

Burgos, Alexander N

From: Rules, Oah
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 11:53 AM
To: Burgos, Alexander N
Subject: FW: [External] protect the bears!
Attachments: bear hunt N. Carolina.docx

From: Isabelle <imtassi@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 10:43 AM
To: Rules, Oah <oah.rules@oah.nc.gov>
Subject: [External] protect the bears!

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Hello -

I sent the below (and attached) letter to the address listed below in January. PLEASE PROTECT THE BEARS!!

January 18, 2024

Rule-making Coordinator
1701 Mail Service Center
Raleigh NC 27699-1701

Re: opposition to expanding bear hunting season

To whom it may concern – NCWRC:

It is my understanding that the NCWRC seeks to expand the bear hunting season and to continue using dogs to hunt bears. This is barbaric!!! No one should be killing ANY bears! Are we still in the Middle Ages? Or are we in the US in the 21st century? Are we not more enlightened than this? Are we not more compassionate as a society than this? If someone treated a dog or cat in this manner, they would rightfully go to jail or prison. Why are bears treated any differently? Why can't human beings peacefully coexist with them? They (the bears) were here first, after all. Humans are infringing on their space, not the other way around. Why have thousands of acres of their sanctuary been eliminated? Why are the NCWRC and bear hunters acting like barbarians? Why are you not protecting wildlife? This is all so disheartening and heartbreaking. The number of hunting license purchasers in N. Carolina as a percentage of the state population is just 5.8% (less than 6%).

PLEASE STOP THE BEAR HUNT, do **NOT** expand the current hunting season, and **CEASE** the use of dogs in any hunts. Killing bears with packs of dogs is not even a hunting issue -- it's an animal cruelty issue. I would urge you to end the practice of bear hunting. It also seems like a conflict of interest when you are funding your agency with the dead bodies of innocent bears. Truly a conflict. Can't we do better as a society? Where is honesty, decency, and compassion? Have you lost your moral compass? As Mahatma

Gandhi stated: "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." Why not aspire to do better instead of worse?

Sincerely,

Isabelle Tassi

--

Isabelle Tassi

<http://www.peaceablekingdomfilm.org>

Award-winning film from Tribe of Heart

"The idea that some lives matter less is the root of all that's wrong in the world." ~ Dr. Paul Farmer

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Raleigh NC 27699-1701

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Sincerely,

Isabelle Tassi

Burgos, Alexander N

From: Rules, Oah
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 8:25 AM
To: Burgos, Alexander N
Subject: FW: [External] BEAR HUNT EXTENSION
Attachments: JHW NC RE BEAR HUNT 3.25.24.doc

From: WOODARDLAW <woodardlaw@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2024 11:49 PM
To: Rules, Oah <oah.rules@oah.nc.gov>
Subject: [External] BEAR HUNT EXTENSION

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Please see attached letter re bear hunt extension.

James H. Woodard

Attorney at Law

woodardlaw@aol.com, woodardlaw@gmail.com

"AV PREEMINENT"-HIGHEST POSSIBLE PEER REVIEW RATING IN BOTH LEGAL ABILITIES & ETHICAL STANDARDS BY MARTINDALE-HUBBELL

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James H Woodard

ATTORNEY AT LAW

17001 SW 90 AVE

PALMETTO BAY, FL 33157

WOODARDLAWOFFICE@AOL.COM

OFFICE 786-361.3529

AV HIGHEST PEER REVIEW RATING MARTINDALE-HUBBELL

3/25/24

Office of Administrative Hearings
Attn: Rules Review Commission
1711 New Hope Church Road
Raleigh, NC 27609

Via Email

Re: Opposition to extension of bear hunt season 15A NCAC 10B .0202

Dear Sir/Madam:

The proposed expansion of hunting dates for black bear is not necessary and will have negative cumulative effects in that a substantial portion of the population views the wanton killing of bears, including through the use of dogs, as cruel and unjustifiable. These are the same people upon whom North Carolina environmental tourism depends. The proposed extension of hunting dates should be rejected.

Sincerely,
James H. Woodard

Fern Martin
94 Penland Cove Road
Black Mountain, NC 28711

FILED

2024 MAR 19 PM 1:47

OFFICE OF ADMIN HEARINGS

March 15, 2024

NC Rules Review Commission
1711 New Hope Church Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27609

RE: Expansion of bear hunting season: Bear [15A NCAC 10B .0202]

Opposition to NC Wildlife Commission recently adopted rule about Bear Hunting
Request for review

Dear members of the Commission:

I am writing to request that the above rule(s) be reviewed by you during the next legislative session and that the effective date of the rules(s) be delayed until a decision is made as to whether this amendment should be approved.

My objections to the recently adopted rules are twofold: that they are not reasonably necessary and that they will have a negative impact on the economy of North Carolina.

