



Connecticut Department of  
**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – February 25, 2013  
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Daniel Esty  
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Susan Whalen

**Raised Senate Bill No. 915 - AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON SUNDAY UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised Senate Bill No. 915 - An Act Authorizing Bow and Arrow Hunting on Sunday under Certain Circumstances. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) offers the following testimony.

We appreciate the Committee's willingness to raise this bill at the request of the DEEP. This proposal, which we strongly support, would allow for Sunday hunting with a bow and arrow on private lands as a white-tailed deer population management measure.

Sunday hunting is an important and proven measure used in 42 states to achieve game species management objectives. Since 2000, DEEP has increased bag limits, lengthened seasons, implemented a January crossbow season and authorized baiting to increase white-tailed deer harvest. Sunday hunting is one of the last remaining progressive measures designed to meet management objectives. High deer densities are causing extensive damage to ecosystems and property in addition to causing risks to public health and safety through tick-borne illnesses and vehicle collisions. The addition of Sundays during the private land deer seasons would significantly increase deer harvest by increasing hunter opportunity. DEEP anticipates that harvest rates on Sundays would be similar to those observed on Saturdays, currently the day during which harvest is greatest.

For the Committee's information, the bill includes a provision that no person shall hunt with a bow and arrow on Sunday within forty yards of a blazed hiking trail.

Decades of research have shown bow hunting to be a safe, effective, and efficient tool for managing abundant deer populations. Forty-six percent of the total 2012 harvest of over 12,000 deer was reported by archers. In some areas, archers are responsible for as much as 90% of the harvest.

Hunting in general is a safe outdoor activity and bow hunting is extremely safe, especially for other outdoor users. Not a single non-hunter has been injured by a bow hunter during millions of hunter-days afield since passage of the Deer Management Act in 1974. Notwithstanding the excellent safety record of Connecticut bow hunters, DEEP feels strongly that landowners should retain the right to determine who recreates on their properties, whether it is for hunting, hiking, or other outdoor pursuits.

Finally, the addition of Sunday hunting would provide positive economic benefits and add value to sporting licenses. The 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation reported that hunters alone expended 69 million dollars in pursuit of hunting-related activities in Connecticut.

In summary, DEEP is confident that the addition of Sunday bow hunting on private lands would play a significant role in meeting deer management objectives and provide significant economic benefits without compromising the safety of other outdoor users.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance at (860) 424-3401 or [Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov](mailto:Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov).