increases sexually selected infanticide upon cubs of deceased males.¹³ Wildlife agencies do not measure these added mortalities as a result of hunting a single bear.

Compared to other mammals, black bears are slow to reproduce. Generally, females are not considered to be adults until they are 3 to 6 years old, but females are capable of breeding until age 21.¹⁴ Fecundity varies with age:

- Female bears 5 years old or younger, or 17 years old or older, are typically barren or will give birth to only one cub.¹⁵
- Bears who are between 6 and 16 years old typically produce twins.¹⁶
- Females between 10-12 years old, the prime breeding age for black bears, are more likely to birth triplets if sufficient food is available to them—particularly natural foods.¹⁷
- Cub survival in one Colorado study was about 55%. Cubs die from many factors including vehicle collisions, predation or starvation.¹⁸

While inclement weather may explain some of the downward trend in the annual hunter kill,¹⁹ black bears' welfare is unknown because the state has not studied the bear population empirically using capture, mark, recapture methods since 2011.²⁰ For these reasons, before it expands the season on Maryland black bears, we respectfully request that the DNR investigate the sizes of Maryland's bear populations using sound, empirical study methods that involve capture, mark, recapture methods. Because the DNR has already invested in trail cameras, one



approach that is both cost effective and non-invasive, could be using facial recognition technology that has been used for brown bears (*Ursus arctos*) in Canada. Just using trail cameras alone, without facial recognition or hair snag DNA, is anecdotal data.

Fig. 1. Hunter kills and trend of hunter kills of Maryland black bears, 2016-2021

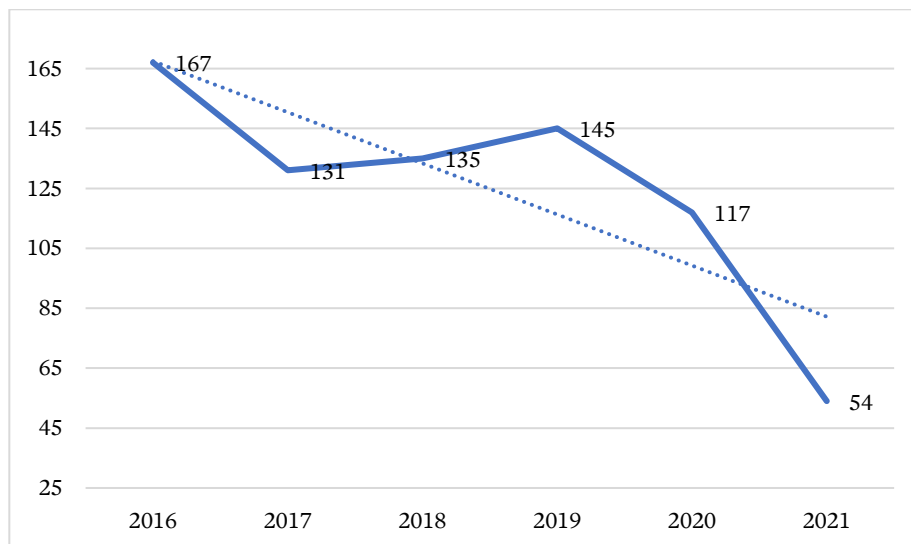


Fig. 2. Comparison of Maryland black bears hunted, non-hunter bear mortality, and bear-hunting permits for the years 2004 to 2021 (Data from the DNR). Permits issued jumped from 200 in 2004 to 950 in 2020.

