

January 2023

Attention: NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Regarding: Columbus County Game Lands A Hunting Regulations Amendment

Dear WRC Members,

We, the undersigned residents and property owners of Bella Coola Road, Lake Waccamaw, NC, hereby propose and request an amendment to NC Game Land regulations, to prohibit the use of dogs for hunting deer on the portion of the Columbus County Game Land A that is south of NC 214.

We preface this request with the consideration that the land use of the property on the southern end of Columbus County Game Land A has changed considerably over recent years. About the same time the property constituting the present game land was deeded to the state of North Carolina from the Conservation Fund in 1996, the lakefront property along Bella Coola Road was annexed into the Town of Lake Waccamaw. Since then, significant improvements have opened up this property to intensive residential development:

- 1) The paved portion of the road has been lengthened up to the present terminus at the NC State Park.
- 2) Water and sewer services have been added to Bella Coola;
- 3) Trash and recycling pickup have been added to Bella Coola;
- 4) Police, fire and rescue squad services have been added to Bella Coola;
- 5) Street lights and internet services have been added to Bella Coola;
- 6) The Town of Lake Waccamaw has implemented zoning of the properties along Bella Coola for residential development.
- 7) The Lake Waccamaw State Park, at the end of Bella Coola Road, has been upgraded from a primitive park to a fully developed park.

As a result of these enhancements, residential development has increased dramatically on both sides of Bella Coola Road, such that Bella Coola Road is now aptly described as a high density residential community. Figure 1 from Columbus County GIS, below, shows the extent to which development has proceeded on Bella Coola Road. Presently there approximately 150 platted residential lots fronting Bella Coola Road; of these approximately 50 are immediately adjacent to the game land property (see Figure 2, below). Most of these lots already have homes on them, and it is reasonable to assume that the remaining lots soon will.

There are only two publicly owned locations adjacent this portion of Columbus County Game Land A that are accessible for motor vehicles, where hunters can enter the woods, and hunting dogs can be released and gathered; NC 214 runs along the north side of this portion of the game lands, and Bella Coola Road borders the southern side. Bella Coola Road lies wholly within the Town of Lake Waccamaw city incorporated limits, and is the sole means of access / egress for the high density residential community lying within the city limits and along the eastern shore of Lake Waccamaw. Lake Waccamaw lakefront property has some of the highest real estate values in Columbus county. Residents here pay thousands of dollars per foot, as well as the highest taxes in the county, for the privilege of living in the quiet enjoyment of this bucolic setting.

RECEIVED

FEB 14 2023

NCWRC RULES COORDINATOR

As noted above, the southern boundary of Columbus County Game Land A lies immediately on one side of Bella Coola Road, residential development with town limits lies on the other. The access limitations for this portion of the game lands are such that dog hunting south of NC 214 invariably uses Bella Coola Road as an integral part of the logistics of the hunt. Throughout the day of the hunt, hunters continuously use Bella Coola Road both as a means to access the game lands and to deploy, track, call, and retrieve dogs.

Dog hunting requires dogs to make lots of noise to effectively push the deer, and dogs that are particularly good at loud and incessant barking, howling, baying, etc., are valued by dog hunters for this reason. By design, dog hunting in Columbus County Game Land A results in vocal packs of hounds often in proximity to homes along Bella Coola Road within town limits of Lake Waccamaw, beginning early in the morning and continuing throughout the day. The Town of Lake Waccamaw's position on noisy dogs is delineated in a town ordinance prohibiting dogs that "bark excessively". The ordinance defines excessive barking as persistently creating a noise "by barking or otherwise", "to such a degree or extent that it unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort and convenience of a person". Clearly, a pack of hounds chasing a deer up and back in the woods across the road from your house falls into this category. It is also noted here that current dog hunting practice is to train hounds to respond to the sound of a horn blowing. In addition to incessant barking from hunting dogs, at some point the hunt invariably transitions to hunters driving up and down and parking along Bella Coola Road, honking truck horns to retrieve dogs.

