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September 15, 2011

**House Game and Fisheries Committee – Public Testimony
Topic – Sunday Hunting**

Good evening Mr. Chairman, esteemed committee members and fellow sportsmen and women.

My name is Janet Nyce. I live in Montgomery County and have held a Pa hunting license for the past 47 years. Hunting changed my life in ways that are hard to describe, but, because of that passion I have been a volunteer activist and mentor for the past 35 years.

For the past eight years I have had the privilege to sit on the Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation. Within that appointment I was also given the opportunity to be the Advisor to the Governor's Youth Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation. These young council members are from age 14 years to graduation from high school. I met with them every other month and for several special occasions such as Hunting Heritage Lobby days and a trip to Washington, D.C., to talk to federal legislators about Pennsylvania issues. I would like to mention at this time that during the eight year tenure both councils voted in favor of Sunday hunting and sent letters to the Governor's office and to the Game & Fisheries committees. Every year we came to Hunting Heritage lobby day and promoted Sunday hunting.

I have enclosed with my testimony the white paper that was written by the Governor's Advisory Council in 2005, a copy of the figures that sportsmen pump into the economy, an article called "Helping Kids Outdoors", the topics list from the Youth Council that show youth involvement, a map from the National Rifle Association showing the states that embrace Sunday hunting, a study that the Youth Council was involved in called the "Top 5 Challenges", "Expanding Hunting-Related Tourism Economy" and, a very personal letter that I have written to my children, none of which I will read out loud this evening, but, are for your information.

I attended a meeting a few years ago, of the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, on the results of the study that revealed their findings on the economic benefits of Sunday hunting. I believe the bullet points that were listed in that report are still valid today. There was also a white paper written by the Bureau of Tourism on the positive impacts of Sunday hunting and the benefits to the "cottage" industry that develops in user friendly areas.

So, I'm going to approach this in a different manner. Let's talk about the TRUTH about Sunday hunting. As a woman hunter I am already a minority. I resent also being a second-class citizen by not being able to choose what I wish to do on a Sunday with an activity that is a mainstay in our lives. Why are hunters being treated differently from everything else? We all know that one of the biggest obstacles for families and youth are time. (Refer to Top 5 Challenges) The current Blue Law restricts our opportunities and makes it harder for families and youth to find the time to hunt and trap. They can fish on a Sunday since 1937, you can buy liquor, play golf, go to the mall, do anything you wish,

but, hunt. Its discrimination in its finest form and I'm really very tired of it. I've been behind the push for Sunday hunting for two decades at least! My husband and I have traveled the country for years and hunted on Sunday's where ever we go to increase the time we can spend on the hunt. But, not at home.

We have six grandchildren. We spend much of our leisure time introducing them to the outdoors and to the heritage and legacy that we taught their parents. Along with that we are creating memories that will last a life time, teaching respect of our natural resources, helping them to understand that they must become strong stewards and civic leaders in their futures. I despise watching them sit on a sofa watching TV and playing Game Boy at the same time – it's not healthy and it creates a lazy child. On Sunday morning a round of sporting clays, some crows and, if you're lucky, a coyote, is all we can offer right now – help us change that.

We hobble our future with the barrier of no hunting on Sundays. We need to put on wide angle lens glasses to see what our grandchildren will be left with – if anything. Look what a day in the field with family gives, so many lessons which I have listed in the Letter to My Children attached to this testimony.

How many hunters have you heard say that they're working on Saturday morning, not getting to camp until mid-afternoon and then are unable to have a full day on Sunday. Are we being sent a subliminal meaning from our state government that hunting isn't important enough or legitimate enough? States that have Sunday hunting, where my family often goes in the fall, have no horror stories to tell, no declining wildlife issues, Church attendance remains the same, and land owners have a choice to post their property if they so choose. I want the same rights – to choose the days I hunt and am afield with my family and friends.

Another concern – what will happen to the North American Wildlife model? Hunters raise approximately 80% of all the money raised through back tags and excise taxes. They carry the load for conservation. If recruitment continues to decline and we don't make the effort to *really* recruit the next generations of youth what proposal will you, as a legislator, come up with? How will we replace this funding and the passionate people like you and like me who will safe guard and protect our natural resources? I have full confidence in the Board of Commissioners from the Pa Game Commission to set appropriate seasons and bag limits, per their mission.

I feel discouraged that the Pa Farm Bureau continues to fight against Sunday hunting, when they have been issued crop depredation allowances to kill deer on Sunday – that's right, the Game Code says 24/7. Maybe it's time to re-look at all of the special tags that are given out to special interest groups and re-evaluate their benefit to the hunting community.

This is about being discriminated against. This is about not having personal choice with a time honored legacy. This is about allowing a group of nay-sayers to control our lives. This is about a barrier that I can't fix when my grandchildren look at me and ask "well, Mema, why can't we stay and hunt this Sunday?"

In my humble opinion, the most significant barrier to hunting and recruitment in Pennsylvania remains the prohibition on Sunday hunting. I implore you to have the courage to set this right.

Thank you, very much, for the opportunity to speak with you all this evening.