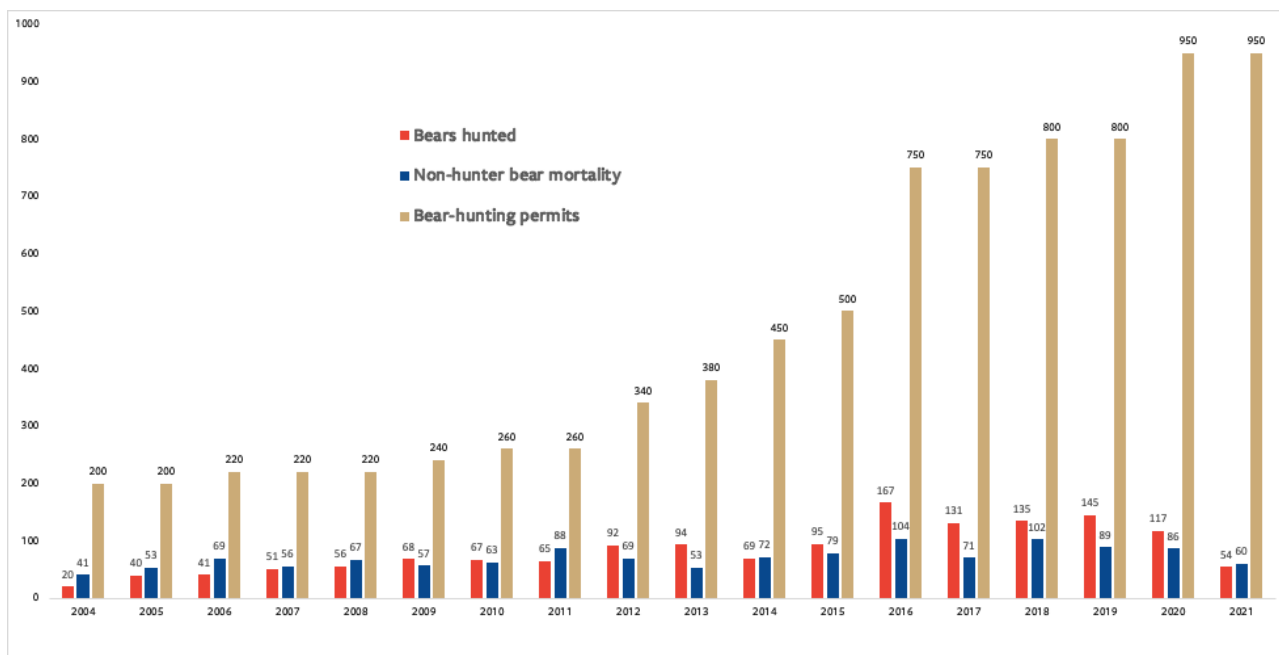
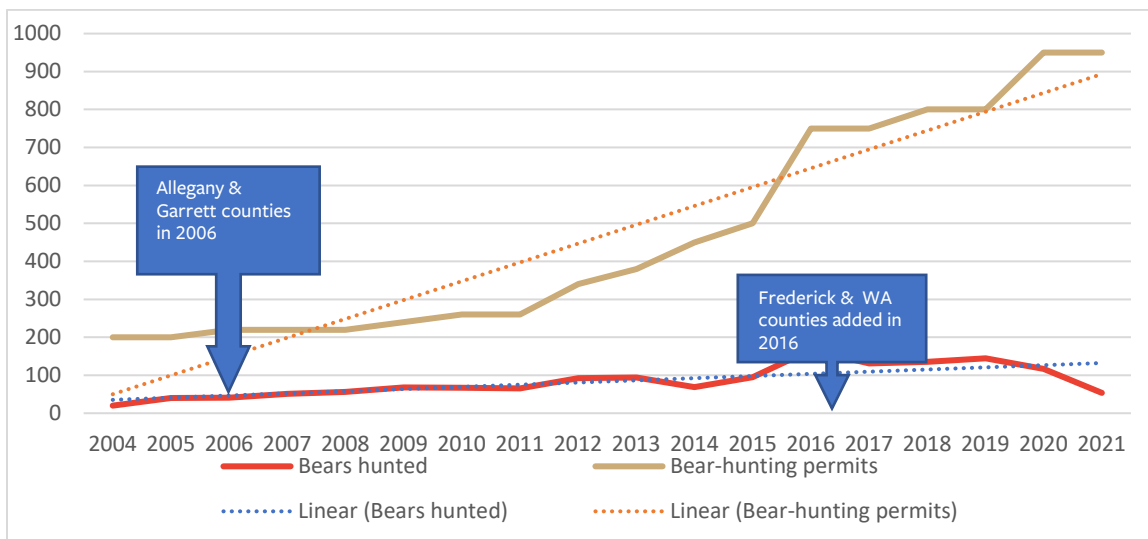




Fig. 3. Trends of Maryland black bears hunted to bear-hunting permits for the years 2004 to 2021



Black bear biologists also suggest that the total annual human-caused mortality that a black bear population can sustain is only between 4% and 10% of the population; more than that is super-additive mortality.²¹ In other words, when there is additive mortality, the population will decline in number, and sometimes that decline is unsustainable because of black bear biology. For example, female bears rarely migrate—they prefer to live near their natal areas, and this compounds the harms to their populations from hunting, vehicle collisions and other sources of mortality that affect their populations.²²

In sum, large carnivores face threats from various human factors, including hunting, poaching and other sources of direct mortality.²³ Expanded human development into bear habitats during the climate crisis exacerbates bear mortalities. Thus, the DNR should act to curb black bear mortalities, especially by legal hunting and poaching.²⁴ This resolves the heretofore unaccounted deaths due to sexually selected infanticide. The DNR must consider the best available science before an expanded bear hunt is implemented.

