



New York State Conservation Council Inc.
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LEGISLATIVE STATEMENTS

Positions taken by the New York State Conservation Council on pending legislation:

ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED AND MOBILITY IMPAIRED

A 319/S 1467

A 2491/S 765

A 2634

The NYSCC supports efforts to allow disabled and mobility impaired individuals to access outdoor areas and participate in recreational activities to the greatest extent possible. This is particularly critical in the 6 million acre Adirondack Park where "forever wild" restrictions mandate careful management of motorized access.

The NYSCC opposes proposals to establish areas with limited or highly restrictive access for the benefit of a limited number of individuals. This would include such programs as "Quiet Waters" that would set aside areas for carry-in canoeing only. These areas should be accessible to as many people as possible, consistent with the "forever wild" principal.

COYOTES

A 5812

The NYSCC supports legislation to reclassify the coyote as an unprotected wildlife species. Coyote populations have increased significantly and are causing environmental depredation and human-wildlife conflict. Seasonal restrictions should be lifted so that coyote populations can be controlled more effectively.

DEER MANAGEMENT PERMITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

A 4538/S 723

The NYSCC supports this legislation. New York provides a preference to disabled veterans having 40% or greater disability when issuing deer management permits. Currently, disabled veterans seeking this permit are required to submit proof of their disability every year. This proposal would change this by allowing disabled veterans to provide proof of service related disability once with the expired permit serving as proof in following years.

FIFTY CALIBER RIFLES

S 7067

The NYSCC opposes this proposal. It would ban a large number of big game rifles in calibers ranging from .500 through .700. These rifles, which are designed for hunting dangerous game, are intended for use at ranges of less than 200 yards and they are not suitable for long range shooting. The purpose of these rifles is purely sporting; this is recognized in federal law, where they are exempt from the prohibition on rifles with a bore over .5 inch.

MOOSE AND ELK

A 5317/S 3385

The NYSCC supports legislation to list moose as a game animal in New York State. The NYSCC also supports a New York State Moose Lottery, where all funds will be earmarked for wildlife conservation.

PHEASANT & QUAIL

A 867/S 1461

The NYSCC supports allowing the DEC to set season and bag limits for these species by regulation on Long Island as it does for the remainder of the state. Such authority would allow the Department to respond quickly to changing conditions and requirements. This approach has been completely satisfactory in the rest of the state.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT TO CONSERVATION FUND ADVISORY BOARD

S 3327

The NYSCC is opposed to this proposal, which would remove the requirement that members of this board hold a hunting, fishing or trapping license. The duties of this board are focused on providing input from the sporting community on expenditures for fish and wildlife programs and promoting the growth of these activities. It is appropriate that these people be drawn from this community where they have demonstrated the experience and commitment to fish and wildlife management. The sporting community not only has the knowledge and experience to perform these functions but also funds the Conservation Fund through license fees.

PISTOL LICENSE PRIVACY

A 224/S 3902

The NYSCC supports this proposal. It is in the best interests of both the licensees and the general public to limit access to this information to specific requests for legitimate governmental and law enforcement purposes. There is no governmental purpose served by the disclosure of such information to the general public. And there is certainly no private need for access to this information on a broad basis. The present system of "opt out" is a costly burden on the counties and provides nothing that would not be better served by this proposal.

POSTING OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

A 6429/S 3994

The NYSCC opposes this legislation. It would add an unnecessary degree of complexity to a system that is working satisfactorily. It is, in essence, a solution in search of a problem.

PRE-LICENSE TRAINING FOR PISTOL LICENSE APPLICANTS

A 2299/S 135

The NYSCC supports this proposal. Safety training is the most critical measure that can be taken to further firearms safety. Responsible firearms use is deeply ingrained in our national heritage. With firearms present in half of American homes, they are a fact of everyday life. Providing optimal training for safely handling and using them ensures the safety of everyone.

The ability to handle firearms during pre-license training classes will provide more effective training. It seems counterintuitive not to make this training available before a license is issued. It is more effective than lecture, video or textbook training. Not providing hands on training is the equivalent of issuing a driver license and then going out and learning to drive.

REGULATION OF SPORTING DOG BREEDERS AND TRAINERS

A 465A / S5556A

A 4847

A 6735/S 144

The NYSCC is opposed to these bills. In an effort to deal with legitimate problems in the breeding, training and sale of pet animals, the sponsors cast much too wide a net and would include many small sporting dog breeders. The breeding and training of sporting dogs bears little resemblance to the commercial animal pet business. The imposition of a regulatory structure designed for one upon the other would impose a significant burden and serve no useful purpose.

RESTRICTIONS ON PRIVATE CAMPGROUNDS IN THE ADIRONDACK PARK

A 2909/S 141

The NYSCC supports legislation to prevent the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) from imposing time limits on private campground occupancy for recreational vehicles. These facilities serve a particular market for visitors with a long-term commitment to the park, providing significant income to local communities in the process. Imposing artificial limits on the duration of a space rental will put many of these campgrounds out of business.

The APA has no business micromanaging private businesses that serve a legitimate segment of the visitors to the park, pose no threat to the health of the park and generate badly needed revenue for local communities. The agency appears to be straying from its true purpose of protecting the resource to a goal of socially engineering the composition of the visitor population.

SPORTSPERSON BILL OF RIGHTS

A 534/S 1153

The NYSCC supports the drafting of legislation and a constitutional amendment that guarantees the heritage of hunting, fishing and trapping as a right of every law-abiding citizen of the State of New York.

TRAPPING PRACTICES

A 264

The NYSCC supports requiring trappers to check water sets and remove furbearers at least once each 48 hours and maintaining the current definition of water set. This change would have no impact on the animal, as animals expire quickly when trapped underwater.

TRAPPING REGULATION

S 3062

The NYSCC opposes legislation that is intended to impose technical regulation of trapping through statute. This level of regulation is best provided by wildlife professionals through the regulatory process within the DEC.

The NYSCC opposes legislation that would authorize local governments to regulate trapping. The state has reserved that authority to itself to prevent local level micromanagement that is often ill conceived and disruptive of broad-based wildlife management objectives.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

A 3678

A 4116A/ S 5148A

The NYSCC opposes legislation that: imposes detailed, field level management by statute on wildlife management; restricts the ability of the DEC to set and adjust season dates, taking methods and bag limits; impedes invasive species management; and attempts to micromanage wildlife populations, locally or on a statewide basis.

While the Legislature is responsible for establishing the policy and direction of wildlife management, the professional staff at the DEC should have the sole authority to provide for the detailed implementation of that policy. The management of habitat and wildlife is complex, requiring both professional training and actual boots on the ground. This is best provided by Department level management.