Council Position Paper

The Benefits of Expanded Sunday Hunting in Pennsylvania

June 14, 2005

Governor, your Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation would like to communicate its strong support for allowing expanded Sunday hunting opportunities in Pennsylvania. At our meeting in Erie last year, council voted unanimously to support legislation that would repeal and/or relax the current prohibition on Sunday hunting found in section 2303 of Title 34 (Game). Currently, Sunday hunting is limited to the pursuit of crows, foxes and coyotes and to hunting activities on non-commercial regulated shooting grounds.

According to the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance, 39 states now allow Sunday hunting while 11 states prohibit or heavily restrict it. Both Ohio and New York allow Sunday hunting and Maryland just passed legislation to allow Sunday deer hunting. The New Jersey General Assembly recently moved a bill from committee to allow Sunday bowhunting during the regular archery season. Today, Pennsylvania is nearly surrounded by states that have worked proactively to allow expanded Sunday hunting.

While there are numerous reasons for supporting this idea, council would like to focus your attention on just three.

First, Pennsylvania depends on hunters as a primary means of support for our state wildlife agency, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, which does not receive any General Fund revenue. Unfortunately, according to Federal Aid data, the number of hunting licenses sold in Pennsylvania has decreased from 1,274,763 in 1980 to 1,017,802 in 2003. It stands to reason that if we continue to lose hunters, we could have even more problems finding adequate support for the commission – license sales, which are projected to continue their decline, will provide less revenue, even as costs continue to escalate. At some point, the state may have to step in and support the agency and/or the legislature (and your office) will be asked to increase fees on a dwindling pool of license buyers. While Sunday hunting won't, in and of itself, solve the revenue problems at the Commission, we believe overall license sales would be positively affected.

Council feels strongly that part of the answer to the Game Commission's fiscal dilemma is to provide hunters with the opportunity to pursue their sport through the weekend. According to a recent study by Responsive Management about hunting participation in Pennsylvania, 38 percent of Pennsylvania's hunters (both lapsed and active) said that they'd hunt more/ hunt again if more opportunities existed for Sunday hunting. Imagine what 380,000 hunters could do for our economy if they were permitted to hunt on Sunday! Envisioning this scenario leads to our second point.

As you know, hunters are already a powerful economic force in Pennsylvania. According to the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, hunters had retail expenditures of over \$1.1 billion and created 19,204 jobs in 2001. These jobs created salaries and wages of over \$521 million, generating over \$65 million in state tax revenue and over \$89 million in the form of federal income tax. What kind of economic loss do we suffer because we don't allow hunting seven days a week? Stay tuned. The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee will be issuing a report later this week evaluating this and other similar questions. Obviously, hunting-related expenditures are important for our rural communities, especially in the Northern tier. And since 2001, our

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appetite for outdoor goods has enticed major sporting goods retailers like Cabela's, Bass Pro Shops and Gander Mountain to locate in the Commonwealth, stimulating even more economic growth.

Lastly, perhaps the most significant problem council has identified is that our society is experiencing severe problems in terms of recruiting and retaining hunters, especially young hunters. According to the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, youth participation in hunting declined by 26 percent between 1990 and

2000. This sharp decline could pose wildlife management problems in the not too distant future with respect to deer and possibly bear in some areas.

Our recruitment problems are largely demographic in nature. Because nearly all youth are initiated into hunting and fishing by an adult, the implications of an aging population present additional challenges. According to Responsive Management, as the U.S. population ages and participation rates in hunting and fishing decrease, there will be a smaller proportion of the population to initiate youth into hunting and fishing. Another demographic hurdle is the increase in the percentage of households that are urban and the decrease in the percentage of households that are rural. Finally, the proportion of two-parent families in the U.S. in which both parents work has increased, as has the number of hours that wage earners work per week.

These trends have major implications on the amount of available time to go hunting and fishing. Indeed, research has shown that lack of time is one of the most important constraints to hunting and fishing participation. When asked why they did not hunt more often, 50 percent of youth who had hunted in the previous year answered "not enough time." When this same group was asked what took away from their hunting satisfaction, they commonly said "not enough time."

For individuals who could dedicate an entire weekend to hunting, providing them with another weekend day would nearly double their time afield annually, helping solve age old problems with crop damage and forest regeneration and promoting weekend tourism to rural communities that desperately need the added spending.

While most of the demographic problems outlined above are difficult to influence, we have an opportunity to give people more time by simply doing away with an antiquated Blue Law, as was done in 1937 when the ban on Sunday fishing was lifted.

Currently, there are three bills introduced in the House of Representatives that council would like to call your attention to. While we would prefer to see the ban on Sunday hunting lifted entirely, we support any effort that would bring relief.

House Bill 904, PN 1026, introduced by Representative Staback, removes all prohibitions against Sunday hunting that are now in statute and, thereby, gives the PA Game Commission complete regulatory authority to decide if, when and where hunting on any given Sunday can occur.

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House Bill 934, PN 1055, introduced by Representative Hanna, adds commercial regulated shooting grounds to the list of exemptions currently found in Title 34. If enacted, individuals who operate commercial regulated shooting grounds would be able to conduct business on Sunday.

House Bill 417, PN 442, introduced by Representative Godshall, adds groundhogs to the list of exemptions currently found in Title 34.

Finally, Representative Gergely introduced legislation last session to allow for Sunday waterfowl hunting and deer hunting in certain urban counties. He intends to reintroduce this legislation in the near future.

As you know, this is a controversial issue and while there are those who will argue aggressively that we should maintain the status quo, council felt it was important to communicate how beneficial we believe Sunday hunting could be to the future of wildlife management, our economy and to the growth and preservation of our outdoor traditions.