B. Mast data are important to gauge the welfare of black bears and wildlife

The DNR collects and analyzes mast crop data,²⁵ and for this, we commend the agency. This information is key to understanding if black bears and other wildlife have had sufficient food each year. Fig. 4. The DNR suggests these data may correlate to hunter success. It writes:

During years of mast shortage, wildlife managers typically observe higher harvest rates by forest game hunters as the fall movements of wildlife species become much more predictable and are of a greater frequency. Likewise, there is often an inverse relationship between hunter harvest rates and higher mast production in the forest. When the woods are rich in food production, game animals typically need not travel as far or often to find the resources they need and are therefore less likely to walk past an occupied hunting stand. Similarly, the amount of agricultural crop damage and the number of wildlife/vehicle



collisions are influenced by these same factors of food abundance. Each either increases or decreases inversely to the amount of natural food abundance.²⁶

DNR's table showing mast abundance (Fig. 3), provides that "mast failures" and "poor and spotty" mast crops have occurred in most counties since 2017 with only three exceptions. The DNR's black bear hunter kill data from 2017 to 2021 (Fig. 1) also show a decline in hunter success. This contradicts the DNR's supposition that mast failures result in "higher harvest rates by forest game hunters."²⁷ Notably, non-hunter bear mortality also declined during the period between 2018 and 2021. Fig. 2. This also seems to contradict the DNR's inverse hypothesis because starving bears would be on the move and more likely to be involved in deadly vehicle collisions.

Fig. 4. Mast abundance ratings in Western Maryland (2017-2021). Annual mast yields are classified according to the following rating system: I – Mast Failure, II – Poor and Spotty, III – Average, IV – Abundant, and V – Bumper.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
GARRETT					
<i>Black Oak</i>	II	I	I	I	II
<i>White Oak</i>	I	I	I	I	II
<i>Unit Average</i>	II	I	I	I	II
ALLEGANY					
<i>Black Oak</i>	II	I	III	I	I
<i>White Oak</i>	II	II	I	III	I
<i>Unit Average</i>	III	II	II	II	I
WASHINGTON					
<i>Black Oak</i>	II	I	II	V	I
<i>White Oak</i>	II	I	I	I	I
<i>Unit Average</i>	II	I	I	II	I
FREDERICK					
<i>Black Oak</i>	I	I	I	I	I
<i>White Oak</i>	I	I	I	I	I
<i>Unit Average</i>	I	I	I	I	I

The HSUS requested an explanation from the DNR on why the poor showing in mast data did not adhere to the norm of increasing both hunter and non-hunter mortality. The DNR confirmed that acorn production was low in 2021, but that red oak acorn production was reportedly high in areas outside of the DNR's study plots, and that hickory and soft mast production (e.g., pokeberry, grapes, persimmon, and others) may have also been exceptional. The HSUS has requested, but has not yet received, empirical data about red oak, hickory, pokeberry, grapes, and other mast crops.

The bottom line is that, in the absence of a current empirical data on the status of the state's black bear population, downward trends in both hunting and non-hunting black bear mortality create enough uncertainty that it warrants a more prudent and conservative approach (i.e., tabling the black bear hunt expansion) until the DNR has more data to explain these trends and confirm that the black bear population is not, in fact, declining.



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C. Expanding the bear hunt will not reduce conflicts, but bear-aware programs will

We commend the Maryland DNR for its black bear education program that focuses on humanely preventing conflicts from occurring in the first place, responding to the rare conflicts that do occur, and enforcing laws that protect the public and our wildlife. Biologists warn that we must co-adapt to, and share habitats with, large-bodied carnivores and be willing to assume the small amount of risk they pose if they are to persist.²⁸

For bear-aware education campaigns to achieve success, they must focus on bears' benefits to society. Researchers have found that education campaigns solely designed to change behaviors will fail, because changing human behavior is difficult. Authors note society's slowness to adopt smoking-cessation or seat-belt campaigns as illustrative. They also conclude that only a few will be motivated to make changes to accommodate bears, but to overcome this people must understand bears' benefits to society.²⁹ While food is the root cause of most negative human-bear interactions, Herrero et al. (2011) write: "Each year, millions of interactions between people and black bears occur without any injury to a person, although by 2 years of age most black bears have the physical capacity to kill a person."³⁰

Trophy hunting bears does not address human-bear conflicts or make people safer, because hunters are not killing the bears in people's back yards. Obbard et al. (2014) write: "We found no significant correlations between [black bear] harvest and subsequent HBC [human-bear conflicts]. Although it may be intuitive to assume that harvesting more bears should reduce HBC, empirical support for this assumption is lacking despite considerable research."³¹ Obbard et al. (2014) cite six studies in addition to their own findings (Garshelis 1989, Treves and Karanth 2003, Huygens et al. 2004, Tavss 2005, Treves 2009, Howe et al. 2010, Treves et al. 2010). Since Obbard et al. (2014) published, many other scientists (cited in the endnote citation here) have also confirmed that trophy hunting bears does not reduce conflicts with humans, but it can harm bear populations.³²

D. The Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission's bear management decisions should represent the values and attitudes of ALL Marylanders

The Maryland DNR's budget analysis document shows that in 2020 and 2021 record numbers of people recreated in outdoor parks resulting in park closures.³³ In comparison, only 1.9% of the Maryland public are paid hunting license holders,³⁴ and this number is in decline.³⁵ And of the \$5,511,424,000 spent on outdoor recreation in 2020 in Maryland, only 1.6% was devoted to hunting and trapping.³⁶ Far more was spent in various other, non-hunting outdoor activities as our Fig. 5 shows.

