

TESTIMONY:

WDNR NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD MEETING

April 13th, 2016

3.B.2. – Request adoption of Emergency Board Order WM-01-16(E), proposed rules affecting Ch. NR 10 related to establishing the 2016 migratory bird hunting seasons

WISCONSIN WATERFOWL ASSOCIATION:

Supports adoption of the proposed 2016 waterfowl season structure,
as outlined by WDNR staff.

Chairman Hilgenberg, esteemed members of the Board, Madame Secretary/Mr. Deputy Secretary; thank you for allowing me time to address your group today.

My name is Don Kirby, I represent the members of the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, from all over the state, as the Executive Director of this organization.

Today, I return to testify our support for the season proposal and hunting zones structure that has been laid out before you. I last stood before your group, back in August, and it was only a few weeks after that session, when the representatives of many user groups came together for the first planning session for the product presented today.

The fact that there are several of us here today, to give our approval is a testament to the incredible effort put forward by DNR staff, to craft a compromise that perhaps pleases almost no one, perfectly. You see, despite the fact that we are currently in “the good old days” of modern waterfowl hunting, that doesn’t mean we agree on what that means, exactly, or how to go about it, or when! It seems at times, that the one thing waterfowl hunters enjoy doing more than actually going out to hunt, is to argue about the conditions for those hunts to occur in.

Kent and Taylor have been tireless in their efforts to provide information and data, to engage stakeholders in the process, to explain the boundaries of what is, and what is not possible, within our federal restrictions, and to make it as easy as possible to provide feedback on the aspects of the season structure that are most important to any particular hunter.

Out of this stew of dissention, they have built a reasonable consensus, a compromise that provides a wide variety of opportunities, over a long period of time, to a broad swath of our hunting public. While none might admit that it is a thing of beauty, it certainly is a good example of “bottom up” leadership, and presents the culmination of the months of outreach activities. It is also important to note: all of this has been done, a full four months earlier than at any time in generations, due to the changes in the federal planning timeline, and with significant staffing shortages, within the wildlife division.

The end result of all these combined efforts will now allow vacation plans to be made, lodging reservations to be called in, guide services engaged, and countless other schemes put in place, far earlier than in previous years, which will hopefully allow even more of our residents and our out-of-state tourist friends to come and take part of the glorious “grand passage” of migrating waterfowl this coming autumn. And that, friends, is a very good thing.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Board.

Presented By:

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