There are those who adamantly oppose the expansion of Sunday hunting, including the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs. Likewise, many individuals who enjoy hiking, bird watching and other forms of outdoor recreation on Sunday, have safety concerns; they believe they're entitled to having one day of the week free of the fear of being accidentally shot. There are also many people

who oppose Sunday hunting for religious reasons. While this position paper is obviously biased, we wanted to inform you that the issue of allowing expanded Sunday hunting is emotionally charged and has many critics.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to help support and strengthen our hunting, trapping and fishing heritage. We'd be more than pleased to discuss this, or any other related issue with you, and we look forward to seeing you again in the near future.

-Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members-

Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation

Janet D. Nyce

Our Hunting Heritage: A Letter to my Children

Dear Kids:

This letter to you is about hunting...and it is about life...when you learn to read between the lines. Being a good hunter represents closeness to life and death, so I thought this letter might be a way for me to be closer to you as we face life and death struggles together. Even if you don't become a hunter, I think that you will understand the underlying reasons for what I have to say. I am one of your elder's. It is my job to instill you with my learned wisdom.

Hunting may cause death, but it really is a lesson in living. How better can we understand our place in the natural living world than as a participant? In hunting and in life you learn that you should give much more than you should take.

Hunters know that land produces an excess of life to make up for losses from weather, diseases, accidents and predation where one animal survives from the death of another. Hunters become part of the natural system by taking some of that surplus for themselves. We have to be careful not to take too much, but with management today, that isn't a real problem.

This letter isn't about wildlife management however; it is about responsible hunters -- especially you and me. If you take part of Mother Nature's surplus through the hunt, remember that death is sacred. Respect the animal in life and death and treat it with dignity. You may feel sadness and joy simultaneously when death comes. You see beauty, dormancy, and change. Just remember that leaves bud again, wildlife reproduces and you benefit from the association. If you give wildlife a fair chase, you will likely experience much more joy than sadness.

Most hunters advance in stages from intense activities to more appreciative activities. Hunters initially want to shoot, shoot, shoot then finally, they become mellow and thoughtful sportsmen. In between, they seek to "limit out," then become selective for better trophies or perhaps take up specialties such as waterfowling, archery or turkey hunting. You'll experience those stages too -- in hunting -- and in life.

Just as with life, hunting isn't easy. Your accomplishments may be few. They will improve when you learn the virtues of planning and persistence. Don't give up. As you set higher goals, you may feel the exhilaration of competition, but it should be only within yourself as you become part of the natural living system. Become the best that you can be. Success will follow. As you learn, help others see your path.

Know the habits of animals and their interrelationships with the environment. Read the environment like a book. She will teach you more than you can imagine.

Be grateful for the shadows. They protect your vision and help you to be less visible. The animals know this also, so beware. Don't hurry; listen to the language of the forest.

Sunlight is also your friend. It lights your way, warms your enthusiasm, and it betrays

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your quarry. It also can betray you...so don't bask in the glory too long.

Understand when enough is enough and don't feel obligated to get your bag limit. Yet, show enough persistence and dedication to harvest the rewards of your efforts. One day you may set standards for a big buck, all male ducks in the bag or a young elk that will taste a little better than the older, bigger trophy.

Dogs may become more important to you than just pets. Train them to the best of their ability because it is best for them and you will enjoy hunting more. They become someone to talk to and someone to admire. They will share your passion for the outdoors.

You may not always be admired. Onlookers may not understand. Hunting is not a sport for spectators, but others do watch, so be sure that your behavior is always top rate. You'll be watched by other hunters, landowners and townsfolk. Your friends, spouses and work associates will have a variety of expectations for you. Anti-hunters will question your morality, your progress towards civilization and above all they will think that you don't care about animals. That will hurt! We care about them more than most know is possible.

There are no rites of passage, no referees, and no coaches to guide you in the hunting field -- only yourself, and that requires you to show responsibility. You'll need to be safe with firearms at home, in the car and while afield, but firearms are harmless in themselves -- careless people cause accidents. The rifle or gun will become tools to take into the field and forests, but if firearms should ever rise in importance over animals, sunsets, or the mist on the river, then stop and take a look at yourself. Artificial targets in artificially lighted ranges may be where you belong. Pass gun safety on to all you know and don't tolerate anything but that.

Letters must eventually come to an end. And my influence with you will gradually end. Will there be time to teach you about the coyote and the ridge he runs the way your father taught me? There are so many distractions now a days, so many easier ways to spend our time. Perhaps we will put off hunting as partners until it is too late. Our hunting heritage could fade if we aren't careful. Parents and children have big responsibilities not to let important traditions to become lost.

You may never become a hunter. I am fine with that. Perhaps you saw me leave one too many cold mornings before even a winter bird dared to leave the warmth of the flock. Maybe I missed too many games in pursuit of meetings, sunrises and the chase and you don't want that to happen in your family. That's fair enough. But, I hope that you will never get so busy or have a life filled with passive indoor pursuits that you forsake the outdoors where you are a participant in basic life and death marvels rather than a mere observer.

It would be a shame to think that MTV, video games or pursuit of career and finances would shield you from the pleasures of seeing geese in flight toward your decoys or songbirds landing on the bird feeder. The 4 wheeler can never replace early morning walks along the river or hikes in Perry County. As toddlers you roamed the ridge with us and the pets to learn about the animals, their sign, their habitats and their voices.

Our dogs, your Father and I, probably saw the last pheasants in those city fields where

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corn has stopped growing. The fields have become high tech centers for progress. I saw the pheasants because I was a hunter. If you aren't a hunter perhaps you won't have reason to look. Now, in today's urban sprawl conditions, I spend a great deal of time helping people create pheasant habitat and programs. Would you rather they disappear from our landscape?

Without you and me, who will be certain that bobwhite have enough grain, good habitat and practical management? Who will care where the elk go when spooked from the meadow? Will ducks continue to migrate if you and I don't provide for their nesting and wintering areas?

Those before us didn't worry about bison and passenger pigeons until it was too late. They didn't worry about digging mines deep into the earth and releasing acid into our streams, so nothing could live there. Our grandfathers finally learned from the past mistakes and restored some wildlife and habitats while there was still time. They left us with the responsibility to carry on and fix the rest. Will you? Can we live without wild things and wild places?

Hunting might help us to see the future better, because, hunters must always look ahead, to the point of a likely covey flush, the landing spot for ducks, or the brush on the hill where deer and rabbits must hide. Hunters will want those patches of cover, quality river systems, trees that provide food and diverse forests that benefit all wildlife.

Hunting taught me to care about animals, landscapes and people. I want you to care too. You don't have to hunt to understand the hunter in your home; you can be part of this fraternity by your interest and your commitment to being part of nature's circle of life. There is so much more I can share with you, if you take the time and you ask the question.

I would appreciate it so much, if you would print this for each one of my grandchildren. When I am gone and they are grown, it will give them a story to tell their own. Tradition, a legacy, heritage, pride.....family

Sincerely and with Love,

Janet D. Nyce

Hunter; Conservationist, Activist, but most importantly

Your Loving Mother

**Written at a CLFT workshop in Illinois 2000*

The exercise was to express your passion of hunting to your children. Phrasing suggestions by Dr. Del Benson, Colorado University.

Pennsylvania sportsmen

1.4 million hunters & anglers spending \$9.6 million a day



TOTAL SPENDING \$3.5 billion

Casting
benefits
throughout
the economy.

- Sportsmen support more jobs in Pennsylvania than Penn State University and the Philadelphia Airport combined (51,000 jobs vs. 45,000).
- Annual spending by Pennsylvania sportsmen is more than the revenues of York-based BonTon Stores (\$3.5 billion vs. \$3.1 billion).
- Annual spending by Pennsylvania sportsmen is more than the cash receipts from dairy products, cattle, greenhouse/nursery, mushrooms and broilers - the state's top five grossing agricultural commodities (\$3.5 billion vs. \$3.1 billion).
- Pennsylvania sportsmen spend \$104 million annually on outboard boats and engines to get out on the water and around the rivers for fishing and hunting.
- Pennsylvania sportsmen outnumber the combined populations of Allentown, Erie, Pittsburgh, Reading, and Scranton, two to one (1.4 million vs. 680,297).

Lots of bang. Even more bucks.

Jobs	51,000
Salaries and wages	\$1.7 billion
Federal Taxes	\$411 million
State and Local Taxes	\$371 million
Ripple Effect	\$5.5 billion



CSF and NASC are the most respected and trusted hunting and fishing organizations in the political arena. With support from every major hunting and fishing organization, we are the leader in promoting sportsmen's issues with elected officials. CSF works directly with the bi-partisan Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus in the U.S. Congress; NASC works with affiliated state sportsmen's caucuses in state legislatures around the country.

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation 202-543-6850 www.sportsmenslink.org