Figure 5. Outdoor recreational spending in Maryland in 2020, U.S. Bureau of Economics³⁷

Sample activities	Spending \$	Percent
Hunting and trapping	127,735,000	1.6
Games areas (includes golf & tennis)	224,248,000	4.1
RVing	162,929,000	3.0
Canoeing, kayaking, sailing and other boating	483,791,000	8.8
Travel and tourism	1,491,460,000	27.1
Total Outdoor Recreation	5,511,424,000	100.0



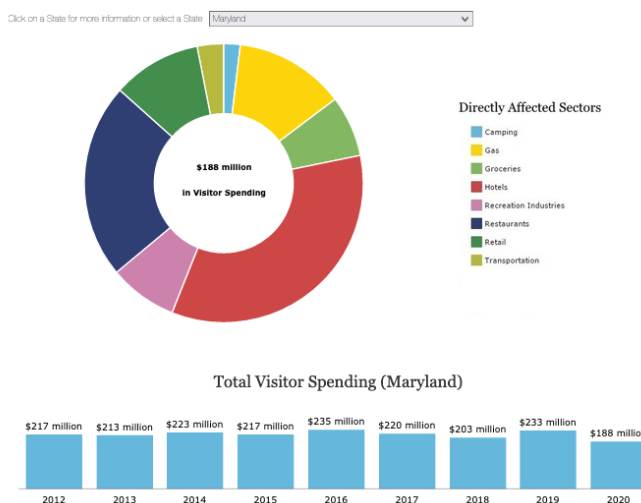
The National Park Service reports:

In 2020, 5.9 million park visitors spent an estimated \$188 million in local gateway regions while visiting National Park Service lands in Maryland. These expenditures supported a total of 2,370 jobs, \$94.2 million in labor income, \$160 million in value added, and \$253 million in economic output in the Maryland economy.³⁸ [Fig. 6.]

Additionally, in the landmark America’s Wildlife Values Project study, Manfredo et al. (2018) found that if a black bear were to attack a person, only 34% of Maryland residents polled would want that bear killed.³⁹ In other words, Marylanders hold a high tolerance and regard for black bears. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies advises that state wildlife agencies, “overcome barriers to broader relevance, public engagement and support” to avoid the loss of revenues that keep the agencies’ doors open.⁴⁰

Even pro-hunting and trapping entities such as the National Shooting Sports Foundation and Responsive Management have found that 66% of Americans disapprove of trophy hunting.⁴¹ More than two dozen polls commissioned by the Humane Society of the United States also find that about two-thirds of Americans dislike the trophy hunting, and some of those polls specifically queried the public about black bear hunting.⁴² For instance, our January 2022 poll found that 76% of Americans oppose the trophy hunting of black bears.⁴³

Fig. 6. National Park Lands’ Economic Contribution to the Maryland Economy⁴⁴



While some consume the meat and fat of bears, the pursuing and killing of bears is commonly described as “trophy hunting,” not only by other state agencies but also by a myriad of scholars.⁴⁵ Trophy hunters’ primary motivation is to kill black bears for photo opportunities and to obtain and display bear parts, including, heads, hides, claws and capes.⁴⁶ Trophy hunters kill animals *primarily* for bragging rights, but not for food. Hunting large carnivores for food is unsustainable.⁴⁷ Darimont et al. (2017) write:



First, inedible species, like carnivores commonly targeted by trophy hunters, make nutritional and sharing hypotheses implausible. Second, evidence for show-off behaviour appears clear. Trophy hunters commonly pose for photographs with their prey, with the heads, hides and ornamentation prepared for display.⁴⁸

Black bears are a highly valued American carnivore and one of the most photographed in the U.S.⁴⁹ Conflicts (or perceived conflicts) are often human-caused problems that are readily resolvable with bear-aware and bear smart campaigns. The DNR's must focus on the benefits of bears and devote far more energy to living with bears to align with mainstream Maryland values.

