



# Pennsylvania Bowhunting News

*Preserving, Promoting & Protecting Bowhunting in Pennsylvania*

February 2018

[www.ubofpa.org](http://www.ubofpa.org)

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## **LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

### **PGC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

#### **1<sup>ST</sup>. QUARTERLY MEETING**

**JANUARY 28, 29, 30 2018**

Wes Waldron,  
Chairman, UBP Legislative Committee

The 2018 Seasons and Bag Limits Meeting of the PGC Board of Commissioners opened on Sunday the 28<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 P.M. A total of 18-individuals gave testimonies including the representatives from, Pheasants Forever, Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative, The Governor's Youth Advisory Council, PA Farm Bureau, U.S. Forest Service (Biologist from Cook's National Forest), Hunters Sharing the Harvest, as well as our own organization.

Subjects included Sunday Hunting, increased hunt opportunities for women and youth, increased opportunity for trapping fishers, the second buck tag, statewide legalization of semi-auto shotguns for deer, bear, and elk, Saturday opener for firearms deer season, and mandatory fall restraints on Game Lands by anyone, hunting from an elevated position. (Tree stands, ladder stands, tripods, etc.)

Once public comments were finished the meeting was adjourned until Monday, but the next morning found eight additional individuals registered to speak. They included representatives of the PA Trappers, PA Chapter NWTF, PFSC, and PA Audubon. Those subjects included dog tracking bill, request to legalize an infra-red site for all predators and furbearer's

legal to hunt, the Pheasant tag, and a petition requesting the PGC to deny the application for wind generators on a specific Game Land. One individual complained that the hunting digest was no longer free, another requested that all types of muzzleloader ignition be legalized during the late flintlock season and that antler restrictions be lifted. Another requested that antler restrictions (AR) be lifted only in the Disease Management Areas. Once those eight commenters were done the BOC moved to Staff Reports

Regarding requests to remove antler restrictions, Dr. Chris Rosenberry, in his Deer Management Report, indicated that studies proved that by the opening of even the archery deer season, the dispersal of both bucks and doe's is over and removing AR would have little if any effect on the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease. He also indicated that the results of the last PA Hunter Survey showed that hunters support AR across the state by a 3 to 1 margin.

As a matter of interest to bow hunters in particular, Mary Jo Casalena, Turkey Biologist, indicated in her report that the total archery harvest in last year's Spring Gobble Season was only 1% of the harvest, and included bows and crossbows. However, the archery harvest during the Fall Turkey Season with all bows was 4%, while the crossbow harvest was between 7% - 8%. When Staff Reports were completed the meeting was adjourned until Tuesday morning.

On Tuesday the BOC got right to business, no doubt due to snow which was accumulating across the area. Roll call showed six commissioners present, a full quorum of the board minus the two unfilled seats. The minutes of the last meeting were quickly approved and the first item of business – the entire list of proposed seasons and bag limits (S&BL)- was approved. The only major changes were the removal of hen pheasant restrictions in WMU’s 2A, 2C, 4C, and 5B, a new 4-day extended firearms bear opportunity in WMU’s 4A and 5A, and an increase in the length of the firearms season for bear in WMU 3A from 4 to 6-days. Also WMU’s 4B and 4C will be opened to fisher trapping. Of course all of S&BL’s are proposals, and will not be up for final approval until the next BOC Meeting which has yet to be scheduled, but will likely be at the end of March or early April.

Preliminary approval was also given to the statewide legalization of semi-automatic shotguns for deer, bear, and elk, and eliminating the requirement that junior hunters purchase a Pheasant Permit, and instead obtaining a free permit. The proposal to require *“On State game lands, any person installing, using, or occupying an elevated treestand, other similar elevated device or platform to securely attach their person to the tree, treestand, or other similar device or platform using a fall restraint device”*. Was tabled by a motion from Commissioner Mitrick until Staff has collected data on instances of falls on SGL’s, and for language changes to clarify the restrictions were for SGL’s only. It may well be in the agenda of the next meeting.

As my testimony included support for this proposal I was grilled pretty well by Commissioner Layton. He compared the proposal to motorcycle helmets and said that *“they were not mandatory”*. I reminded him that this was a safety issue for hunters and that the agency made the wearing of “hunter orange” mandatory as an issue of safety.

Another proposal given preliminary approval was the PGC’s intent to create archery ranges on SGL’s, primarily where firearms ranges already exist. There was much discussion on this proposal between the BOC and Director of Wildlife Habitat Management Director, Pete Sussenbach. Primary concerns to the BOC was where the money would come from, which Sussenbach assured them was being provided by a Pitman-Robertson Grant. The BOC also questioned that since a permit to use PGC Ranges must be purchased, and the purchaser must also have a hunting license, would it be required for archers as well? The answer was, hunting license yes, but no charge for the permit since the money to build the range would come from a Federal grant the Agency could not charge a permit fee.

Additional concerns were voiced by several Commissioners in regard to who would foot the bill for range maintenance, since during heavy periods of use work to clean up the ranges and repair of rebuild target frames often is required several times a week. They were assured by Sussenbach that archery ranges require little if any maintenance, and were not as long as those required for firearms. This proposal will also be up for final adoption at the next BOC Meeting.

Once land transfers, acquisitions, and leases were discussed and voted on the Board went to Old Business (one item), New Business (none), and then Election of Officers. The new officers are: Board President, Timothy Layton-District 4, Board Vice President, James Daley- District 1, and Board Secretary, Michael Mitrick-District 6.

I met and talked with both of the new Commissioners, as well as the recently hired Bureau of Wildlife Management Director, Matt Schnupp.

### ARCHERY GOLF SHOOTS

Saturday, February 24, 2018  
Tree Top Golf Course  
1624 Creek Road Manheim, PA  
(Lancaster county)

See more details here on our website:

<http://www.ubofpa.org/ubparcherygolfshoots.htm>

### DISABLED HUNTERS PROGRAM BANQUET

April 7, 2018 at C.J. Hummels Restaurant  
28 Willow Street  
Lenhartsville, PA

For tickets and more information, please contact  
Joe Filaseta at (610) 504-2889 or  
[jfilaseta@rcn.com](mailto:jfilaseta@rcn.com)

Visit [www.ubpdhp.org](http://www.ubpdhp.org) for updates

### WINTER BANQUET

March 17, 2018  
Sheraton Hotel, 4650 Lindle Road  
Harrisburg, PA

*Please join us for fun, cocktails,  
games, raffles, silent auction, and  
more!*

Complete the registration found in the Winter  
magazine. Reservations must be received by  
**February 25.**

### DONATIONS WANTED

Please consider donating your gently used  
hunting and outdoor items to the Bargain  
Table for the silent auction at the Winter  
Banquet.

\*\*\* Contact Crista at [cwize10@verizon.net](mailto:cwize10@verizon.net).

### STATE SENATE/HOUSE REPS

Having trouble locating your state Senator and  
Representative? See these links for all the  
contact information you need.

<http://www.pasen.gov/index.cfm>

<http://www.house.state.pa.us/>

When writing or calling your Senator or  
Representative, be polite and be professional.  
Let them know the Senate or House Bill number  
you are contacting them about and clearly let  
them know why you are for or opposed to the  
bill or issue. Conclude with your name and  
contact information.

Click [HERE](#) for a letter template ...

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