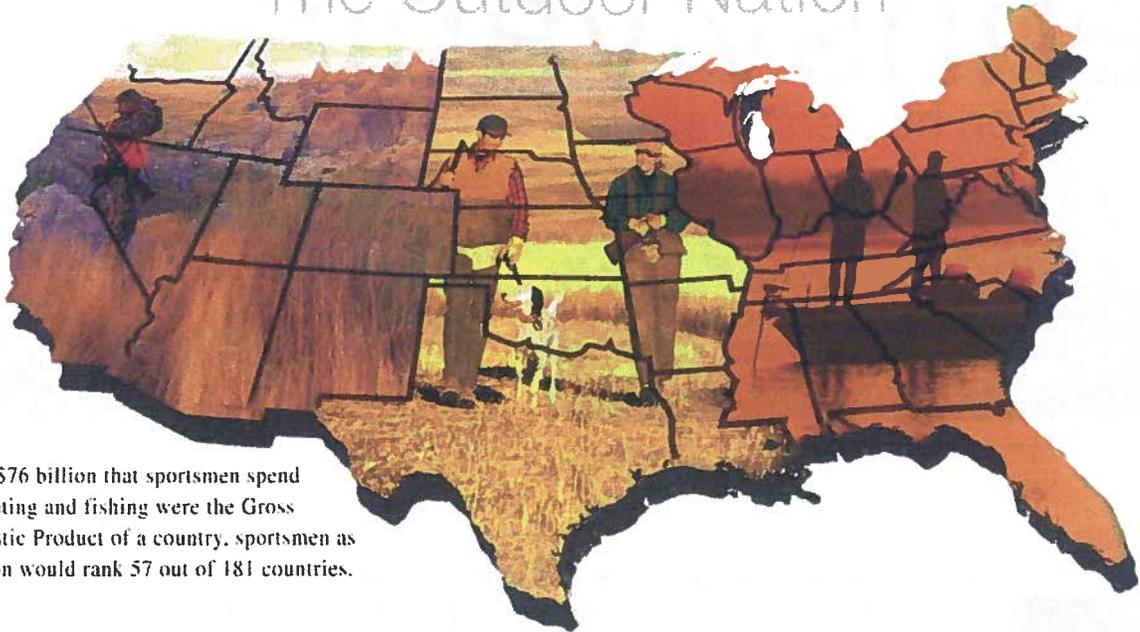
In partnership with



National Marine Manufacturers Association



The Outdoor Nation



If the \$76 billion that sportsmen spend on hunting and fishing were the Gross Domestic Product of a country, sportsmen as a nation would rank 57 out of 181 countries.

PARTICIPATION	SPENDING	JOBS	SALARIES/WAGES	FEDERAL STATE & LOCAL TAXES
Sportsmen 34 million	\$76 billion	1.6 million	\$60 billion	\$25.6 billion
Anglers 30 million	\$42 billion	1 million	\$38 million	\$16.4 billion
Hunters 12.5 million	\$23 billion	600,000	\$21 billion	\$9.2 billion

Every single state makes a contribution through revenue, taxes, and jobs. Here are the facts on Pennsylvania's anglers and hunters.

PARTICIPATION			SPENDING		
		RANK			RANK
Resident sportsmen	1.4 million	# 5	Sportsmen	\$3.5 billion	# 4
Resident anglers	830,000	# 12	Fishing	\$1.8 billion	# 6
Resident hunters	933,000	# 2	Hunting	\$1.7 billion	# 2
Out of state hunters	111,000	# 4			
Out of state anglers	164,000	# 17	JOBS		
Days afield	16 million	# 1	Sportsmen	51,000	# 6
Days on the water	17.1 million	# 6	Fishing	23,000	# 8
			Hunting	28,000	# 2



The majority of all sportsmen consider themselves "likely voters" and 8 in 10 say that a candidate's position on sportsmen's issues is important in determining for whom they will vote.

If all hunters and anglers living in Pennsylvania voted in the 2004 presidential election, they would have equaled 38% of the entire vote.

1 out of 7 residents hunt or fish.

www.sportsmenslink.org

*A respondent who is both a hunter and an angler is counted in each category, but only once for total participation numbers.

**Money spent on an item for both hunting and fishing is only counted for in the total spending category.

***Sample size too small to be reliable.

Statistics come from the U.S.F.W.S. 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. Southwick and Associates, American Sportfishing Association, and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. For further information, contact CSE at 202-543-6850.

Helping kids get outdoors

New legislation and initiatives promote physical activity and nature education

“No Child Left Inside Act” helps environmental education

CONGRESSMAN JOHN SARBANES (MD) and Senator Jack Reed (RI) have introduced legislation to strengthen and expand environmental education in America’s classrooms and reconnect children with nature. These bills, each entitled the No Child Left Inside Act of 2007, were introduced in the House (H.R.3036) and the Senate (S.1981).

With the nation facing complicated environmental issues that will challenge us for years to come, it is critical that schools provide kids with a solid grounding in environmental education. But because of the No Child Left Behind law (NCLB), many schools are scaling back or eliminating environmental education programs. Congress has the opportunity to change this as it reauthorizes NCLB.

To see how the No Child Left Inside Act of 2007 amends the NCLB law, and for ways you can take action, visit www.AmericanTrails.org and click on “What’s Hot.”

“Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights” promotes active kids

WITH CONCERNS ABOUT YOUTH detachment from outdoor activities, lack of physical exercise, and increased health risks, the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism adopted the California Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights to recommend a basic list of experiences that every child in California would benefit from experiencing, before entering high school.

Numerous studies document that children who are more active and learn to enjoy the outdoors are healthier, do better in school, have better social skills and self-image, and lead more fulfilled lives. For more information on this bill, visit the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks & Tourism’s website at www.calroundtable.org/child.htm.

“GEEKS in the Woods” reach out to the next generation

JOSH MORRISON, A 15-YEAR OLD student at White Plains High School in Calhoun County, AL, noticed that his generation had lost touch with the natural world. In response to that disturbing trend and inspired by Richard Louv’s book *Last Child in the Woods* and his mother, Renee Morrison, an educator for the Jacksonville State University Field Schools, Josh created a group called “GEEKS in the Woods.”

Now, Josh and his friends are reaching out to their generation and promoting nature through outdoor experiences and the group’s website. Visit their website and see the letter Josh read at the National Recreation Forum in DC last April at www.geeksinthewoods.org.



The Rivanna National Recreation Trail
(photo by Diana Foster)

GoPAW teaches kids to build and protect the future

By Patrick Zellner, GoPAW Expo Logistics

WE, AS A GENERATION, have not done enough to teach kids the importance of being connected to nature, outdoor recreation, and most importantly, stewardship. The future needs us to help the kids now, to build their confidence and knowledge of nature.

