



9 April 2024

TO: Governor Josh Shapiro

RE: Pennsylvania Game Commission & Pennsylvania Fish Commission Boards of Commissioners Appointments

Dear Governor:

The undersigned organizations, who represent the interests of thousands of sportsmen and women across Pennsylvania, are writing to urge you to support the responsible management of our Commonwealth's wildlife by ensuring that the boards of commissioners for Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) remain fully appointed.

The sportsmen and women of the Keystone State rely on the PGC and PFBC to protect, restore and conserve the state's land and water resources cherished by millions of Pennsylvanians. While pursuing their passion, these 1.3 million anglers and 1 million hunters/trappers in turn support over 20,000 jobs and support Pennsylvania's \$26.9 billion recreation economy. Over the last year there is ample evidence that this outdoor recreation economy is growing. With more and more Pennsylvanians turning to our public lands and fisheries, maintaining the ability of the boards of commissioners to operate at full capacity is paramount to undergird Pennsylvania's recreation economy.

Specifically, the term for Pennsylvania Game Commission's District 1 commissioner is about to expire. Without prompt action by your office, it risks setting a precedent that will put the commissions in jeopardy of not having a quorum in the coming months as more commissioner seats are up for reappointment. These vacancies make it difficult for the Commissions to function properly.

Finally, if there is no quorum, the Commissions cannot make annual adjustments to hunting and fishing regulations. For example, in 2021 the PGC lacked a quorum due to a lapse in the Commissioner appointment process, resulting in the PGC being forced to use the previous years' rules and regulations.

The inability to make annual regulation adjustments impedes the intended function of the Commissions and can result in negative impacts to fish and wildlife populations and loss of opportunity for sportsmen and women. The ability to adjust seasons and bag limits based on the previous years' harvest and habitat data is vital to scientific wildlife management. All Pennsylvanians deserve fully staffed and functioning Commissions that oversee the operations of these important agencies.

We urge you to promptly utilize the Commissioner nomination process, both for the current PGC vacancy and for future vacancies, to ensure that both the PGC and the PFBC Boards of Commissioners are fully appointed and fully functional. By doing so, your office will be supporting the vital species and scientific habitat management that is deep rooted in the outdoor heritage of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. We thank you for your consideration and the continued support of our wildlife and fisheries resources enjoyed by all Pennsylvanians.

Signed,

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen & Conservationists
Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever
Ruffed Grouse Society
SCI First for Hunters
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited

Cc:

Members of the Senate Committee on Regulations and Executive Nominations