E. Black bears are highly sentient, hold intrinsic value and provide incalculable benefits to their ecosystems

Highly sentient, bears have the largest brain size of any carnivore.⁵⁰ Their intelligence has been compared to that of great apes; they are able to, for example, estimate quantities (count), assess moving stimuli and subsets of stimuli.⁵¹ They form close social attachments with kin.⁵² Cubs learn foraging styles from their mothers⁵³ and they spend prolonged periods raising and nurturing young.⁵⁴ They can use tools.⁵⁵ They have a right-paw bias while foraging.⁵⁶

Black bears are also not simply “solitary animals”– they operate in family units with resident males guarding their territories that contain multiple females and offspring. Those females invest considerable time raising their cubs and maintain bonds with their daughters even after the family breaks up. See the considerable literature cited here on sexually selected infanticide.

Black bears also hold intrinsic value, that is, they are inherently valuable beyond their benefits to society or even their ecosystems. A 2009 mailed survey to Ohio residents found that a supermajority of these residents, 82%, believed that *wildlife hold intrinsic value*, a result that included both hunters and trappers and non-consumptive users.⁵⁷ A 2019 study of adult U.S. residents also found that 81% believe that wildlife hold intrinsic value.⁵⁸ As Bruskotter et al. (2015) write, “. . . most people believe that wildlife possess ‘intrinsic value,’ which suggests that wildlife should be treated with regard for their own welfare, not just their utility (or lack thereof) to humans.”⁵⁹

Black bears are an important umbrella species that increases the biological diversity of their forest ecosystems. For example, black bears eat fruits and deposit them across long distances,⁶⁰ and disperse more seeds than birds.⁶¹ Bears cause small-scale ecological disturbances to the canopy that allow sun to filter to the forest floor creating greater biological diversity.⁶² Bears break logs while grubbing, which helps the decomposition process and facilitates the return of nutrients to the soil. They also recycle carrion.⁶³ In one study, researchers found that black bears were the dominant species moving salmon from streams into riparian zones. Bears ate about half of the salmon, leaving remnants that contributed to greater tree ring growth.⁶⁴ They also found higher plant growth along the riparian areas where bear trails existed and where bears' urine deposit was high.⁶⁵ When black bears are out of the den, they also protect gray foxes from competition with coyotes and bobcats, who avoid bears.⁶⁶ So in this way, bears create a non-lethal “trophic cascade,” meaning that bears indirectly benefit gray foxes. And by changing the makeup of the smaller carnivores in the ecosystem, this in turn can affect rodent populations and seed dispersal.⁶⁷



F. Conclusion

For the reasons stated herein, we respectfully request that the Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission table the black bear hunt expansion proposal until an empirical count of Maryland's black bear populations has been completed.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective on the management of Maryland's black bears. We welcome your thoughts and questions.

Sincerely,

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Senator Sarah Elfreth and Delegate Sandy Rosenberg, Co-Chairs,
Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review (AELR)

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- ⁵⁶ Reimchen and Spoljaric, "Right Paw Foraging Bias in Wild Black Bear (*Ursus Americanus Kermodei*)."
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- ⁶⁰ M. S. Enders and S. B. Vander Wall, "Black Bears *Ursus Americanus* Are Effective Seed Dispersers, with a Little Help from Their Friends," *Oikos* 121, no. 4 (2012).
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- ⁶⁴ T. E. Reimchen and C. H. Fox, "Fine-Scale Spatiotemporal Influences of Salmon on Growth and Nitrogen Signatures of Sitka Spruce Tree Rings," *Bmc Ecology* 13 (2013).
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Proposals: 2022-23 and 2023-24 Hunting Seasons



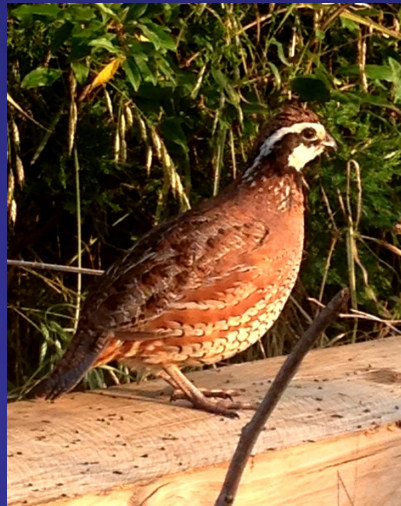
Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Wildlife and Heritage Service

Bobwhite Quail

Concept Proposal: Shorten the season in the Eastern zone (private lands) by one month so that the season would end on January 15.

Recommended Action: Recommend moving forward with proposal as presented.



Bobwhite Quail

Concept Proposal: Close the season on public hunting lands east of the Susquehanna River until populations improve.

Recommended Action: Recommend moving forward with proposal as presented.



Ruffed Grouse

Concept Proposal: Shorten the season by one month so that the season would end December 31.

Recommended Action: Recommend moving forward with proposal as presented.



White-tailed Deer

Concept Proposal: Add an additional day to the established antlerless white-tailed deer firearm season in Region A on private and public lands.

Recommended Action: Recommend moving forward with proposal as presented to include the second Saturday of the two-week season on private and public lands.



