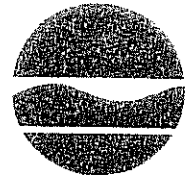


New York State Department of Environmental Conservation



Division of Fish, Wildlife & Marine Resources, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

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June 18, 2008

Mr. Jack McShane  
Tremperskill Hunting & Fishing Club  
1409 Bussey Hollow Rd.  
Andes, NY 13731

Dear Mr. McShane:

Thank you for writing to convey the position of the Tremperskill Hunting & Fishing Club regarding the potential use of antler restrictions in Delaware County. This is an important topic to many New York deer hunters and as you are aware support for antler restrictions is not universal.

While the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) does not believe a change in buck hunting regulations is necessary for biological reasons, we recognize that antler restrictions may be supported by hunters in certain areas of the State for other reasons. We have entertained proposals for antler restrictions in the past and we will continue to do so when it is clear that there is strong support for this type of deer hunting.

Because antler restrictions are a substantial change to the traditions associated with deer hunting, we have recently identified a process for evaluating proposals to implement antler restrictions. Fundamental to this process are several factors:

- (1) The geographic scope of the proposal must be based on Wildlife Management Units (WMUs), not political boundaries (such as a county) and the area must be large enough to allow for the scientific measurement of hunter opinion and monitoring of potential impacts of antler restrictions on the deer population and harvest.
- (2) The level of support should be determined using scientifically rigorous surveys conducted by the DEC of people who hunt in the WMUs in question.
- (3) We have established a threshold of support that we would use before considering moving forward with a change in the regulations. This level of support should be at least a super majority (67%) of hunters who hunt in the area, and no more than 20% of hunters who hunt in that area strongly oppose the proposal.

(4) We will always exempt Junior Hunters from antler restriction regulations.

The opinions and support of deer hunters are critical for the success of antler restriction programs. We encourage the Tremperskill Hunting & Fishing Club to work with the Delaware County Federation of Sportsmen and other interested stakeholders to identify a consensus on this issue.

Deer management and potential changes to hunting laws and regulations are serious matters for the Department. We will continue to monitor the status of deer populations and the interests of stakeholders to recommend or enact changes that are in the best interests of sound deer management and the ability of people to use and enjoy this important wildlife resource.

Thanks again for sending your comments. Please feel free to share a copy of this letter with others who are interested in this issue.

Sincerely,

Patricia Riexinger  
Director  
Fish, Wildlife & Marine Resources