



# NATIONAL DEER ASSOCIATION

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## NDA Branch Quarterly Policy Update – April - June, 2021

### Organizational Update

With many state legislatures already adjourned, adjourning within the next few weeks, or preparing for summer recess, we've seen a flurry of state action followed by sudden quietness blanket state capitols across the country. Spring is always a busy time in the policy world. After all, many states only have a few months to get legislation passed, so things change quickly and often.

That doesn't mean that state policy and advocacy is done for the year, though. Far from it. We can still expect regulatory initiatives throughout the summer as state agencies continue to operate. Specifically, we'll continue to see a number of proposals and amendments from state wildlife agencies as they wrap up changes for the upcoming fall hunting seasons. We'll also see fall legislative activity from those state legislatures that resume the 2021 session for a few months to close out the year.

While things are quieting at the state level, federal policy initiatives are ramping up. The first 100 days of the Biden Administration have passed – this period was used for tackling top priorities and fulfilling campaign promises. Certainly, COVID-19 and the economy occupied much of that time, but we did see some great conservation initiatives sprout. Similarly, Congress settled in, and we've seen, and continue to see, the introduction of some fantastic conservation legislation to carry on the trend set in the last Congress. A few prominent hits on the National Deer Association's (NDA) radar are:

- **Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful:** This collaborative report from a number of federal departments outlines a locally led and voluntary nationwide conservation goal to conserve 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters by 2030. More widely known as 30 by 30, this initiative is grounded by the idea that nature is essential to the health, well-being, and prosperity of every family and every community in America. The NDA has been advocating for the role of hunting and fishing in biodiversity conservation and 30 by 30 solutions that allow hunters and anglers to continue our proud conservation legacy. We're happy to see the America the Beautiful report in its final form and with the inclusion of input provided by the hunting and fishing communities.
- **Expanded hunting opportunities on federal lands:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) recently announced a proposal for new or expanded hunting and fishing opportunities for game species across 2.1 million acres at 90 national wildlife refuges and on the lands of one national fish hatchery. The proposal is the largest expansion in recent history of hunting and fishing opportunities on national wildlife refuges and national fish hatcheries, opening acreage about one and a half times the size of the state of Delaware.

- **Recovering America's Wildlife Act:** Introduced on Earth Day, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, or RAWA, will provide \$1.3 billion annually for state fish and wildlife agencies to implement congressionally mandated State Wildlife Action Plans, which outline specific, science-based conservation actions necessary to recover and sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations. These plans include strategies to collectively conserve close to 12,000 fish, wildlife, and plant species identified as "at-risk."

These federal initiatives, proposals and bills are just a small sample of some of the federal policy items the NDA is focusing on. In a time of unprecedented partisanship, conservation priorities have found a way to bridge the ever-widening gap between left and right. Perhaps politicians see conservation issues as an easy win – in fact, I'm sure that's true. But what's more important is why they're such an easy win. It's because many Americans, especially after a year where many were forced to focus on the things that really matter in life, understand that intact ecosystems filled with biodiversity are fundamental to who we are, how we want to live and how we hope the future will look. That's something worth fighting for, and the NDA will be there every step of the way.

So far this year, we've sent Action Alerts to members regarding 48 deer-hunting-related bills or engagement opportunities originating in 23 states, and we authored or signed-on to 56 policy initiative letters sent to state and federal agencies and lawmakers.

Below, you'll find a number of lists and items that could be useful to you and your members. First, we highlight what we've accomplished so far this year, followed by larger and long-term focus areas for the remainder of the year. Of course, any and all policy that affects wild deer is on our radar, and we're relying on branches, volunteers and members to bring state and local issues to our attention. The final lists provide specific details on legislation and other initiatives we've engaged on this quarter.

#### **By the Numbers (through end of Q2):**

- 48 Action Alerts/Eblasts
  - About one every three days
  - 23 different states
- 40 pieces of state legislation
  - 23 different states
  - Over 3000 form submissions (Over 4000 including federal)
- 56 policy letters
  - Signed on 41
  - Authored 15
- 19 policy articles/features
  - CWD Roundup
  - Press releases and other activity updates

## **Current Projects & Initiatives**

- Federal CWD legislation
  - Working closely with TRCP and some others to draft language and gather support
  - Captive cervid movement moratorium letter
- NY Youth Hunting Initiative
  - Provision included in budget to allow youths 12-13 to hunt deer with a firearm
    - Individual counties must opt-in
- NY Hunting Hours Initiative
  - 180+ letters of support submitted
- Policy Advisory Committee
  - Larry Williams (USFWS), Glenn Johnson (Weyerhaeuser) and Steve Kline (TRCP)
- Dedicated policy intern
  - Morgan Basely
    - Student at University of Montana Western studying ecology and fire science

## **Going Forward**

- Grassroots engagement
  - Working closely with RDs and Branch presidents
  - Continue to focus on all deer and build our membership and advocacy network for other species
- Federal initiatives
  - HuntFish3030
  - Infrastructure
  - CWD

