

# Allegheny County Sportsmen's League, Inc.

CELEBRATING 87 YEARS OF ENHANCING THE CONSERVATION OF THE OUTDOOR RESOURCES OF PENNSYLVANIA  
THE VOICE OF 200,000 LICENSED HUNTERS AND FISHERMEN IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY



Website: [www.acslpa.org](http://www.acslpa.org)

MEMBER: NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

MEMBER: NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION

MEMBER: U.S. SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

MEMBER: CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR THE RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

Feb 28, 2019

Dear Representatives:

## A Case for passage of Sunday hunting

The Allegheny County Sportsmen's League represents many clubs and organization in and around Allegheny County. While there is some difference of opinion on Sunday hunting for religious, tradition, or personal reasons, there is still a large majority who are in favor of Sunday hunting. These individuals have Monday to Friday jobs, but would welcome the opportunity to have literally twice as much time – one additional day – to hunt the Pennsylvania Game Lands.

The legislation only transfers authority for the decision concerning Sunday hunting from the General Assembly to the Pennsylvania Game Commission. It does not require the Commission to permit Sunday hunting on state Game Lands. Instead, it provides the Commission with an additional tool to manage wildlife population or to create additional recreational opportunities for the many hunters of the Commonwealth.

Beyond the benefits to hunters, the Commonwealth stands to reap economic benefits by allowing Sunday hunting. By some estimates, these economic benefits could generate millions in local and state tax revenue through additional spending, creating many full and part-time jobs. These are, of course, tangible benefits for the state, but speak nothing of the intangible benefits to the countless hunters who would take advantage of the additional day to hunt. These are parents and children, brothers and sisters, who have a new opportunity to partake of, and pass along the great tradition of hunting that Pennsylvanians have enjoyed for generations.

The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, of course, opposes this change. They have long argued that allowing Sunday hunting will lead to their members posting their land to prohibit hunting. What they ignore, however, is that there is much farmland in Pennsylvania that is already posted. When our neighbor to the west, Ohio, expanded hunting opportunities, they did not see a large increase in posted lands despite dire warnings to the contrary.

Farmers are some of the hardest working people in the Commonwealth. As taxpaying landowners, they have the right to invite people onto their property to use that property how and when they allow. No matter what the Pennsylvania Game Commission says about Sunday hunting, private landowners still have the right to post their land to prohibit Sunday hunting.

### President:

KLINT MACRO  
724-212-7006  
[kmacro@acslpa.org](mailto:kmacro@acslpa.org)

### First Vice President:

EDGAR STEPHAN  
724-354-2307  
[edstephan@edstephan.net](mailto:edstephan@edstephan.net)

### Second Vice President:

JACK WALTERS  
HM: 412.884.2148  
[jwalters@acslpa.org](mailto:jwalters@acslpa.org)

### Treasurer:

HERB OHLIGER  
950 Lindsay Road  
Carnegie PA 15106  
412-759-0682  
[hohliger@acslpa.org](mailto:hohliger@acslpa.org)

### Directors

MIKE KOZAK  
DR. CHARLES GALLO  
JOHN HOFFMAN  
MIKE CHRISTESON  
MIKE KARKULLA

### Legislative Chairman:

MIKE CHRISTESON  
P.O. Box 234  
Houston, PA 15342  
HM: 724.222.6160  
[mchrist@acslpa.org](mailto:mchrist@acslpa.org)

### Executive Secretary

Michele Colville  
[mcolville@acslpa.org](mailto:mcolville@acslpa.org)

However, the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania also are landowners. The Pennsylvania Game Commission owns land on behalf of citizen hunters, for their use and enjoyment. Hunting license sales pay for this land (well over a million acres!). Just as the Farm Bureau and its constituents will have the right to designate their property use for Sunday hunting, or not, the Commission should be able to decide on behalf of its constituency whether or not Game Lands are to be used on Sundays for that purpose. Extra license fee money was collected for purchasing property for hunters to hunt on why should they be restricted from SGL.

It is not improper to request that public lands be open for public use at a time and manner that is conducive to that use, while at the same time respecting the right of the private landowner to make whatever rules they want concerning the use of their property. In doing so, both the public interest and the private interest are respected and can peacefully coexist. All we are asking by supporting Sunday hunting is that the state turn control of hunting back to the Commission, which can then decide what days to allow hunting and what species.