Go Play Outside Alliance of Washington (GoPAW) is a varied group of archers, anglers, hunters, horsemen, and many other outdoor recreation enthusiasts. We started with hands-on activities for middle schools and have branched out into mini-expos open to several schools. Our goal has been to reach more and more kids, and just as importantly, families throughout the state to share our love and stewardship of the outdoors. The greatest resource we have to lose is the human resource represented by our young people, and their lives ahead of them.

Read Patrick’s illustrated article in the new “Kids and Trails” area at www.AmericanTrails.org.

Topics of Interest and Advocacy for the GYC

Apprentice Falconry – Change the age for apprenticeship
Deer and Forest Issues – Acid Rain, Food Plots, Timber Cutting
Sunday Hunting – allowing more time afield
Youth Pheasant Program – important recruitment tool
Jet Ski Age Limit – making the waters a safer place
Bag and Creel Limits
Youth Fishing License Initiative – alternative funding for education
Mentored Youth Hunting – Families Afield Bill – strong advocates
Adding Rabbits to MYH
Adding Coyote to MYH
Letters of Approval for transferring doe tags for Mentored Youth
Acid Mine Drainage Abatement
License Fee Increase for independent agency's – advocacy
Second Amendment Rights – Common Sense Values – Gun Rally
Wild Resources Conservation Fund
Climate Change
White –nose Syndrome in Bats – environmental concern
Agency Funding – how the agency's operate
Poaching Issues – support more value for wildlife
License Point of Sale – Efficiency
Seedlings for Schools Program
Archery In Schools Program
Fishing In Schools Program
Marcellus Gas Fields – the impact on the natural resources
Turkey Dogs – creating more opportunity for hunting dog lovers
Mercury Pollution – in our streams and fish
Puppy Mills – common sense values
Crossbow Initiative – creating more opportunity for youth
Lobby Day – National Hunting and Fishing Day – Advocacy

February 1, 2006

To: Kim Woodward, PRPS Training Coordinator

From: Glenn Nelson, PRPS Liaison and Youth Mentor to the Governor's Youth Council for Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation

Re: Top 5 Challenges Related to Programming for Teens

The PRPS request for feedback arrived at an opportune time. The Governor's Youth Council (GYC) for Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation met the very next weekend.

I asked for a few minutes on the agenda to get feedback from both the agency liaisons/mentors and the youth members during the meeting. The top 5 challenges related to programming for teens and other issues you may encounter in your community follow for all in attendance at the GYC board meeting except for the girl serving as council secretary who was busy taking minutes. (3 girls and 13 boys)

I compiled them as a listing with very little editing. I now have a sixth challenge working with teens, grammar and writing skills. Good luck with your project.

I. Professional Adults

Laurel Anders, PA Fish & Boat Commission Liaison:

1. Teen's lack of responsiveness, not proactive.
2. Communication skills, sometimes non-communicative, lack of response.
3. Absenteeism, sometimes no shows and just not there.
4. Listening skills.
5. Getting outdoor recreation and its value. Not on top of the typical teen mind, other activities much higher priority than recreation.

Gene Odat, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources:

1. All organizations are after the youth dollar and time
2. It's easier to just sit at home; and look at the TV or computer screen.
3. A dwindling supply of mentors, leaders from adult population
4. Is the outdoor experience worthwhile?

Charlie Fox, Chairman, PA Youth Hunter Education Challenge, National Rifle Assoc.

1. Difficulty finding Adults willing to give of their time for kids and share their facilities/resources with kids.
2. Difficulty in finding funding for teen programs.
3. Lack of willingness of schools to promote outside programs, especially shooting programs
4. Competition with "instant gratification" distractions
5. Kids have money to do many things that they could not afford in the past, entertainment and shopping

Page 2 of Top 5 Teen Challenges

Glenn Nelson, Pennsylvania Recreation & Parks Society Liaison:

1. Lose 16-17 years old teens to driver's license meaning jobs, dating and more sports.
2. Getting teens to be open by sharing their thoughts & feeling in a group setting, especially on controversial issues
3. Battle with the corporate culture and marketing, the need for stuff and gadgets to be cool
4. Dealing with the transition between childhood to adulthood, acceptance and accountability in behavior.

5. Experimentation and peer pressure in finding true self.

Dave Smith, Parent to GYC member:

1. Short attention spans in teens.
2. Peer pressure pulls kids into alternatives to hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation.
3. Teens today are involved in too many organized activities: sports, scouts, school and more.
4. Addicted to TV, computer, and video games
5. Parents do not display enough pressure to control what their teens are doing.

II. Youth Council Members (all teens in high school)

Girl Rural Resident

1. So involved in other activities and other obligations
2. Too addicted to electronic devices (internet)
3. Transportation and having outdoor wear
4. Capturing and maintain their interest, usually think it's boring.
5. Other friends & plans with them as so use to like causing trouble for attention; fighting, violence, gangs, drugs that they don't want to stop that and try something new.

Girl Suburban Resident-Harrisburg area

1. Costs of programs
2. Distance/transportation
3. Duration of trip
4. Lack of interest
5. Not liking the itinerary, Example I love activities, but sometimes there is over planning. Teens like down time.
6. Sometimes challenges are something I can't handle. Example, I enjoy rock climbing but I'm slower & have difficulties, so I'm embarrassed.