Black Bear

Concept Proposal: Increase black bear hunting opportunity by extending the existing season.

Recommended Action: Recommend moving forward with proposal as presented to include the Saturday at the end of the current Monday-Friday October season.



Tree stands

Concept Proposal: Allow hunters on public lands to leave their tree stands in place throughout the hunting season.

Recommended Action: We do not recommend moving this proposal forward.

Black Bear

Concept Proposal: Add a third bear management option for farmers experiencing bear damage so that they could receive an Agricultural Bear Crop Damage Permit to use when they are experiencing damage (often outside of the bear hunting season).

Recommended Action: Recommend moving forward with proposal as presented.

Deer Cooperator Permit

Concept Proposal: Expand the legal shooting days permitted under the authority of a Deer Cooperator Permit to permit operations January 15 through April 15.

Recommended Action: Recommend moving forward with proposal as presented.



Concept Proposal: Require crossbows to be uncocked when transported in a licensed vehicle.

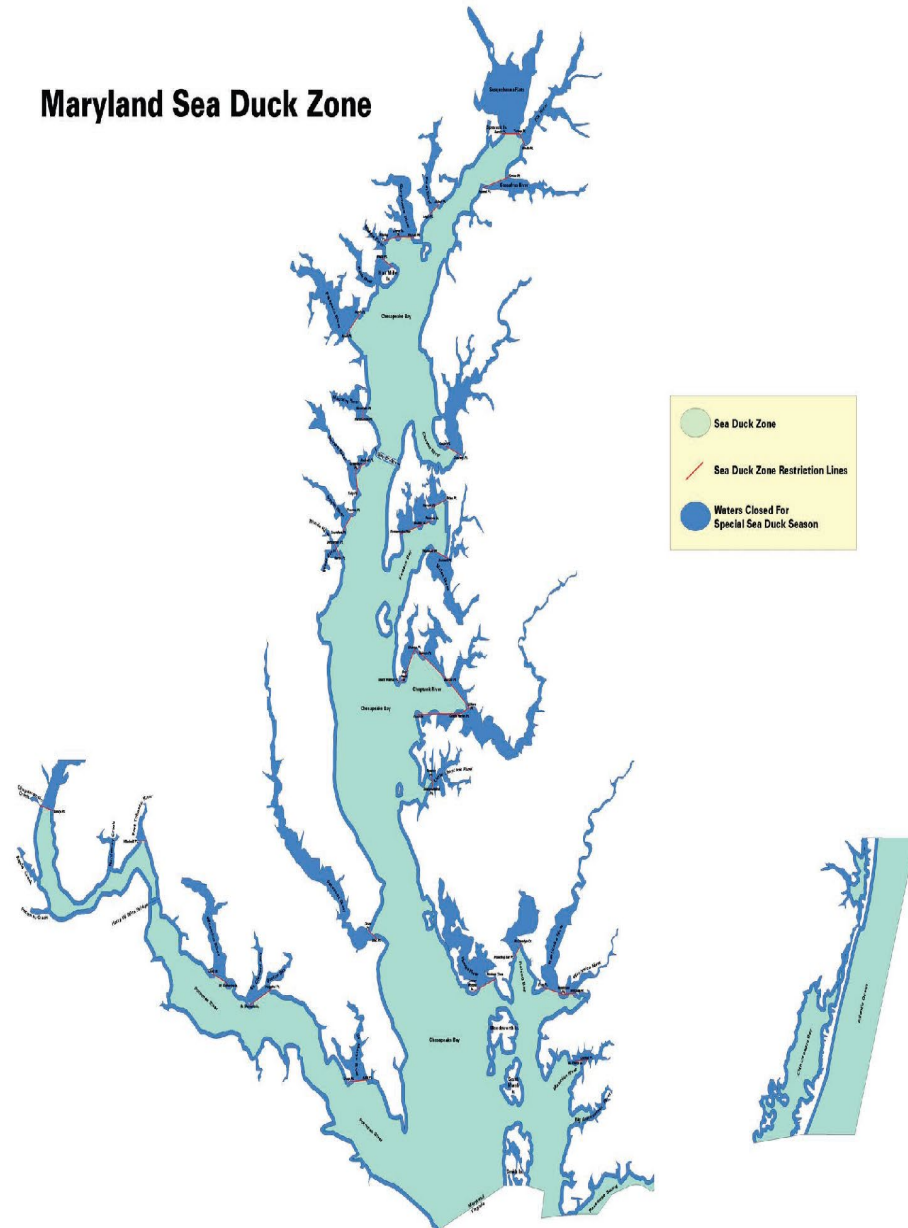
Recommended Action: We do not recommend moving this proposal forward.

