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January 3, 2023



Sportsmen's Update

Happy New Year!

Sunday Hunting in 2023

The 2023 Regular Session of the General Assembly begins this Wednesday, January 4. That means the time for action is upon us, once again.

Keith Cagle and Chas Catina from the Friends of Connecticut Sportsmen Board and Julie Cammarata, lobbyist, met with new Environment Committee leadership on December 27th to ask for a public hearing on a bill to eliminate the prohibition on Sunday hunting in Connecticut. While there are many battles for the sportsmen's community to fight and win, few will positively impact our member-community more than removing this antiquated restriction.

So far, we have a group of bipartisan legislators willing to raise and co-sponsor the bill, including Representatives Boyd, Conley, Fishbein, Dauphinais, Veach, Reddington-Hughes; and Senators Osten, Sampson and Somers.

We need all of the sportsmen to reach out to the Co-Chairs, Vice Chairs and Ranking Members of the Environment Committee, copying their State Representative and Senator if possible, to urge the Committee to raise and hear a bill to lift the Sunday hunting prohibition. We have already heard back from some legislators that they never hear from sportsmen.

- Access a sample email to send to the Environment Committee leaders [HERE](#), including email addresses.
 - Please feel free to use your own words and if you represent a group, say so
 - Club Presidents are urged to send a letter, referencing the number of your club's members
 - Share this with any sportsmen you know and ask them to send an email as well
- Look up your State Representative and Senator by your home address [HERE](#). Share a copy of your email to the Committee with them.

For more background and context on Sunday hunting restrictions, [check out this resource](#) by the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus.

The best way for us to break through the barriers that have impeded the rights of hunters is to be active and persistent as individuals and clubs. Each contact from a sportsman represents a voting constituency

within the district in the eyes of legislators. When we don't speak up, we cannot be surprised by our lack of progress. We'll stop pushing as soon as we win.

Want to receive updates directly to your inbox? Email
FriendsOfCTSportsmen@gmail.com
Subject Line: Sign me up

CT Sportsmen Fund Conservation

The hunting community in Connecticut is a significant contributor to the wildlife conservation budget. Via the **Pittman- Robertson Act** (AKA the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act) hunters pay an 11 percent federal excise tax on sporting arms, ammunition, and archery equipment, and a 10 percent tax on handguns that makes its way back to the state to fund wildlife restoration and conservation. Between 2017 and 2020, Connecticut received more than **twenty million dollars** in funding via Pittman-Robertson, ranging from \$4 to \$6 million per year. ([Download 2017-20 CT Pittman-Robertson expenditures here](#)).

In 2020, hunting licenses provide an additional \$2.33 million in revenue and fishing licenses generated \$4.49 million. [Read more about CT's system of funding conservation.](#)

2023 Environment Committee Leaders

There are many new faces on the Environment Committee this year.

Senator Rick Lopes of the 6th Senatorial district, which includes Berlin, New Britain and part of Farmington replaced Senator Christine Cohen who moved to the Transportation Committee. The House Co-Chair, **Representative Joe Gresko** of the 121st district in Stratford remains in his role for 2023.

Former House Ranking Member **Representative Stephen Harding** of the 107th district, including Brookfield, Danbury and Bethel won the 30th District Senate seat, including Brookfield, Canaan, Cornwall, Goshen, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, New Milford, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, Warren and Winchester. Senator Harding replaces Senator Craig Miner in the 30th District seat as well as Senate Ranking Member on the Environment Committee. **Representative Patrick Callahan** of the 108th District including, Danbury, New Milford, Sherman and New Fairfield, replaces Stephen Harding as House Ranking Member.

Vice Chairs **Representative Christine Palm** and **Senator Derek Slap** are remaining in their roles this session. The rest of the Committee membership has not yet been posted but will be finalized by the Committee's first organizational meeting on Friday, January 6th.

You can catch Environment Committee meetings and hearings, which convene on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, live or on demand at the [Environment Committee's YouTube Channel](#).

Calendar

January 3 at 9:30AM - Deer lottery permit application online window opens! CT DEEP awards a limited number of permits for deer hunting on certain state lands and controlled hunt areas. Access the [online application portal](#). Learn more about [the deer lottery](#).

January 4 - First day of the 2023 Regular Session of the General Assembly

January 6 at 10:00AM - Organizational Meeting of the Environment Committee Meeting, LOB Room 2B, and watch via the [Env Committee YouTube Channel](#). [Agenda](#).

What About Black Bears?

The Sportsmen's community has been very vocal for years about the dangers of the Department's non lethal bear management plan. Having no predator, bear populations have grown and more bear-human encounters happen each year.

Last October, the unprovoked attack on a young boy in Morris proved our fears warranted and highlighted that the state's non lethal black bear management strategy is not working, and the issue is one of public safety.

Friends of CT Sportsmen does anticipate that there will be a hearing on a bill authorizing a DEEP-administered bear hunt. It is unclear if the bill will be part of the Governor's proposals or raised by the Committee on its own. Regardless of who raises the bill, sportsmen across the state will want to testify on behalf of clubs or individuals. Members will be kept apprised of developments and public hearing dates on this important legislation. As expected, several animal non governmental organizations (NGOs) joined together to form the CT Coalition to Protect Bears and have committed to fight any effort to effectively manage the bear population in CT for the protection of humans, pets and property.



Read **Stamford Advocate** article about the upcoming bear hunt debate at the Legislature [HERE](#)
Download DEEP's Black Bear Fact Sheet [HERE](#)

Animal Advocacy Caucus

The Legislative Animal Advocacy Caucus met on December 16th for a brief meeting to list the Caucus' priority legislation this session, which is as follows, in order:

1. Greyhound ban
2. Pet shop ban
3. Rodenticides ban
4. Traveling animal acts
5. Black Bear - make it a no no to feed them
6. Desmond's law expanded to all animals
7. Leghold trap ban

Latest Resources from DEEP

[2023 Deer Permit Lottery](#) for state land and controlled hunt areas may be applied for starting January 3, starting at 9:30AM
[2023 Fishing Licenses](#) are available online



[Latest Trout Stocking Update](#)
[Interactive Stocking Map](#)
[Final Bass Action Plan, September, 2022](#)

[NEW! Hunter Highlights, Winter Edition, 2022](#)
[Wildlife Highlights December, 2022](#)
[Fishin' Tips Newsletter, December, 2022](#)

[2021 Spring/Fall Wild Turkey Program Report](#)
[\(Published Oct, 2022\)](#)

[2023 Hunting & Trapping Guide](#)
[CT Migratory Bird Hunting Guide for 2022-23](#)
[DEEP Fishing Regulations Guide](#)

[2023 List of CT Public Hunting Areas](#)

Public Hunting Areas Interactive Map

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