Page 3 of Top 5 Teen Challenges

Girl Suburban Resident-Lancaster Area

1. Working around busy schedules = time.
2. Close-mindedness
3. Transportation-parents have busy schedules, can't take non-driving teens places.
4. Attitudes-judge a book by its cover-dismiss as being "uncool"
5. Not in the media, don't see role models, only few influences in non-outdoor/recreation families, especially true for hunting and fishing.

Boy Suburban Resident-Westmoreland County

1. Kids would rather sit in front of a screen, easier.
2. Easier to stay inside, kids are becoming more lazy
3. Some of the older kids have jobs.
4. Lack of space in a community and lack of people to do it, lead it for kids.
5. Many students have very little time; many kids have after school activities.

Boy Suburban Resident

1. Getting kids to start something and stay motivated, stay with it.

2. To set goals and work towards them.
3. Kids being too busy.
4. Kids prioritizing
5. Kids being interested.

Boy Suburban Resident-Montgomery County

1. School keeps you busy
2. Driving
3. Video Games
4. Internet
5. Sports

Boy Suburban Resident-Westmoreland County

1. Keeping away from television & computer during bad weather.
2. Peer pressure-spending time with friends
3. Working, jobs and school work
4. Lack of motivation, activities may be too boring
5. Shortness of woodlands and/or free space to go outside

Boy Suburban Resident-Montgomery County

1. Driving
2. Jobs
3. Schoolwork
4. Electronics (TV, video games, computers)
5. Girlfriend or boyfriend

Page 4 of Top 5 Teen Challenges

Boy Suburban Resident

1. Getting them off games and in the outdoors & recreation
2. Recruiting groups of friends so they will do it together.
3. Keeping their attention long enough for them to learn
4. Having someone to get them there.
5. Need days to fit around sports schedule.

Boy Suburban Resident

1. Getting the kids away from the party scene, off drugs and drinking.
2. Get teens to be more mature.
3. Getting them away from the TV & computer.
4. Getting transportation.
5. Getting time in their schedule.

Boy Rural Resident

1. Kids are spread too thin/involved in too much
2. Conflicting interests
3. Family life style/way brought up/parent's influence or lack of
4. Technology taking the place of outdoor activities
5. No motivation/lazy

Boy Rural Resident

1. Schools too much demand

2. Sports
3. TV & computers
4. Video Games
5. Just staying inside

Boy Rural Resident – Perry County

1. Getting teens attention through advertising and increasing their will to stay in it.
2. Keeping programs separate from sports in schools (very difficult in certain schools)
3. Telling them what they will get out of the program after they complete it.
4. Necessary supplies, if they have or don't have the required tools and gear.
5. Necessary licenses and papers required to participate, will they have them.

Boy Rural Resident

1. Getting them out of the house
2. Not enough time
3. Teens don't want to go outside, lack of interest in recreation
4. No friends to do it with them

Page 5 of Top 5 Teen Challenges

Boy Rural Resident – Butler County

1. Go out and learn how to Fly Fish and tie flies.
2. Go camping and build fires, cook, and tell stories
3. Teach leadership skills
4. Teach good work ethic
5. Take kids out in the woods to relieve stress and worries

Boy Rural Resident – Huntingdon County

1. Fight for teenage attention (not to beat a dead horse).
2. Teens "too cool" to do outdoor and recreation stuff.
3. Teens not used to outdoor and recreation stuff, so afraid of it, uncomfortable with it.
4. Juggling cost of programs with interests of teens
5. Funding and manpower for programs.

RE: Expanding Our Hunting-Related Tourism Economy

Dear Friends of Tourism:

Representative Ed Staback (D-Lackawanna) recently authored House Bill 779 that would position the Keystone State to be much more competitive in terms of hunting-related tourism. As you are well-aware, hunting is a vital segment of our economy, and yet we are one of only a handful of states that restricts the activity through the weekend. One of the last remaining **BLUE LAWS**, dating back to the 1800's, prohibits hunting on Sunday, keeping Pennsylvania at a decided disadvantage when compared to neighboring states to the north, south and west.

The Numbers Speak for Themselves

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducts a study every five years entitled "*The National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation*." The survey is considered the most definitive report of its kind regarding the behavior and spending habits of hunters and anglers. Here are some highlights:

- Pennsylvania hunters had expenditures of \$1.7 billion in 2006 and ranked second only to Texas for total spending.
- This spending created 28,000 jobs in 2006 and provided \$214 million in state tax revenue and \$229 million in federal tax revenue.
- The survey reveals that 933,000 Pennsylvania residents are hunters, nearly twice the national average.
- Pennsylvania hunters spend more days in the woods annually (16 million) than their counterparts anywhere else in the country, even Texas!
- The average hunter in Pennsylvania spent over \$1,700 in 2006.
- The economic stimulus provided by Pennsylvania's sportsmen (hunters and anglers combined) equates to an astounding \$9.6 million per day. The figures just mentioned are conservative because they don't measure hunters under the age of 16 or adults who were not able to hunt in 2006, like those who were on active duty with the military.

So the sport of hunting is a critical part of Pennsylvania's economic engine and it shouldn't be taken for granted. Pennsylvania's hunting tradition must be nurtured, protected and enhanced if we want to keep reaping these benefits. The good news is that we have a fairly strong hunting economy; the bad news is that there have been indicators for quite some time that show it's weakening. Today, hunting both at the national level and in Pennsylvania, is declining.