Another real problem: Parents not being able to go hunting on Sat or very severely limited to Sat hunting time because of the children involved with sports & school activities on Sat leaving only Sunday open.

Its a tough position to be in, support your child by attending practice or a game versus not going hunting and even their children couldn't go hunting lots of time because of extra sat school activities when they wanted to hunt. It's a real spot to be in as a parent's with those kind of choices and its not something a blue law written in 1873 should NOT be still in effect almost 150 YEARS later making you have to choose. **Children grow up fast & the few precious years to instill and share in the them a rich hunting experience shouldn't be limited by a 1873 law** that also prevented Sunday fishing in PA to it was repealed in the 1930's.

Currently, the Commission allows hunting of crows, foxes, and coyotes on Sundays. In order to respect the desires of those who oppose Sunday hunting, it would be entirely reasonable for the PGC to only allow Sunday hunting on private property with written permission of the landowner, or on State Game Lands. Some other ideas include:

- The Commission could choose to allow only mentored youth hunting on Sunday, or perhaps even small game or certain species like bear or turkey.
- Since the vast majority of hunters in the Commonwealth hunt deer, the Commission could allow a combination of public or private property, but only allow deer hunting with bows on Sundays.
- Restrict Sunday hunting to urban deer hunting in areas where there is a recognized population problem leading to expensive, injury-prone auto collisions that result in deer carcasses that cannot be harvested.
- PGC could allow hunting only on farms where crop damages are compensated for or by issuing DMAP tags. As much as farmers may not like Sunday hunting, they assuredly like the animal population literally eating their profits even less.

These are just some ideas. What the final form of Sunday should be is left to the PGC to decide and NOT restricted or limited by legislation. Ultimately, people negotiating in good faith can often find common ground to compromise. The real question, however, is whether the Commission should be trusted with the ability to allow Sunday hunting, to both expand recreational hunting and further refine wildlife management. None of the states that have repealed the Sunday Hunting Blue Laws have had the problems that the Farm Bureau claims would occur, particularly not to the point of requiring the removal of the power to decide from each state's hunting authority.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Christeson

ACSL Legislative Chairman

Visit US on the web at <http://acslpa.org/>

Its way past time to repeal the PA Sunday legislative hunting restrictions placed in the 1873, now that we all live in the 21st century as the reasons back then are not as valid today as the times are changing in case people elected to office haven't noticed!

### Other resources to reference

December 30, 2007 By Bob Frye

#### Economic impact of hunting, fishing in state among tops in nation

How big are hunting and fishing in Pennsylvania? These numbers help to tell the tale.

- Annual spending by Pennsylvania sportsmen exceeds the cash receipts from dairy products, cattle, greenhouse/nursery, mushrooms and broilers, the state's top five grossing agricultural commodities (\$3.5 billion versus \$3.1 billion).
- Hunting and fishing account for \$9.6 million a day being pumped into the state's economy.

[http://pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/sports/outdoors/s\\_545093.html?source=rss&feed=3#ixzz1OV0PMDGr](http://pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/sports/outdoors/s_545093.html?source=rss&feed=3#ixzz1OV0PMDGr)

September 03, 2006 By Ben Moyer

#### Outdoors: Sunday hunting would expand opportunities for the state's working sportsmen

A Penn State study released in early 2004, however, suggests that only a fraction of the state's private land base would be at risk to posting if Sunday hunting laws were relaxed.

- In a survey of landowners in Greene, Pike and York counties, Penn State found that 69 percent of landowners post their property against hunting. Among the remaining 31 percent who had not yet posted, 58 percent said Sunday hunting would motivate them to close their land to hunters.
- **Doing the math associated with land area and ownership in the state indicates that Sunday hunting might jeopardize access to about 13 percent of Pennsylvania's land area.**

Read more: <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/06246/718691-358.stm#ixzz1OUz3jICO>

Reading this the max we may lose is 13% and that is **IF** the land owners follow through with their threat. In Ohio most didn't.

So the threat to post property **IF** Sunday hunting really is a non issue as large parts of PA are already posted against hunting 6 days a week now.

Right now 100% of the ALL the public property and game lands are closed to Sunday hunting for most species including your own property **IF** you want the freedom to choose to hunt on Sunday or not.