Special Sea Duck Zone



- The Special Sea Duck Season is no longer an option in the Federal Frameworks.
- MD DNR has proposed retaining the Sea Duck Zone to allow hunting opportunity throughout its geographic extent during the regular duck season.
- Recommend retaining the SDZ.

Maryland Sea Duck Zone



Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons

- Most public comment referred to topics outside the Federal Frameworks, Maryland law or Maryland regulation.
- Applicable public comment was favorable.
- Recommend approving migratory game bird seasons as proposed.

Summary of General Public Comments

- Liberalize Atlantic Population (AP) Canada goose hunting seasons.
- Sunday hunting for migratory game birds.
- Hunt waterfowl in February.
- Establish a tundra swan season.
- Change zone boundaries.

Questions



**Summary of 2022 Proposed Legislation
Wildlife and Heritage Service
(as of March 15, 2022)**

Number/ Chapter (Cross File) Total: 38	Title	Primary Sponsor	Status	Original House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates	Opposite House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates
<u>HB0015</u> <u>(SB0007)</u>	Invasive and Native Plants – Classification, Listing, Use, and Sales and Use Tax	<u>Delegate Luedtke</u>	Hearing 1/26 at 1:00 p.m. (Ways and Means)	<u>Ways and Means</u> 1/26/2022 - 1:00 p.m. <u>Environment and Transportation</u>	
<u>HB0051</u> <u>(SB0140)</u>	Talbot County – Deer and Turkey Hunting – Sundays	<u>Delegate Mautz</u>	Hearing 3/11 at 2:00 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 3/11/2022 - 2:00 p.m.	
<u>HB0052</u> <u>(SB0381)</u>	Natural Resources – Wildlife Trafficking Prevention	<u>Delegate Love</u>	First Reading Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 1/19/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u>
<u>HB0143</u> <u>(SB0098)</u>	Somerset County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting	<u>Delegate Otto</u>	Hearing 2/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB0170</u> <u>(SB0220)</u>	Calvert County - Sunday Hunting	<u>Delegate Clark</u>	Hearing 2/02 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/2/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB0221</u> <u>(SB0665)</u>	Natural Resources – Healing Hunting and Fishing Fund – No–Cost Licenses and Stamps	<u>Delegate Thiam</u>	First Reading Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/2/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u>
<u>HB0485</u>	Montgomery County - Deer Hunting - Sundays MC 25-22	<u>Montgomery County Delegation</u>	Hearing 2/25 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/25/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB0514</u> <u>(SB0388)</u>	Charles County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting	<u>Charles County Delegation</u>	Hearing 3/11 at 2:00 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 3/11/2022 - 2:00 p.m.	
<u>HB0556</u> <u>(SB0342)</u>	Queen Anne’s County – Natural Resources – Sunday Hunting	<u>Delegate Arentz</u>	Hearing 2/18 at 11:00 a.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/18/2022 - 11:00 a.m.	
<u>HB0592</u> <u>(SB0497)</u>	Deer Management Permit - Hunting on State Land Leased by Permit Holder - Authorization	<u>Delegate Jacobs</u>	Hearing 2/18 at 11:00 a.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/18/2022 - 11:00 a.m.	
<u>HB0631</u>	Caroline County – Sunday Hunting – Authorizations	<u>Delegate Ghrist</u>	Unfavorable Report by Environment and Transportation; Withdrawn	<u>Environment and Transportation</u>	
<u>HB0672</u>	Worcester County – Turkey Hunting – Sundays	<u>Delegate Otto</u>	First Reading Environment and Transportation	<u>Environment and Transportation</u>	
<u>HB0682</u> <u>(SB0427)</u>	Baltimore County - Hunting - Nongame Birds and Mammals	<u>Delegate Brooks</u>	Hearing canceled	<u>Environment and Transportation</u>	
<u>HB0784</u>	Department of Natural Resources - Irreplaceable Natural Areas Program - Establishment	<u>Delegate Stein</u>	Favorable Report by Environment and Transportation	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/23/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	

