February 1, 2021

Mr. David Hoyle, Jr.
Chairman
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
1701 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699

RE: Proposed Regulation Changes
   G17. Game Lands Hunting – Four and Seven Day Per Week Designations
   G18. Game Lands Hunting – Four Days Per Week Game Lands
   G19. Game Lands Hunting – Seven Days Per Week Game Lands
   H1. Deer
   H4. Trapping

Dear Chairman Hoyle,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission’s proposed regulation changes for the 2021-2022 seasons. Specifically, we support the G17, G18 and G19 rule proposals that would allow Sunday hunting on Game Lands. We also support the H1 proposed regulation that would allow breech-charging muzzleloader products to be used during blackpowder seasons and the H4 proposed regulation that would allow trappers to utilize remote trapping checking systems.

Since 1989, the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF) has maintained a singleness of purpose that has guided the organization to become one of the most respected and trusted sportsmen’s organization in the political arena. CSF’s mission is to work with Congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting and trapping. The unique and collective force of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus, the Governors Sportsmen’s Caucus, and the National Assembly of Sportsmen’s Caucuses, working closely with CSF, and with the support of major hunting, angling, recreational shooting, and trapping organizations, serves as an unprecedented network of pro-sportsmen elected officials that advance the interests of America’s hunters and anglers.
G17, G18, and G19 – Four and Seven Day Per Week Designations, Four Days Per Week Game Lands, and Seven Days Per Week Game Lands

We support the G17, G18 and G19 rule proposals that would allow Sunday hunting on various Game Lands across the state. The G17 rule proposal would create Four Days per Week Areas and Seven Day Per Week Areas on Game Lands, and we support the proposal as both new definitions allow the taking of game on Sundays. We additionally support the G18 and G19 proposed regulations that would designate six Game Lands as Four Days Per Week Game Lands and 45 Game Lands as Seven Days Per Week Game Lands, respectively.

Expanding public land Sunday hunting in opportunities in North Carolina is a priority for CSF. We have been involved with the effort to open Sunday hunting on Game Lands since the passage of the Outdoor Heritage Enhanced Act of 2017, and we appreciate the dedication of the Commission to implement the law following a robust public input process that considered the views of hunters as well as other Game Lands users.

Allowing Sunday hunting on the 51 identified Game Lands would increase opportunities across the state for hunters that rely on public land access; reduce the access impparity between hunters and other Game Lands users that are not prohibited from Game Lands on Sundays; provide seven-day access for your hunter constituency that contributes financially to Game Lands acquisition and management costs through the “user-pays, public-benefits” American System of Conservation Funding via hunting licenses and excise taxes on hunting-related equipment through the Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson Act); support increased conservation funding for the state; further hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation efforts; and benefit the state’s economy. We are confident that seven-day hunting on Game Lands can be successfully implemented with little conflict with other users, and we look forward to future opportunities to expand Sunday hunting on other Game Lands.

H1. Deer

We support the proposed regulation that would expand the current definition of blackpowder firearms to include firearms that use propellant loaded through the breech. The rule change would allow hunters to use new breech-charging muzzleloader products that are safe and reliable while not changing the existing characteristics of blackpowder firearms seasons. These new products still require the projectile to be loaded through the muzzle, they still only accept one projectile at a time, and they have a similar
effective range to muzzleloaders that are presently authorized for use. These new products also eliminate a potential cause of inconsistency in presently authorized muzzleloaders - user-caused variances in powder loads. Eliminating this variable would enhance the consistency and repeatability of muzzleloaders afield while simultaneously reducing risk of injury to the user caused by overloading or double-charging the propellant.

H4. Trapping

We support the rule proposal that would allow, but not require, trappers to use remote trapping checking systems in lieu of a physical trap check. Trapping is an important wildlife management tool, and we support advances in trapping technology that reduce response times to activated traps as well as increase the efficiency of checking traps.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully,

John Culclasure
Southeastern States Assistant Director
jculeclasure@congresssionalsportsmen.org