The Decline of Hunting

- In Pennsylvania, total annual sales of general hunting licenses have declined 28 percent, from 1.3 million in 1981 to under 946,000 last year. This trend isn't confined to Pennsylvania. The national hunting population peaked in the mid 1980's, but by 2001, it had dropped 23 percent.
- By 2025 numbers are expected to drop another 24 percent to 9.9 million.
- Recent figures confirm that this trend is continuing. According to the 2006 National Survey, the nation experienced a 4 percent decline between 2001-2006, to 12.51 million hunters.
- According to the **Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association**, youth participation in hunting declined by 26 percent between 1990 and 2000.
- And the **2001 National Survey** uncovered something very alarming about Pennsylvania. It found that for every 100 Pennsylvania hunters who have stopped hunting, only 62 new hunters have taken their place.

Why aren't people hunting as much as they use to? The answer is **TIME**.

When asked why they didn't hunt in 2001:

- 44% of Probable Hunters said "**Not enough time.**"
- Those who are most likely to have children (ages 25-54) said "**Not enough time.**"

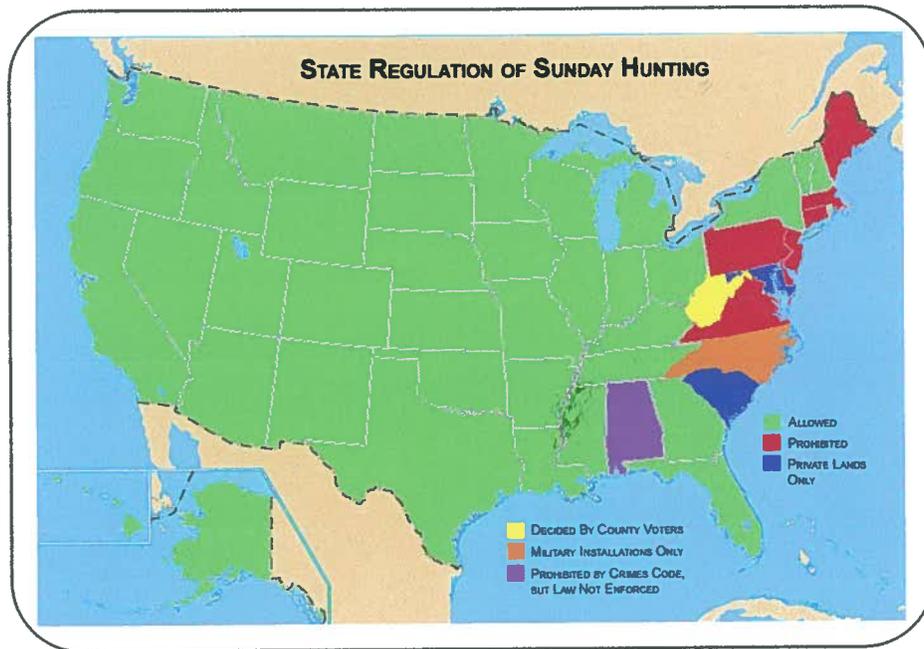
- 50% of young hunters said “**Not enough time.**”
- “**Not enough time**” was almost always the reason for not hunting in 2001, second occasionally to family or work.

Now the Good News

Pennsylvania has the opportunity to give people more time by simply doing away with one of only two remaining **blue laws** ... that being the prohibition on Sunday hunting.

In 2005, the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee contracted Southwick Associates to study what would happen if we allowed hunting on Sunday during all hunting seasons. Using data from the 2001 National Survey, Southwick Associates extrapolated some remarkable information:

- Hunters would hunt an average of 4.7 additional days a year if Sunday hunting were allowed during all seasons
- This added activity would stimulate an estimated \$629 million in additional spending
- It would create 5,300 new jobs and
- Generate \$18 million in additional state sales and income taxes



Reinvigorating Our Hunting-Related Tourism Economy

About 12% of our resident hunters hunt in other states; they prefer a neighboring state. They are more likely to hunt on Sunday in that neighboring state than any other day of the week. When asked what compelled them to hunt in another state, nearly one third stated, “I could hunt on Sunday.” If Sunday were available as a day to hunt in Pennsylvania, it would stand to reason that these same hunters might be inclined to stay within our borders.

Pennsylvania ranks 4th in the nation in terms of attracting non-resident hunters, but we could do much better. Over 30 percent of our non-resident hunters indicated that their hunting activities in Pennsylvania might increase if Sunday hunting were expanded. Perhaps this is the reason so many of our neighboring states have done away with the restriction in the last decade. Allowing Pennsylvania residents, especially young people, the added time to hunt might help stave-off future declines in license sales.

Four states, all of which border Pennsylvania have, in the last decade, done away with most of their restrictions on Sunday hunting. They include New York, Ohio, Maryland and West Virginia. Today, Pennsylvania is at a

decided disadvantage in terms of growing our hunting-related tourism economy. Who today can imagine not being able to fish on Sunday? That blue law was done away with way back in 1937. Allowing hunting over the entire weekend is long overdue!

How can you help? First, let Representative Ed Staback know that you appreciate his authorship of House Bill 779, which removes the prohibition on Sunday hunting from statute. Second, call or write your state senator and let them know about the benefits full-weekend hunting would have in terms of increased tourism, job creation and economic stimulation. Ask them to "level the playing field" so Pennsylvania can compete with its neighbors.