**Summary of 2022 Proposed Legislation
Wildlife and Heritage Service
(as of March 15, 2022)**

Number/ Chapter (Cross File) Total: 38	Title	Primary Sponsor	Status	Original House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates	Opposite House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates
<u>HB0875</u>	Hunting and Fishing - Recreational License Fees - Moratorium	<u>Delegate Cox</u>	Unfavorable Report by Environment and Transportation; Withdrawn	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/23/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB0884</u>	State Conservation Land - Old-Growth Forests - Protection	<u>Delegate Gilchrist</u>	Hearing 2/25 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 2/25/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB0934</u>	Gasoline-Powered Leaf Blowers - Sale, Offering for Sale, and Use - Prohibition	<u>Delegate Foley</u>	Unfavorable Report by Economic Matters; Withdrawn	<u>Economic Matters</u> 2/25/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB0956</u>	Natural Resources - Recreation on Private Land - Hunting	<u>Delegate Clark</u>	Hearing 3/02 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 3/2/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB1067</u>	Natural Resources - Wildlife Management - Nighttime Hunting	<u>Delegate Stein</u>	Hearing 3/02 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 3/2/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB1279</u>	Sunday Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones - Statewide Authorization and Establishment	<u>Delegate Hornberger</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 2:15 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 3/9/2022 - 2:15 p.m.	
<u>HB1298</u> <u>(SB0960)</u>	Natural Resources - Hunting and Fishing Offenses - Expungement	<u>Delegate Ghrist</u>	Hearing 3/08 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Judiciary</u> 3/8/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>HB1304</u>	Natural Resources - Offshore Blind Sites - Licensing Process	<u>Delegate Mautz</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 2:15 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 3/9/2022 - 2:15 p.m.	
<u>HB1386</u>	Natural Resources - Black Bear Hunting - Permit Requirements	<u>Delegate Cox</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 2:15 p.m.	<u>Environment and Transportation</u> 3/9/2022 - 2:15 p.m.	
<u>HB1465</u> <u>(SB0982)</u>	Kent County - Archery Hunting - Safety Zone	<u>Delegate Jacobs</u>	First Reading House Rules and Executive Nominations	<u>Rules and Executive Nominations</u>	
<u>SB0007</u> <u>(HB0015)</u>	Invasive and Native Plants - Classification, Listing, and Use	<u>Senator Elfreth</u>	Hearing 3/23 at 1:00 p.m. (Ways and Means)	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u> 1/25/2022 - 1:30 p.m. <u>Budget and Taxation</u>	<u>Ways and Means</u> 3/23/2022 - 1:00 p.m. <u>Environment and Transportation</u>
<u>SB0042</u>	Natural Resources - Canada Geese - Bag Limits	<u>Senator Bailey</u>	Hearing canceled	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u>	
<u>SB0098</u> <u>(HB0143)</u>	Somerset County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting	<u>Senator Carozza</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u> 3/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0140</u> <u>(HB0051)</u>	Talbot County – Deer and Turkey Hunting – Sundays	<u>Senator Eckardt</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental</u>	

**Summary of 2022 Proposed Legislation
Wildlife and Heritage Service
(as of March 15, 2022)**

Number/ Chapter (Cross File) Total: 38	Title	Primary Sponsor	Status	Original House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates	Opposite House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates
				<u>Affairs</u> 3/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0160</u>	Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting - Migratory Game Birds	<u>Senator Carozza</u>	First Reading Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u>	
<u>SB0220</u> <u>(HB0170)</u>	Calvert County – Sunday Hunting	<u>Calvert County Senators</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u> 3/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0233</u> <u>(HB0874)</u>	Prince George’s County – Natural Resources – Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones	<u>Senator Jackson</u>	Hearing canceled	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u>	
<u>SB0342</u> <u>(HB0556)</u>	Queen Anne's County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting	<u>Senator Hershey</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u> 3/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0388</u> <u>(HB0514)</u>	Charles County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting	<u>Senator Jackson</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u> 3/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0427</u> <u>(HB0682)</u>	Baltimore County - Hunting - Nongame Birds and Mammals	<u>Senator West</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u> 3/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0497</u> <u>(HB0592)</u>	Deer Management Permit - Hunting on State Land Leased by Permit Holder - Authorization	<u>Senator Gallion</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u> 3/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0582</u>	Natural Resources - Recreation on Private Land - Hunting	<u>Senator Bailey</u>	Hearing 3/09 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs</u> 3/9/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0960</u> <u>(HB1298)</u>	Natural Resources - Hunting and Fishing Offenses - Expungement	<u>Senator Bailey</u>	Hearing 3/17 at 1:00 p.m.	<u>Judicial Proceedings</u> 3/17/2022 - 1:00 p.m.	
<u>SB0982</u> <u>(HB1465)</u>	Kent County - Archery Hunting - Safety Zone	<u>Senator Hershey</u>	First Reading Senate Rules	<u>Rules</u>	

Wildlife and Heritage Service
Legislative Update
March 16, 2022

New Bills Introduced Since Last Meeting

- **Senate Bill 982: Kent County - Archery Hunting - Safety Zone**

The purpose of the Bill is to alter the safety zone for archery hunting down to 75 yards. Sponsored by Senator Hershey.

- **HB 1452: Female Deer Hunting Contests - Authorization**

The purpose of the Bill is to allow a person to sponsor, conduct, or participate in a contest that has the objective of killing a female deer for monetary rewards. Sponsored by Delegate Mautz and Adams.

Bills Which Have Been Withdrawn

- **HB 631: Caroline County - Sunday Hunting**

- **HB 875: Hunting and Fishing - Recreation License Fees**

Moratorium