December 6, 2009 By Don Steese

#### Making the case for Sunday hunting

Argument No. 4: "People like to use the state game lands for other uses; they need one day a week during the hunting seasons to bike, hike, ride horses." Sorry, hunters paid for the state game lands with their license money, and their needs come first. If you treat us real nice maybe we'll let you have Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. But you work on those days, you say? So do most hunters, and you're OK with keeping them off the game lands on one of the few days they don't work and could hunt. You're more than welcome to find some land that is posted against Sunday hunting and ask permission to pursue your passion there.

[http://dailyitem.com/0200\\_sports/x546127889/Making-the-case-for-Sunday-hunting/print](http://dailyitem.com/0200_sports/x546127889/Making-the-case-for-Sunday-hunting/print)

March 3, 2011 By Bob Frye Capital Correspondent

**PA: Sunday-hunting push is targeting this state**

"The Coalition has just one goal: to facilitate the repeal of laws prohibiting hunting on Sundays in the 11 remaining states that still have the archaic blue law in place," said Rob Sexton, vice president for government affairs for the Sportsmen's Alliance.

"This is really a question of basic American freedom. As a property owner, I should have the right to decide whether I want to allow hunting on my land any day of the week.

"And as a hunter, I should be allowed to take advantage of the precious hours and days available to me to go into the field with family and friends and enjoy the hunt."

Repealing Pennsylvania's blue law would not in and of itself lead to hunting on Sundays. But it would give the Game Commission the authority to include Sundays in hunting and trapping seasons if it saw fit

[.http://outdoornews.com/pennsylvania/news/article\\_038dc35e-44e5-11e0-bfb7-001cc4c002e0.html](http://outdoornews.com/pennsylvania/news/article_038dc35e-44e5-11e0-bfb7-001cc4c002e0.html)

Feb 13, 2019 By John Finnerty CNHI News Service

**Pennsylvania Senate bill aims for Sunday hunting**

A number of states have relaxed their hunting blue laws in recent years and there's no indication that there were negative impacts that made any of them rue the decision, Daub said.

Delaware legalized Sunday hunting last year. Maryland has limits on Sunday hunting, but there is legislation in that state to relax the Sunday hunting restrictions.

In New York, Sunday hunting was opened in 1996 for three Sundays during the gun season, according to the Congressional Sportsman's Foundation, a lobbying group. Five years later, the entire state allowed Sunday hunting throughout the year, with few exceptions. In Ohio, a three-year trial period for Sunday hunting was initiated in 1998 and then became permanent in 2002

Read more : [https://www.meadvilletribune.com/news/pennsylvania-senate-bill-aims-for-sunday-hunting/article\\_9f60a448-2f21-11e9-ae85-6f706975956b.html](https://www.meadvilletribune.com/news/pennsylvania-senate-bill-aims-for-sunday-hunting/article_9f60a448-2f21-11e9-ae85-6f706975956b.html)

**Congressional Sportsmen Foundation**

Sunday hunting bans are one of the last remaining examples of the puritanical blue laws that were initially designed to encourage church attendance. At the time when these restrictions were first put in place, other activities that were illegal on Sundays included: opening a store for business, drinking alcoholic beverages, and tilling your fields. Today, most blue laws have been repealed; however, Sunday hunting restrictions in some capacity remain in 11 states while 3 states (ME, MA, and PA) prohibit or severely restrict Sunday hunting.

In March 2014, Governor Terry McAuliffe signed Virginia House Bill 1237 which amends the Code of Virginia relating to hunting wild animals and wild birds on private property and state waters on Sundays. The amendment broadly allows for hunting on Sundays with some exceptions, most relating to the proximity of a place of worship. Prior to the passage of this legislation an economic analysis conducted by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, found that providing a Sunday hunting option in Virginia would contribute an **additional \$296 million to the state's economy and 3,927 new jobs would be created.**

A 2011 empirical study conducted by CSF staff found that if Sunday hunting restrictions were lessened in the six states that had the most severe restrictions at that time (CT, DE, ME, MA, PA, VA), an additional 117,500 hunters would likely be recruited or retained by 2016. This would have resulted in **substantial increases** in funding for the fish and wildlife agencies within these states.

MUCH more documentation by CSF of Sunday hunting in other states **READ HERE**

<http://congressionalsportsmen.org/policies/state/sunday-hunting-restrictions>