

September 15th 2016

To: The Committee on State Government about House Bill # 2083 meeting on 09-20-2016.

TO: Honorable Matt Gabler
150B East Wing
P.O. Box 202075
Harrisburg, Pa 17120-2075

FROM: John P. Dzemyan
Deer Hunter and Wildlife Conservationist
466Bloomster Hollow Road
Smethport, Pa. 16749
814-887-6995
jdzemyan@verizon.net

Dear Representative Gabler and the Committee on State Government;

I am writing to you about House Bill 2083 and recommend that it not be passed as it will be a detriment to present and future hunters and to future deer populations in Pennsylvania.

Deer populations throughout Pennsylvania are of utmost importance to hunters and many other people who live in or visit Pennsylvania. In the north central part of Pennsylvania, deer populations are even more important. I have hunted deer in McKean, Cameron, Elk, Potter and Clinton Counties for the past 46 years and lived and worked in the woods of Cameron and McKean County for most of those years.

For all 46 of those years, and a lot more, some hunters have been complaining about the lack of deer in those counties. Even back when the doe season was only two or three days and after the regular 2 week buck season, some hunters claimed there were not enough deer and berated the Game Commission and State Legislators to cut back on doe season permits and season lengths.

The reason deer numbers are not as high as those complaining hunters want is not because too many deer are killed in the hunting seasons. It is because the food and cover for deer, the habitat, has been so over browsed since the 1930's (86 years ago) that in those aforementioned counties the woods cannot and will not support the higher populations of deer that some hunters want.

To shorten the antlerless deer season and to stop DMAP on public lands will only cause the deer habitat to go into a decline again, which will result in less deer for future hunters. Future hunters will end up just like many of today's hunters who are upset with less deer and have less deer thanks to the over populations of deer in the past. If legislation stops wise science and biology based wildlife management just to try to satisfy the instant gratification desires of some of today's complaining hunters, we will all end up with damaged food supplies for deer and other wildlife. We will also end up with many other detrimental effects on Pennsylvania's forest, economy, and future. We will have a very temporary and small increase of some deer populations up here which will result in the long term decline of deer numbers and deer habitat, just like what has happened over the past 30, 50, and 80 years, whatever time period one wants to reminisce about.

I extend to you an invitation for you and any and all state legislators and any and all complaining hunters to come and see for yourself what deer need to survive and prosper. Myself and many others can show you work on State Game Lands that has made better habitat for deer and grouse and many other game animals. We can show you areas where deer and wildlife habitat

✓ has improved thanks to DMAP and thanks to more days and more permits to harvest antlerless deer. In areas where hunters have been allowed to harvest more antlerless deer there has been habitat recovery, and in those areas, deer numbers are increasing. We can show you areas where very few antlerless deer are harvested by hunters due to the remoteness of the landscape and the lack of hunters. In many of those areas where antlerless deer are under harvested, deer numbers are low, and remain low, and will not recover to higher numbers due to the overbrowsing the deer are forced to do because of hunters who refuse to properly harvest antlerless deer.

Creating a Forestry and Wildlife Agency Council and mandating the hiring of a Forestry and Wildlife Agency Service will not change the facts about habitat and deer populations on Pennsylvania's public or private lands. The whole concept is an attempt to ignore scientific facts just like the old days from 1930's to the 1990's which allowed a few generations of hunters to have high deer populations even though they were repeatedly warned that this would ruin many areas for future hunters. And it did. High deer populations cannot be sustained on mandated rules made by hunters or others who ignore the reality of what nature and habitat can sustain.

The provisions of House Bill 2083 to shorten and change the antlerless season, to get rid of management units and go back to county lines for units, to stop DMAP, to force unwise and unrealistic misuse of ideas such as maximum sustained yield will all result in lowering the ability of Pennsylvania Forests to sustain the very deer herd that the complaining groups of hunters want. **Going back to the old separate seasons for buck and doe will not bring back the deer numbers of the old days that some hunters want. Those are the very rules that led to today's' much lower deer carrying capacity in much of north central Pennsylvania.**

I look forward to your reply, and encourage you to come up and spend a few days in the woods with the deer and deer habitat. There is so much to see. Myself and many others who spend their lives working in the woods improving habitat, studying deer, protecting deer, protecting habitat, for deer and all wildlife up here would be honored to spend the time walking in the woods with you and anyone you bring with you.

Sincerely;


John P. Dzemyan
Deer Hunter and Wildlife Conservationist
466 Bloomster Hollow Road
Smethport, Pa. 16749
814-887-6995
jdzemyan@verizon.net

*P.S. About myself. I started my work in Cameron County when living in Sinnamahoning and also worked for the Elk State Forest and Cameron County Conservation District Stream Improvement. From 1978 on I worked for the PGC as laborer improving habitat for 3 years and then as Game Protector/Wildlife Conservation Officer for 11 years in McKean Co. and then as a Land manager for 22 years in Elk and McKean Counties. I was also a deputy game protector and hunter education instructor prior to full time employment with PGC. I worked closely for decades to reclaim the coal mines around Benezette for elk and water quality. I also worked closely with the DEP BAMER, Pa. Fish Commission, Ruffed Grouse Society, Pheasants Forever, Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative, Elk State Forest, Allegheny National Forest, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Keystone Elk Country Alliance, and numerous other groups, sportsmen clubs, and agencies to improve wildlife habitat. I am a life member of the Pa. Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, a former member of the Unified Sportsmen of Pennsylvania. I continue to do habitat work for deer and all Pennsylvania Wildlife and look forward to doing habitat work for years to come. **Please enter this letter into the record of your State Government Committee meeting on 09-20-2016.***