



PHEASANTS

forever®

June 8, 2006

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TO: Pennsylvania House Game and Fisheries Committee Public Hearing

RE: Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's Position of Pennsylvania House Bills 2600, 2601, and 2602.

Pheasants Forever (PF) and Quail Forever (QF) is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the protection and enhancement of pheasants, quail, and other wildlife through habitat improvement, public awareness, education and advocacy for sound land management policy. There are roughly 1800 PF and QF members represented by 16 chapters in Pennsylvania.

The members of PF and QF recognize that the Pennsylvania Game Commission's (PGC) growing expenses and commitments to managing Pennsylvania's wildlife resources is not balanced with current revenues and the time has come to increase hunting and trapping license fees as well as investigate alternative sources of revenue.

The members of PF and QF of Pennsylvania support House Bills 2600 and 2601 along with all the proposed stamps associated with these bills. More specifically, the majority of the members favor HB 2601; proposing the adult resident hunting fee at \$34. The organization realizes that there is a continuing need and increased demand for private lands habitat work for wildlife in Pennsylvania. The future of wildlife in Pennsylvania depends on private lands and private landowners, and the PGC budget and funding priorities need to reflect that, both for wildlife habitat and wildlife research. These license fee increases and stamps and tags must specifically address those overwhelming needs.

The organization specifically supports the proposed \$10 pheasant stamp as it would hopefully restore the historic pheasant allocations and continue the great pheasant hunting opportunities in PA. However, the organization would like to see 50% of the pheasant stamp revenue earmarked for grassland habitat establishment or improvement with at least 25% dedicated to private lands. In addition, we would like to see support

allocated to the establishment of a long-term pheasant and quail management plan and continued support of wild pheasant and quail reintroduction programs in Pennsylvania.

The members of PF and QF also support House Bill 2602. Additional revenues supporting acquisition and habitat management of State Game Lands (SGL's) are a plus for the resource. However, some concerns of SGL "ownership" arise with the proposed Conservation Stamp or "SGL access permit". The State Game Lands have always been purchased and supported by hunter's dollars and managed for hunters. The concern is by allowing non-hunters equal rights to purchase access to SGL's may diffuse the primary intention of the state game land system of providing public hunting and trapping for sportsmen. Increased pressure from "non-hunting" and even "anti-hunting" groups as equal or even greater stakeholders of state game lands could jeopardize the state's hunting and trapping heritage. In lieu of this concern, the organization would like to see 50% of the revenue generated by the Conservation Stamp be dedicated to private lands habitat management.

On behalf of the members of PF and QF in Pennsylvania, I thank you for the opportunity to present our organization's position on the proposed House Bills.

Sincerely,



Shon Robbins
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Quail Forever