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Hearing Date: 4/23/2020

Today's Date: 5/1/2020

Agency: ODNR Division of Wildlife

Rule Number(s): 1501:31-1-02, 1501:31-7-02, 1501:31-7-03, 1501:31-7-05, 1501:31-7-06, 1501:31-9-01, 1501:31-9-08, 1501:31-13-01, 1501:31-13-08, 1501:31-13-13, 1501:15-01, 1501:31-15-04, 1501:31-15-10, 1501:31-15-11, 1501:31-15-12, 1501:31-15-17, 1501:31-21-02, 1501:31-23-01, 1501:31-23-02, & 1501:31-27-04

If no comments at the hearing, please check the box. ☐

List organizations or individuals giving or submitting testimony before, during or after the public hearing and indicate the rule number(s) in question.

1. John Adams – 1501:31-15-11
2. Randi Bidlack – 1501:31-15-17
3. Joshua McRoberts – 1501:31-7-06
4. Samuel Rodriguez – 1501:31-7-06
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Hearing Summary Report

Consolidated Summary of Comments Received

Please review all comments received and complete a consolidated summary paragraph of the comments and indicate the rule number(s).

The ODNR Division of Wildlife received written testimony from four people as part of the public hearing, in summary:

One person commented that they are opposed to the deer bag limit in Defiance and Williams County (Rule 1501:31-15-11),

One person requesting an extension of the opening and closing dates for the open season for hunting raccoon (Rule 1501:31-15-17),

Two people expressed opposition to the propose veterans and active duty special waterfowl season. Both people are not opposed to the season, they object to having the season on the same dates as the youth waterfowl season (Rule 1501:31-7-06).

Hearing Summary Report

Incorporated Comments into Rule(s)

Indicate how comments received during the hearing process were incorporated into the rule(s). If no comments were incorporated, explain why not.

No comments were incorporated into the proposed rules:

Rule 1501:31-15-11- Based on the best available information, including biological data as well as formal hunter and agricultural producer surveys derived from professionally accepted practices in wildlife management, deer populations in Defiance and Williams Counties are above desirable population levels. Increasing bag limits from 2 to 3 deer will reduce populations toward levels acceptable to both hunters and farmers. The Division will continue to monitor populations through the use of biological surveys, harvest data, and sociological surveys to assess population levels in the future and make appropriate changes to hunting regulations.

Rule 1501:31-15-17- The Division of Wildlife sets seasons for fur-bearing animals based on the best available information, including biological data and surveys of fur taker permit holders. For raccoons, the season is set late enough to take primarily adult sized raccoons and the season is closed prior to the raccoon mating season. Another factor that is considered when setting season dates is fur quality; the current raccoon season dates ensure pelts are prime and have value in the fur market. The Division of Wildlife has regulations in place for agricultural producers and property owners to legally deal with nuisance raccoons. These regulations allow for the legal shooting, trapping, and removal of nuisance raccoons year round, when and where damage is occurring. We too are concerned with the illegal use of pesticides and illegally produced poisons that can adversely affect wildlife and unfortunately humans on occasion. We rigorously pursue complaints concerning illegal use of pesticides and poisons. We annually monitor furbearer populations through standardized surveys, and regularly review this information to identify additional hunting or trapping opportunities, while still ensuring sustainable management of our state's native wildlife. We do consider public input and will gauge interest in extending the raccoon season in a future survey of fur taker permit holders.

Rule 1501:31-7-06 - Overall hunting participation is declining in Ohio and throughout the nation. Wetland habitat stamp sales (all categories) over the past 10 years (2010 -2019) have averaged 28,000 with a declining trend – even though continental waterfowl populations remain above long term averages. Based on a change in federal law, Ohio, along with 8 other Mississippi Flyway states, has proposed a combined youth and veteran/active military 2-day waterfowl hunting season in 2020. Arkansas, one of the premier waterfowl hunting states in the nation, implemented the season in 2019 and similar concerns were expressed by some hunters at the time. Following the inaugural combined season in Arkansas, anecdotal reports indicate that the season was well received and may have actually increased youth participation as multiple generations could hunt together. We will conduct a waterfowl hunting survey to assess participation and support following the 2021 hunting season. Additionally, Ohio offers many quality youth only controlled waterfowl hunt drawings each year.