The game lands adjoins the Lake Waccamaw State Park in the vicinity of the Big Creek boat landing managed by the State Park, and Big Creek is a favorite location for kayaking, fishing, and nature watching. None of these activities are feasible while dog hunting is occurring. Based on discussion with state park personnel, the Lake Waccamaw State Park has tentative plans to build camping facilities in the Park property on Big Creek adjacent to the game lands. A campground here would likewise suffer from the impacts of dog hunting.

NC game lands regulations currently prohibit the discharge of firearms within 150 yards of a residence. We, the residents, can say firsthand that the discharge of a shotgun firing 3" magnum shells at a distance of 150 yards from our homes is quite unnerving, particularly when children are playing outside. In our opinion, this setback is far insufficient to protect our safety and the safety of our families, never mind the peaceful enjoyment of our property.

The problems arising from dog hunting in the southern portion of Columbus County Game Land A are illustrated by a recent hunt many of us witnessed on December 10, 2022. Early that morning dogs were released into the southern portion of Columbus County Game Land A. Hunters accessed the game lands from NC 214, from Bella Coola Road (a jon boat was placed in the canal adjacent Bella Coola Road and used to portage hunters across the canal and into the game land), and from the nearby State Park boat landing. Throughout the day, packs of dogs ran deer through the game lands, often in close proximity to Bella Coola Road. Several times during the day a shotgun was discharged and magazine emptied (5 shot capacity) in the woods

nearby Bella Coola Road. At one point, a deer being chased escaped the game lands and headed for the safety of the lake. This resulted in hounds chasing the deer across Bella Coola Road, first through Park property, and then through the backyards of town residents. The dogs were followed by hunters in trucks, with horns honking, driving into yards and driveways to retrieve the dogs from behind the homes along the lake. Clearly, this chaos constitutes a situation that "unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort and convenience of a person", yet when lake residents questioned the impact of these activities on the private enjoyment of their property, a hunter responded that it was all legal, and there was nothing the residents could do about it. The hunt on December 10 concluded like dog hunts invariably do, with hunters gathering up their dogs. For quite some time after the hunt itself was over and into the evening, trucks were driving up and down Bella Coola Road or parked on the Big Creek Bridge, honking horns to retrieve their dogs.

In light of these circumstances, we, the undersigned residents / property owners of Bell Coola Road, submit that, as a result of substantial and ongoing planned development, the game lands bordering Bella Coola Road are now adjacent to a high density residential development, and that continued use of the portion of Columbus County Game Land A south of NC 214 for dog hunting and game land access deprives us of the peaceful enjoyment of our property. Further, that it is inconsistent with Town of Lake Waccamaw dog / noise ordinances, adversely impacts present and planned usage of the Lake Waccamaw State Park, and is wholly incompatible with the residential character of Bella Coola Road. We therefore request that Wildlife Resources Commission amend and adopt the following regulation for utilization of Columbus County Game Land A:

15ANCAC 10D .0220 COLUMBUS COUNTY GAME LAND IN COLUMBUS COUNTY

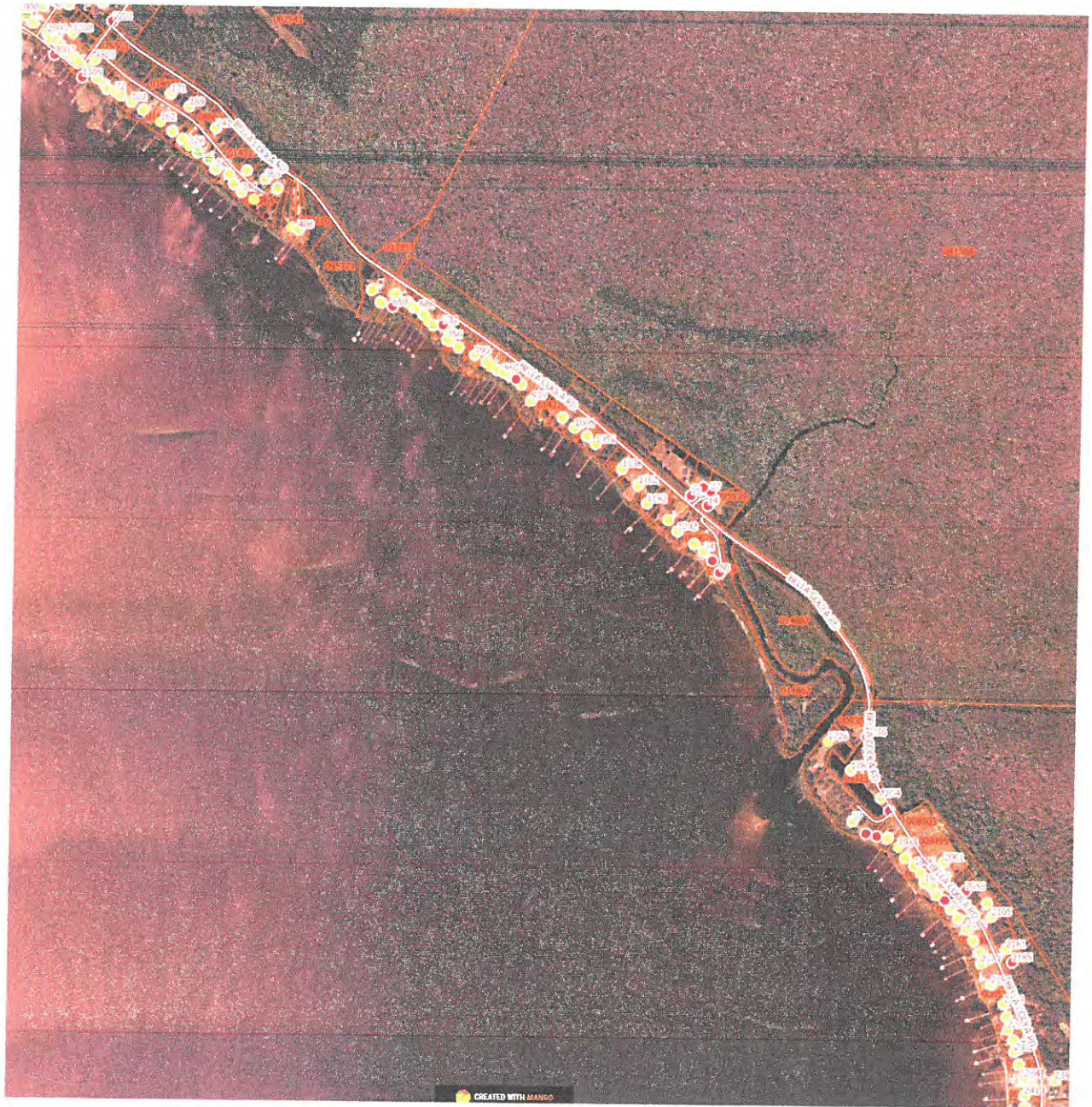
- (3) The use of dogs for hunting deer is prohibited on the portion of the Columbus County Game Land A that is south of NC 214.

Respectively Submitted,
See Attached Signature Pages*

Figure 1



Figure 2



SIGNATURE PETITION

To The NC Wildlife Resources Commission

We, the undersigned residents and property owners of Bella Coola Road, Lake Waccamaw, NC, hereby propose and request an amendment to NC Game Land regulations, to prohibit the use of dogs for hunting deer on the portion of the Columbus County Game Land A that is south of NC 214. We preface this request with the consideration that the land use of the property on the southern end of Columbus County Game Land A has changed considerably over recent years. (see details in attached letter)

	Printed Name	Signature	Address	Date
1)	Patricia L. Medlin	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/2/2023
2)	David E Medlin	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1-2-23
3)	MARK WILLIAMS	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1-2-23
4)	Jennifer William	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1-2-23
5)	[REDACTED] Gwynking	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
6)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Sylvia B. Patton	1-2-23
7)	[REDACTED] Patton	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/2/23
8)	Stephanie Brown	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1.3.23
9)	Charlotte Findley	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1-3-23
10)	Jess Battle	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/3/23
11)	Brent Lanier	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1-3-23
12)	Shelly Lanier	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/3/23
13)	Brenda Turner	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/3/23
14)	Nick Turner	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/3-23
15)	William A Blake	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/3/23