## Comments, Initiatives and Coalition Letters

Letter	Authored/Signed	Date Sent
<a href="#">Indiana SB 389 Facts, Alternatives and Policy Concerns</a>	Signed	4.1.21
<a href="#">Missouri Prescribed Fire Legislation Testimony</a>	Authored	4.9.21
<a href="#">Snake River Salmon Restoration Support Letter</a>	Signed	4.12.21
<a href="#">Letter of Support - Forest Service Legacy Roads and Trails FY22 Appropriations</a>	Signed	4.13.21
<a href="#">AR SB670 - Letter of Support for AR License Fees</a>	Signed	4.13.21
<a href="#">Forest Stewardship Program Support Letter</a>	Signed	4.14.21
<a href="#">Hunter Angler Group Bristol Bay Letter to POTUS</a>	Signed	4.26.21
<a href="#">AWCP Robert Bonnie FPAC Support Letter</a>	Signed	4.26.21
<a href="#">AWCP Tommy P. Beaudreau DOI Dep. Sec. Support Letter</a>	Signed	4.26.21
<a href="#">Support ag conservation funding in American Jobs Plan sign on letter</a>	Signed	4.27.21
<a href="#">Hunters and Anglers Support Shannon Estenoz for DOI ASFWP</a>	Signed	5.6.21
<a href="#">Hunter Angler Support for PA Online Raffles</a>	Signed	5.7.21
<a href="#">Senate Highway Bill Wildlife Crossings Support Letter</a>	Signed	5.11.21
<a href="#">Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act</a>	Signed	5.14.21
<a href="#">Forest restoration in Infrastructure Package</a>	Signed	5.18.21
<a href="#">AWCP Infrastructure Letter</a>	Signed	5.20.21
<a href="#">AWCP Support Letter for Tracy Stone Manning BLM</a>	Signed	6.1.21
<a href="#">PA Antlerless License Modernization Support Letter</a>	Authored	6.2.21
<a href="#">Critical Minerals Supply Chain Hunt Fish Letter</a>	Signed	6.4.21
<a href="#">Vilsack Captive Cervid Moratorium Letter</a>	Co-Authored	6.9.21
<a href="#">MI Urine-Based Scent Ban Proposal Letter</a>	Authored	6.9.21
<a href="#">AWCP Ltr Opposing Chipman Nomination</a>	Signed	6.11.21
<a href="#">MS CWD Rule Change Proposals Letter</a>	Authored	6.15.21
<a href="#">National Forest Planning Letter</a>	Signed	6.30.21
<a href="#">Delaware Right to Hunt, Fish and Trap Support Letter</a>	Authored	3.31.21
<a href="#">WI RAWA Congressional Ask Letter</a>	Signed	*
PA SB 607 Support Letter	Signed	*
TX HB 1984 - Youth Hunt Legislation Letter	Signed	*

## Legislation and Resolutions

State	Legislation	Support/Oppose	Action Alert/Letter
Arkansas	SB 670	Support	<a href="#">AR SB670 - Letter of Support for AR License Fees</a>
Massachusetts	S 547	Support	<a href="#">Action Alert: Massachusetts Sunday Hunting and Outdoor Heritage</a>
Michigan	HB 4088	Oppose	<a href="#">Action Alert: Michigan House Bill 4088 – Wildlife Feeding</a>
North Carolina	H 181	Support	<a href="#">Action Alert: North Carolina CWD Response Funding</a>
Oregon	HB 3152	Support	<a href="#">Action Alert: Oregon HB 3152 – Wildlife Inspection Stations</a>
Pennsylvania	HB 290	Support	<a href="#">Action Alert: Support Pennsylvania Non-Profit Online Fundraising Legislation</a>
Pennsylvania	S 243	Support	<a href="#">Action Alert: Support Pennsylvania Non-Profit Online Fundraising Legislation</a>
Pennsylvania	S 607	Support	<a href="#">Action Alert: Support Sunday Hunting in Pennsylvania</a>
Texas	HB 1781	Oppose	<a href="#">Action Alert: Texas Captive Deer Cloning – H.B. 1781</a>
Texas	HB 1984	Oppose	

## Other Advocacy/Engagement Opportunities

State	Opportunity
New York	<a href="#">Action Alert: New York Youth Deer Hunting Pilot Program</a>
Massachusetts	<a href="#">Action Alert: Massachusetts License Fee Increase Proposal</a>
Montana	<a href="#">Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission Seeking Public Comment on Deer and Elk Urine Rules</a>
Texas	<a href="#">Texas Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) Enrollment Now Open</a>
Vermont	<a href="#">Vermont Fish and Wildlife to Hold Virtual Deer Hearings</a>
Wisconsin	<a href="#">Wisconsin 2021 Deer Season Recommendations Open for Public Comment</a>