The justification for lengthening the hunting season is to decrease the number of bears and therefore human and bear interactions. I have lived in the mountains of North Carolina for nearly 40 years with very frequent interactions with black bears. Aggressive behavior by the bears is extremely rare. If aggressive behavior happens it is usually the humans at fault, i.e. unleashed dogs. With the very rare incidence of humans being injured by bears, opening the bear hunting season early to decrease the bear population is not reasonably necessary.

The state's economy, especially here in western North Carolina, is heavily dependent on tourism. Starting the bear hunting season early when so many tourists are out enjoying fall colors is a significant safety issue. It is particularly alarming to think that tourists enjoying fall in the mountains may risk encountering hunters and vicious bear hunting dogs. (hunting dogs with bears is cruel and should be banned). I suspect many tourists will try to avoid that situation completely. Thus, these new rules will have a negative impact on the state's economy.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and I hope that the Rules Review Commission will not approve the NCWRC's expansion and starting of the bear hunting season early.

Sincerely,



Fern Martin

Burgos, Alexander N

From: Nancy Kehr <drkehr@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2024 7:25 PM
To: Rules, Oah; rrc.comments
Subject: [External] Against Extended Black Bear Hunting Season

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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I am against the extension of the Black Bear Hunting season in North Carolina.

I live in Asheville and the bears are a part of the cohabitation of people and bears. I have lived in my house near the French Broad River and have periodically seen bears come through my property. I live in the River Walk Community and we are all used to the bears. They have never bothered anyone's pets or property.

While I am aware of human bear interactions that have not turned out well, when examined it is because of human ignorance, not bear aggression. Yes if people leave their trash cans out (bear straps are easily purchased to keep bears from getting into the cans) bears are opportunistic and as their habitat is regularly raided by humans who eat the berries that the bears need, again it is human caused problems.

I am a cyclist and have occasionally come across bears and sometimes a bear with cubs. I know to stop and let the bears pass and have never been threatened by a bear.

I understand that, like deer, the bear population does need to be culled but that has been handled in the past without the need to extend the season.

I have also been on my bike and heard the rifle shots; I've also been enjoying an evening out on friend's decks only to be disturbed by gun shots. It is disturbing to hear rifle shots and any time of day, but especially when I'm biking, hiking or just sitting out on a deck.

I wonder at the lost revenue as tourists learn of the hunting season happening at peak times they would be out hiking or camping in our mountains.

Nancy Kehr
828-484-8492
Asheville, NC

Burgos, Alexander N

From: rosa weisfeld <themagam1@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2024 6:24 PM
To: Rules, Oah
Cc: rrc.comments; Apple ID
Subject: [External] Oppose NCWRC Amendment to extend NC Bear Hunting Season

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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March 16, 2024

Dear Commissioners:

I want to express my strong opposition to moving forward with the 2024-2025 new Amendment expanding the bear hunting season as proposed by the NCWRC by an additional nine days, to become effective on August 1, 2024.

The Commission states "Opening the bear hunting season nine days earlier will serve to change the composition of the Mountain bear harvest..." This means opening the season earlier will increase the number of pregnant bears killed.

The rule is not reasonably necessary as the number of human/bear interactions that result in injury to humans remains very rare and is most often caused by humans and their dogs being unleashed or unsupervised.

An issue that is being cited as justification - of increased sightings of bears - can be handled humanely by following guidelines from Bear Wise, so that inquisitive bears are less tempted to go into neighborhoods. When more and more land is developed, bears are displaced, and what follows is that we see them more, but the answer cannot be so simplistic as to create a regulation to kill more bears.

Introducing an Amendment to allow more days of hunting bears does nothing to address the human-made issue that then shifts blame to innocent bears who may or may not even be those "involved in increased bear-human interactions".

The proposed change especially targets and harms younger bears who have just started life on their own away from their mothers following bear family separation and who don't have the skills to elude the packs of dogs running rampant and ambushing bears in their forest homes. Killing does not reduce human-bear interactions and it does not "target" the bears who have been deemed vulnerable to human-bear interaction. Implementing and mandating Bear-Wise Basics with responsibility and enforcement is the solution to resolving negative human-bear interactions.

Additional bear hunting days does not solve bear population issues, except in a way that condones killing more bears for the sake of killing for recreation. NC bears control their own population naturally by delayed implantation and is so important to educate and enforce regulations that point to how human behavior is the cause of these interactions that blanketly then point the finger at a bear to be killed – as though this will stop the problem. Effective co-existence between humans and bears needs regulations that require humans to control themselves by not offering or leaving attractants on Forest Service property and the neighboring private property.

I strongly oppose using dogs, increasing the use of dogs in hunting and strongly oppose the expansion of the bear hunting and the use of unprocessed bait that the NCWRC is also endorsing - a practice that betrays the trust of an animal who is fooled to treat this as food and is bringing their families to feed here – not knowing how much danger this disguised death trap will be for them as they eat.