SIGNATURE PETITION

To The NC Wildlife Resources Commission

We, the undersigned residents and property owners of Bella Coola Road, Lake Waccamaw, NC, hereby propose and request an amendment to NC Game Land regulations, to prohibit the use of dogs for hunting deer on the portion of the Columbus County Game Land A that is south of NC 214. We preface this request with the consideration that the land use of the property on the southern end of Columbus County Game Land A has changed considerably over recent years. (see details in attached letter)

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Date
1) Elaine Blake			1-3-23
2) Linda Barnhill			1-3-23
3) Scott Findley			1-6-23
4) Allyson Battle			01/07/23
5) Ashlee Ramirez			01/07/23
6) Reynaldo Ramirez			1/7/2023
7) BARBARA BURTON			01/07/2023
8)			1/25/2023
9) Brenda Barker			
10)			
11)			
12)			
13)			
14)			
15)			

SIGNATURE PETITION

To The NC Wildlife Resources Commission

We, the undersigned residents and property owners of Bella Coola Road, Lake Waccamaw, NC, hereby propose and request an amendment to NC Game Land regulations, to prohibit the use of dogs for hunting deer on the portion of the Columbus County Game Land A that is south of NC 214. We preface this request with the consideration that the land use of the property on the southern end of Columbus County Game Land A has changed considerably over recent years. (see details in attached letter)

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Date
1) Jeffrey Brett Lane	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2) Stephanie Quist	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/2/23
3) Robert J. Lane	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/2/23
4) Rebecca Wilcox	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/2/23
5) Elizabeth Eslander	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/2/23
6) Judy Batchelder	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/2/23
7) Pamela Winsky	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
8) [REDACTED]	WILLIAM M WINSKY	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
9) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
10) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
11) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
12) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
13) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
14) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
15) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

SIGNATURE PETITION

To The NC Wildlife Resources Commission

We, the undersigned residents and property owners of Bella Coola Road, Lake Waccamaw, NC, hereby propose and request an amendment to NC Game Land regulations, to prohibit the use of dogs for hunting deer on the portion of the Columbus County Game Land A that is south of NC 214. We preface this request with the consideration that the land use of the property on the southern end of Columbus County Game Land A has changed considerably over recent years. (see details in attached letter)

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Date
1)			
2)	Julie M Stocks		1/3/23
3)			
4)			
5)			
6)			
7)			
8)	Jo Wayman		
9)	Gene Wayman		
10)			
11)			
12)			
13)			
14)			
15)			

SIGNATURE PETITION

To The NC Wildlife Resources Commission

We, the undersigned residents and property owners of Bella Coola Road, Lake Waccamaw, NC, hereby propose and request an amendment to NC Game Land regulations, to prohibit the use of dogs for hunting deer on the portion of the Columbus County Game Land A that is south of NC 214. We preface this request with the consideration that the land use of the property on the southern end of Columbus County Game Land A has changed considerably over recent years. (see details in attached letter)

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Date
1) Stephen M. Smith	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1-27-23
2) Paula Smith	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1-27-23
3) Melanie Capps	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1-27-23
4)			
5)			
6)			
7)			
8)			
9)			
10)			
11)			
12)			
13)			
14)			
15)			

SIGNATURE PETITION

To The NC Wildlife Resources Commission

We, the undersigned residents and property owners of Bella Coola Road, Lake Waccamaw, NC, hereby propose and request an amendment to NC Game Land regulations, to prohibit the use of dogs for hunting deer on the portion of the Columbus County Game Land A that is south of NC 214. We preface this request with the consideration that the land use of the property on the southern end of Columbus County Game Land A has changed considerably over recent years. (see details in attached letter)

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Date
1) Joseph Little	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	24 Jan 2023
2) Meredith M. Little	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	1/24/23
3)			
4			
5)			
6)			
7)			
8)			
9)			
10)			
11)			
12)			
13)			
14)			
15)			