

## **BHA Policy Update for February 10<sup>th</sup> BOD Meeting**

If anyone is pressed for time - Ben Bishop, our 4<sup>th</sup> District Director and I, do a podcast at every month to cover the same issues you'll see below in as much detail as a 1hr program will allow. You can find the link to that podcast, "State of the Outdoors" on my website at:

<https://www.theslowhunt.com/podcasts>

### **National Issues**

(sources for this include BHA, TRCP, Sportsmen's Alliance and Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation)

1. The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Pollution Prevention Act sponsored by Representatives McCollum and Rooney is a bipartisan bill that would administratively remove 234,328 acres of public lands from being developed by a proposed sulfide-ore copper mine.
2. William Perry Pendley is still the Deputy Director, Chief of Policy and Programs, exercising the authority of the Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM is our largest land management agency. The reason this Presidential Administration has not appointed a real Director of the BLM is that they want Pendley to have the job. Pendley has written extensively about the divestiture of all public lands. He has also worked as a lawyer for the oil and gas industry. The reason the Administration hasn't appointed Pendley to the Director of the BLM is that requires Congressional Confirmation and there's no way a darling of the oil and gas industry and advocate for the divestiture of all public lands could make it through Congressional Confirmation. So, the Administration put him in the #2 position at BLM and let him run it from there.
3. The Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act is two bills, S. 1081 and H. 3195. These bills would permanently fund the LWCF at \$900M a year and remove it from the annual Congressional appropriations process. This is a follow up to the John D. Dingell Conservation, Management and Recreation Act bill that passed last year to make the LWCF permanent.
4. Recovering America's Wildlife Act H.R. 3742 is a bipartisan resolution what create an annual revenue stream to restore habitat and species. This started with a blue-ribbon panel of scientists and outdoor recreation magnates, who were concerned about species and habitat loss. If it passes it could double the annual budget of the KDFWR.
5. The Public Land Renewable Energy Development Act H.R. 3794 and S. 2666 would encourage development of alternative energy sources, while conserving the integrity of the terrestrial and aquatic habitat. It would also create a fund where 25% of the revenue generated from new development of wind and solar would be spent on conservation.

6. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act HR 4031 is awaiting a vote in the House. It would amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and increase the annual funding for science based conservation and management.

7. The Authorizing Critical Conservation and Enabling Sportsmen and Sportswomen Act HR 1326 is a broad bill that would help on many conservation issues including CWD. It would also reauthorize the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and the US Fish and Wildlife Service Resource Protection Act.

8. January 23<sup>rd</sup> this Presidential Administration rolled back previous administration rules on what waters are protected by the Clean Water Act. Dramatically limiting the amount of fish and waterfowl habitat that is currently protected against pollution or development. Half the nation's wetlands and 1 out of every 5 miles of streams will no longer be protected.

9. A bill was recently filed in the Virginia House, HB 449, which would increase the penalties for violating hunting, trapping and fishing laws. I put this in here because we need to do the same thing in Kentucky. Our penalties are woefully small, in fact one poacher from Alabama caught this year in the Peabody WMA during deer season said, "I don't ever buy a license to hunt in Kentucky, because the license costs more than the ticket if I get caught." I've personally spoke with the head of the Law Enforcement Division at the KDFWR, Colonel Gibson, and he's working on this. Many of our 9 Fish and Wildlife Commissioners agree it needs to be updated.

### **State Issues:**

(sources for this come from official state websites and my own notes from attending meetings)

1. The following legislation is of concern to sportsmen and women:

House Bill 45 would impose significantly more restrictive gun control laws in Kentucky. This bill creates 3 new chapters of law, amends 11 chapters of law, and repeals 1 chapter of current law. You can research it yourself at: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/20rs/hb45.html>

House Bill 334 would put the following constitutional amendment on the ballot this fall: *"It is proposed that a new section be added to the Constitution of Kentucky to be numbered as 255B, as reads: The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic values of the environment. The Commonwealth's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people."* You can research the bill yourself at the following link: [https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/recorddocuments/bill/20RS/hb334/orig\\_bill.pdf](https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/recorddocuments/bill/20RS/hb334/orig_bill.pdf)

House Bill 31 would repeal the 2019 Senate Bill 150 which allowed Kentuckians who were allowed to own firearms to carry them concealed without a license. It would return us to the

old way of everyone having to take a class. Currently the only reason to take a class is if you decide to carry concealed out of the State, because we have reciprocal carry concealed privileges with most other states. If you want to research HB31 you can do so at:

<https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/20rs/hb31.html>

House Bill 52 would require the KDFWR and F&W Commission to promulgate rules to expand coyote hunting at night using center fire rifles and expanded light technology. You can research that bill here at this link: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/20rs/hb52.html>

House Bill 76 would require anyone under a court ordered emergency protective order or intrapersonal protective order to surrender all their firearms. You can research that bill here: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/20rs/hb76.html>

House Bill 192 is expansive new gun control legislation, you can research that bill here at this link: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/20rs/hb192.html>

Senate Bill 32 defines what the legal storage of a firearm means, anyone found violating this would be guilty of a crime. You can research that bill here at this link: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/20rs/sb32.html>

House Bill 259 is the house's companion bill to SB32 above and also defines what the legal storage of a firearm means, anyone found violating this would be guilty of a crime. You can research that bill here at this link: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/20rs/hb259.html>

House Bill 369 defines what legal disposal of deer and elk carcasses is for processors and taxidermists. If this passes, they must bury all carcasses 4ft deep with 2in of lime or send them to a landfill. Some of our biggest and best processors told me they cannot do this, and it would end their processing of deer and elk. You can do your own research here: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/record/20rs/hb369.html>

## 2. Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting Notes from January 31, 2020

a. Changes in meeting structure – the KDFWR and the F&W Commission will transition to a new annual meeting structure. See PowerPoint attached.

### b. Motions.

(1) Update a previously passed motion on double fencing all new or expansions to existing deer and elk farms. That update included a double single strand electric fence to be hung off the existing fence on all existing deer and elk farm fences. It passed unanimously.

(2) Recommended a legal and biological review of how to separate the legal baiting of deer in the elk zone from the illegal baiting of elk in the elk zone. It passed unanimously.

(3) End the practice of late season elk quota hunts based on local elk causing crop or other damage. Improve the process for moving before euthanizing elk causing damage. If elk are causing damage and must be euthanized the meat would go to Hunters for the Hungry. It passed unanimously.

c. Law Enforcement Division, COL Gibson briefed that they're having excellent success in the last two Conservation Officer Recruiting and Training Classes. We could see as many as 29 new Conservation Officers on duty this spring/early summer.

d. Discussion of many issues took place.

(1) having a 5-year plan for each WMA to be updated annually

(2) increasing the use of burning to help habitat

(3) moving early goose season back up to September 1<sup>st</sup>

(4) increased penalties for elk poaching

(5) improved elk habitat initiatives

(6) improved access and law enforcement on the Ohio River