

Subject: Texas Parks and Wildlife Proposal for a rifle season Collin County for deer.

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To: dhale@collincountytx.gov

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Good evening sir.

My name is Steve Seals and I am President of Collin County Bowhunters association in Blue Ridge Texas. I am an avid hunter both rifle and bow but enjoy archery year round. I am also a retired Firefighter from the Allen Fire Dept. and current instructor at Collin College Fire School. I was born and raised in Mckinney.

I am contacting you today with my sincerest heartfelt concern over a proposed change in Collin County's Deer season. A group from Grayson County has included Collin, Grayson, Dallas and Rockwall counties in a proposal that would bring a rifle season to these counties. The people pushing this are high fence ranch owners in Grayson county looking to make their ranches MLD properties with special seasons and tags and want rifle hunting on these properties. MLD means and methods are restricted to what is legal in that county already. In short, they want the ability to charge more money, harvest more of their stocked herds and they are using the Texas Parks and Wildlife to accomplish this at the expense of the other counties.

As you know these counties are among the fastest growing counties in the state. We are already on a timeline for losing all our agricultural and hunting land due to growth. Whitetail hunting is currently limited to bow and crossbow only because the populations are good enough to handle that pressure and it is a safe manner in which to hunt without affecting surrounding properties. Texas currently has a law prohibiting any projectile crossing a property line without permission from that land owner.

The majority of a hunting lands in these counties are small tracts. 200 acres or less in bottoms surrounded by houses. This is especially the case where we hunt between Blue Ridge and Farmersville East of 78. We hunt in some of the most rural areas of Collin county and we simply dont have room to shoot a rifle safely without special conditions such as backstop and large properties etc. This law would make the trespass by projectile law almost impossible to enforce.

A drive in Collin County will show you the number of housing developments popping up. Hwy 78, FM 1377, FM 2933, FM 1826 all have numerous large projects going in now and these are a few I am familiar with. Celina, Prosper and other smaller communities are booming as well. Mckinney needs no mention as it has been booming and growing for years. The privilege and opportunities we have to hunt in our county are quickly dwindling.

In addition to the safety factor, the deer populations we have will not sustain rifle hunting very long. The age structure we have and genetics in Collin are what makes bowhunting here so desirable. We have a low population and bucks grow bigger without hunting pressure as they have in Grayson County for years. This makes Collin and Grayson counties special. The reason to include Rockwall and Dallas Counties is beyond me. They are grouped under one

management area due to being connected. There is no space in these other counties big enough to safely shoot high powered rifles, except in a range type setting.

The group bringing this forward is lead by a high fence land owner that is a convicted felon for violating the Lacey Act by transporting game animals across state lines. He acquired the services of a Biologist from Mississippi State to write the proposal without any population or safety surveys being done. I cannot find any surveys being done by the state on this matter either.

A public meeting has been scheduled for March 9th in Grayson county for the entire proposal in all 4 counties. This will undoubtedly reduce the attendance for the other counties which I believe .as be why the other counties were included to begin with.

I have spoken to hundreds of individuals, farmers, landowners, hunters and simply citizens that realize the peril this will cause in our areas. We need someone with a voice and authority to see it also. I implore you to do a little research and see for yourself.

I would appreciate your thoughts on this matter as well as well as any advice or help you can give. In the past Grayson County Commissioners passed a resolution not being in favor of a rifle season. This carries significant weight with the state. Maybe Collin County Commissioners can do the same. I am far from being a political activist but this matter demands attention by everyone affected. Thank you for your time.

Steve Seals Jr
CCBA President