



Dormont-Mt. Lebanon Sportsmen's Club

George Taylor IV, President; Theodore Hildabrand, Vice-president; Ellsworth Vines, Treasurer; Bruce Long, Secretary

Remarks for the House Game and Fisheries Committee Saturday Opener Hearing, Charleroi, PA, February 20, 2020

Dear Representative Kortz (Chair, PA House Game and Fisheries Committee),

There's no question that the action by the PA Game Commission to move to a Saturday opener for the rifle deer season is a controversial topic on many levels. Opinions are split on the issue and the debate continues. We need to remember this PGC decision was not made in a vacuum. The PGC weighed the immediate implications--traditions, economics, etc.--against the long term benefits--the survival of our hunting heritage by enabling more hunters, especially youth and young adults, to hunt on opening day.

After reviewing all the factors, the PGC made the call to institute a Saturday opener. A one-season experience proves neither the overwhelming success or dismal failure of that call, although license sales enjoyed a small uptick.

Change was needed. Change isn't always acceptable to all. But this change requires more time to determine its true effectiveness. Over time, opinions, attitudes, and traditions can also change. People adapt. After time, if this effort proves to be unsuccessful, the change can be reversed.

Which brings us to an even more important issue. How would that reversal, if needed, be accomplished? The obvious answer is that the PGC wildlife professionals would take that action after review and due consideration of the results of a multi-season experience. Conventional wisdom dictates this should be the approach to wildlife management, leaving it to the professionals tasked with the job, rather than to subject the decision to potentially contentious, slow-moving legislation initiated by a few legislators responding to a knee-jerk reaction from a vocal minority.

When the dust settles on this Saturday opener issue, one of the takeaways should be this mantra, applicable to all wildlife management --regulation...not legislation.

George Taylor, IV

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