It is a false narrative that bears are overpopulating and threaten human safety. The increase in bear-human conflicts is due in part to the failure of people to remove bear attractants and adequately secure their trash. Bear-human conflicts will continue to rise until the root causes are addressed (unsecured trash and other attractants). If we apply common-sense measures such as bear-resistant trash cans, securing garbage until morning pickup, and removing attractants such as birdfeeders, we can resolve these issues and prevent future incidents.

In fact, black bears are not overpopulating and pose no significant threat to human safety. Black bears are predominantly vegetarian, with 80% of their diet consisting of plants, 15% insects, and only 5% animal matter. Unprovoked bear attacks are extremely rare.

The proposed Rule/Amendment to extend the North Carolina Bear Hunting Season will have a negative impact on the state's economy.

The NCWRC needs to put its resources into what public opinion asks of you. You could lead the way to stop the practice of using dogs as hunting tools on North Carolina bears. This action would be welcomed and respected by many North Carolina residents, those who are considering relocation to North Carolina and entering the North Carolina real estate market, those who have second homes in North Carolina and who are considering making North Carolina their primary residence with their second home, and those who love North Carolina for its beautiful mountains to hike in and come here to enjoy and participate in this vacation and recreational purpose.

The Amendment could have a negative impact on the NC economy because tourists who just want to hike without risking being shot by careless hunters or attacked by hunting dogs will choose to go elsewhere in these prime fall weeks. North Carolina residents and visitors resent losing some of the best hiking season to the hunting season as it is, and the economic damage to restaurants and hotels we might have patronized is a real economic concern – these businesses will lose out on significant business – as those who care, learn and react with their economic wallets - to the practices of North Carolina and its disregard for animals living in the beautiful wild forests.

Non-hunters value the beauty of North Carolina to enjoy without fear and with the sacred respect of what a mountain forest with its inhabitants is.

I appreciate your reading my Letter of Opposition to extending the bear hunting season in North Carolina and implore the NCWRC to postpone final decisions of implementing these new regulations in August 2024 – and to consider negative consequences that such a decision, unsupported by so many people – will bring to the well-being of North Carolina, the respect entrusted to NCWRC, and to the Bears who are interested in living their lives. Co-existence is possible and is the constructive way to proceed.

Sincerely,

Rosa Weisfeld

Jupiter, Florida

Burgos, Alexander N

From: Barbara Alexander <barbara@barbarainc.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2024 12:31 PM
To: Rules, Oah; rrc.comments
Subject: [External] Against extended bear hunting season

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Dear commission,

The Commission says objections must address at least one (not all three) of the following categories. a) The rule is not clear and it is ambiguous. b) The rule is not reasonably necessary. c) The rule will have a negative impact on the state's economy.

I chose to address items B and C for the following reasons. Item B: I live in Asheville, North Carolina in the mountains. We have had many bears over the last 25 years come onto our property and on our roads. They have never been a problem and are actually delightful to watch with their babies. I have personally witnessed how gentle they are with their babies And walk away as long as I am not aggressive towards them. It's the people that are causing the problem, and the cruelty of hunters with their dogs is beyond humane.

In regards to item b) The rule is not necessary as the number of human/bear interactions that result in injury to humans remains EXTREMELY rare and is most often caused by humans and their dogs being unleashed or unsupervised. The issue of increased sightings of bears can be handled humanely by following guidelines from Bear Wise so curious bears don't get into trouble in our neighborhoods. It's no mystery that as humans develop more land, the bears are displaced so we see them more, but the answer shouldn't be to simply kill more of them.

Item C: I also horseback ride and have been in the woods and come up on hunters with rifles. It is incredibly frightening to me to know that someone could shoot me or my dog by accident. Though bright colored attire is worn, accidents happen all the time and we don't need to extend the danger To any of us walking or riding in our beautiful woods.

In addition, tourists come here all the time and as long as they're not stupid, they may be lucky enough to have a bear sighting. Something that's common in this part of the country and uncommon in most others. The rule could have a negative impact on the NC economy because tourists who just want to hike without risking being shot by careless hunters or attacked by hunting dogs (it happens!) may choose to go elsewhere in these prime fall weeks. Plus, we NC locals resent losing some of our best hiking season to the hunting season as it is, and the restaurants and hotels we might have patronized will lose out on our business.

rrc.comments@oah.nc.gov oah.rules@oah.nc.gov

Barbara Alexander
828-712-8993

Burgos, Alexander N

From: Jennifer Mosley <jennijo6@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 10:19 AM
To: rrc.comments
Subject: [External] New hunting laws

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Please do not continue to allow more killing of our wild life with new seasons and more killing allowed. Our bears and coyotes up here have all but disappeared. Allowing Hunting of animals in hibernation is already gross enough.

We must preserve what little mountains we are being left with. As our eco system is so important and now rare.

Thank you

Just a concerned taxpaying citizen.