

NYSCC Big Game Committee Spring 2022 Report

The NYSCC Big Game Committee met virtually on March 26, 2022.

Attendance: Dan Owen, Co-Chair, NY Houndsmen, Gary Murthig Region 3, and Rich Davenport, Co-Chair Region 9.

Discussions concerning the 2021 Big Game Season, changes implemented for this season, and the new Holiday Hunt in NY Southern Zone. The Committee concluded:

- The shooting hours expansion was long overdue, and was a benefit to all.
- We are still uncertain about the benefits of the blaze orange rules, but noted that this year was the safest on record. We are in agreement that the season talk was the number of youths heading afield this season, as it was encouraging and exciting to see.
- The Holiday hunt remains a controversial issue, but a clear exam of the harvest numbers during this additional 7-day season would go a long way in reducing the concerns.

Additional discussions surrounding several issues concerning:

- Lead ammo and the moves to ban use of lead on state lands.
- Actions happening Federally and the potential for lead ammo (and lead fishing tackle) bans on Federal lands.
- Concerns over emerging “Sue and Settle” practices that result in anti-hunting and anti-fishing rules via court cases, not the legislative or regulatory process.
- We recommend NYSCC stand with the US Sportsmen’s Alliance in the opposition to this practice.
- The lack of environmental impact studies in the face of expanding renewable energy projects, and not knowing what damage may be caused to big game specifically, but our natural resources as a whole as well.

The Big Game Committee reviewed the four (4) resolutions set before us, and shall deliver the following recommendations to the NYSCC membership at large:

E1 – Erie County Resolution with co-sponsors opposing fish and wildlife management through local legislation

Recommendation: The Big Game Committee recommends SUPPORT for this resolution. Would like assurances that language is adequate to address wildlife management via local authority is opposed.

01 – Delaware County Oppose Opt In/ Opt Out

Recommendation: Same as above, adding we would like to see a consistent and unified resolution that can also be supported by CFAB, FWMB and others.

03 – Erie County Big Game Dashboard

Recommendation: The Big Game Committee recommends SUPPORT of this resolution, initial rollout of a pilot for big game committee and DEC to evaluate and set expectations due to differences in reported harvest (preliminary) and final harvest (estimated)

04 – Erie County Youth Elevated Stand Hunting

Recommendation: The Big Game Committee recommends SUPPORT and fast action to make this change happen.

Respectfully Submitted

Rich Davenport, Co-Chairman
NYSCC Big Game Committee
Region 9 Rep

NYSCC

Hunter Education Committee Meeting held 4/2/2022

Attended by Mike Donahue Orleans County Region 8, Brian Krawczyk Wyoming County Region 9 and
Glen Adams Genesee County Region 8

The following was the starter Idea from where we discussed Ideas.

Brian Krawczyk
2533 Wethersfield Rd.
North Java, NY 14113
Date: August 2020

To: NYS Hunter Education Instructors, Coordinators and Administrators and all Conservation based organizations

Re: The recent challenges and changes within the NYS Hunter Education Program

To whom it may Concern;

We are in unprecedented times and facing challenges in nearly every aspect of our lives as a result of the COVID-19 crisis of 2020. The disruptive effects of this pandemic have reached far beyond the obvious health concerns. How we work, how we learn, how we travel, how we socialize and how we conduct business are just a few of the examples of the adjustments that have been brought to our door step by this unwelcome visitor. Certainly, the NYS Hunter Education Program has not escaped unscathed.

The program administrator's along with the management team realized early on that the uncertainty swirling around the Corona virus would force decisive action and significant changes to allow the program the opportunity to continue its vital mission of serving NY's hunting community. This goal was prioritized in light of the quickly approaching New York State youth & spring turkey seasons.

On April 15th the NYS DEC in partnership with Kalkomey Enterprises, LLC launched a New York State approved, fully online hunter safety education course. The state website and press releases made it clear that this was a limited time offering to help deal with the pending hunter education certification demand. The online opportunity was and remains a very popular option for many families as witnessed by the registration numbers. The numbers early on clearly revealed that online enrollment outpaced historic class registration numbers for the traditional classroom/hands-on HEP classes held in the early spring.

This dramatic shift in New York's hunter education policy & procedure drew wide ranging opinions from across the spectrum of interested parties. Concerns about the application of distance learning in the arena of hunter education circulated even though several states have used this approach with no reportable rise in hunting related incidents or game law violations.

After speaking with members of our local HEP teaching team I decided to reserve making a definitive judgement on the new class until after I had registered and actually completed the course. I knew that it would be difficult for me to experience the course through the prism of a twelve or thirteen-year-old boy or girl or even someone who is older yet, new to the world of hunting. I tried to set aside my experience in the fields and woods as well as my previous exposure as a long time HEP instructor to form a meaningful an objective opinion. At the same time, I thought my personal experience as an active instructor would be beneficial in noting the strengths and weaknesses in the new offering.

Mike Donahue started the discussion about the exam on line and then a hands on class for safety. The concern was about the time the exam would take if we were doing all the range work. Brian brought up

the concern of who was taking the test and making sure it was the student. Brian acknowledged that currently there has been no increase incidents and accidents among the youth taking online class. Last year was the safest on record.

Brian went online and took the online course to see what it taught. The test is timed so you cannot skip ahead, the weird part is the field real life demonstrations are skippable. Brian expressed concerned about lack of in person classes and Pitman Roberson funds that reimbursement for volunteer hours. It was expressed concern about future attendance of in person classes.

There is concern about the 8 hour class being so compressed and the lack of educators leading the DEC in the education process, has moral of Hunter Educators at an all-time low.

Brian, Mike and Glen would like to see a hands on range supplement to the online class tried.