



WISCONSIN BOWHUNTERS ASSOCIATION - LEGISLATIVE REPORT

By Mike Brust, WBH Legislative Liaison

The new legislature is now in session. There are several new faces, including some on key committees that deal with hunting issues.

So far, there haven't been any bills introduced that impact bowhunters; however, legislators have already called a committee meeting to question the DNR regarding the lack of deer in the north. I attended that meeting and was encouraged to see legislators' interest in the subject.

Although there haven't been bills introduced affecting bowhunting - so far, we will be monitoring activity closely. A common practice is to re-introduce bills that failed or did not get through the previous session. The bill to re-define crossbows as archery equipment and include them in the archery license, failed to get through the last session, but may well return again. Although unspoken, the primary intent of this bill is to eliminate separate regulations and recordkeeping so that the much higher crossbow success rate could be "hidden", and it would be almost impossible to separate them in the future to regulate the crossbow season to account for its much higher success rate.

I find that most hunters appreciate the opportunity to hunt and don't pay much attention to what other people do. Not so with those that oppose hunting and want to decide what we should do. I see them in Madison all the time, and they are extremely active, both with legislators and even with the DNR. As much as I hate to say it, we need to be active too. And actually, it's not as difficult as you may think.

Most legislators take their responsibility to represent the citizens in their districts very seriously. And frankly, they often hear little or nothing from their constituents on most subjects, so in many cases, even a few calls or emails can affect their votes. Calls to their office are the most effective, and while you may not talk to a legislator, their aides are very good at conveying your information.

The other thing that legislators appreciate is "getting to know" constituents in their districts. These are folks that they want to connect with, both to hear what's going on locally, and perhaps even for support in the next election. Once that relationship is established, some even contact those citizens for advice on a topic that's coming before them. (like hunting)

So, what I would ask each of you to do is step a little out of your comfort zone and contact your legislator or their office in Madison. Let them know you're a hunter and bowhunter, and a member of WBH. You don't need to discuss any bills or make any requests. Just let them know you appreciate them representing you, and that you would be happy to provide information or just your thoughts on issues coming before them, especially as it relates to hunting and bowhunting. You will probably be surprised at how willing they are to do that.

In the legislature there are two main committees that decide on and advance hunting-related legislation: the Assembly Committee on Sporting Heritage, and the Senate Committee on Financial Institutions and Sporting Heritage. Most of these folks have experience or knowledge of hunting. And while it would be nice if every WBH member got to know their legislator, it's especially important for WBH members living in the districts of these legislators to let them know who you are. Following is a list of the members on those committees. If you recognize any of them as your representative, a simple call or email to



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introduce yourself as a bowhunter and member of WBH will go a long way in helping us promote, preserve and protect our great sport of bowhunting. Thank you.

Senate Committee on Financial Institutions and Sporting Heritage				
		home	office	email
R	Rob Stafsholt (chair)	New Richmond	608-266-7745	Sen.Stafsholt@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Mary Felzkowski(vice chair)	Irma	608-266-2509	Sen.Felzkowski@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Cory Tomczyk	Mosinee	608-266-2502	Sen.Tomczyk@legis.wisconsin.gov
D	Mark Spreitzer	Beloit	608-266-2253	Sen.Spreitzer@legis.wisconsin.gov
D	Dianne Hesselbein	Middleton	608-266-6670	Sen.Hesselbein@legis.wisconsin.gov

Assembly Committee on Sporting Heritage				
		home	office	email
R	Treig Pronschinske (chair)	Mondovi	608-237-9192	Rep.Pronschinske@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Paul Tittl (vice chair)	Manitowoc	608-237-9125	Rep.Tittl@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Ty Bodden	Hilbert	608-237-9159	Rep.Bodden@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Robert Brooks	Saukville	608-237-9160	Rep.Rob.Brooks@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Calvin Callahan	Tomahawk	608-237-9135	Rep.Callahan@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Chanz Green	Grandview	608-237-9174	Rep.Green@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Jeff Mursau	Crivitz	608-237-9136	Rep.Mursau@legis.wisconsin.gov
R	Shae Sortwell	Two Rivers	608-237-9102	Rep.Sortwell@legis.wisconsin.gov
D	Kristina Shelton	Green Bay	608-237-9190	Rep.Shelton@legis.wisconsin.gov
D	Katrina Shankland	Stevens Point	608-237-9171	Rep.Shankland@legis.wisconsin.gov
D	Tip McGuire	Kenosha	608-237-9164	Rep.McGuire@legis.wisconsin.gov
D	Sue Conley	Janesville	608-237-9144	Rep.Conley@legis.wisconsin.gov