



25 May 2017

RE: Proposed Resident License Fee Increases

To Whom It May Concern:

The League of Kentucky Sportsmen (LKS), representing the sportsmen and women of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, disagree with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) proposed resident license fee increases. It is the position of LKS that the residents of our state should not bear the burden of compensating for financial shortfall at the state level.

KDFWR consistently report that resident license/tag/stamp sales are declining, yet the numbers reported to the US Department of Fish and Wildlife are in conflict with these statements. In 2014 resident fishing license/tag/stamp sales were reported at 485,596, 2015 reported 528,124 and 2016 reported 533,279 – an increase of 47,683 licenses sold over a three-year period. In 2014 resident hunting license/tag/stamp sales were reported at 494,854, 2015 reported 504,097 and 2016 reported 520,032 – an increase of 25,178 licenses sold over a three-year period. It is evident from these numbers that license/tag/stamp sales are increasing rather than decreasing.

What is disturbing to LKS is the exclusion of non-resident sportsmen and women from the proposed fee increases. Kentucky non-resident license/tag/stamp sales are soaring. Although this is a financial windfall for KDFWR, non-residents and commercial outfitters are making it harder for resident hunters to find lands on which to hunt. Between 2014 and 2016 non-resident fishing license/tag/stamp sales increased 7% for a reported 89,167 sold in 2016. Non-resident hunting license/tag/stamp sales increased 14% for a reported 97,097 sold in 2016. Therefore, the League of Kentucky Sportsmen

would propose the following increases in non-resident license/tag/stamp and commercial outfitter pricing:

- Annual fishing \$75
- 1 day fishing \$15
- 7 day fishing \$35
- 14 day fishing \$50
- Trout permit \$20
- Annual hunting \$150
- 1 day hunting (small game only) \$25
- 7 day hunting (small game only) \$75
- Annual trapping \$140
- Statewide deer permit (2 deer) \$150
- Youth deer permit (ages 12-15/1 deer) \$25
- Additional deer permit (2 deer) \$50
- Spring turkey permit (2 turkeys) \$100
- Youth turkey permit (ages 12-15/1 turkey spring or fall) \$25
- Fall turkey permit (4 turkeys) \$100
- Migratory game bird-waterfowl permit \$25
- Pheasant quota hunt permit (if drawn) \$35
- Sandhill crane permit (if drawn) \$10
- Quota bull elk permit (if drawn) \$600
- Quota cow elk permit (if drawn) \$450
- Youth elk permit (if drawn) \$50
- Out-of-Zone elk permit \$450
- **Non-resident** commercial hunting/fishing guide business \$500 with each individual guide obtaining a \$50 permit
- **Resident** commercial hunting/fishing guide business \$250 with each individual guide obtaining a \$50 permit

If each of the reported 89,167 non-residents reported purchasing fishing license/tag/stamps in 2016 were to purchase the annual license, revenue for KDFWR would increase \$2,229,175. This is a best-case scenario as the license/tag/stamp sales are not broken down into categories. Comparatively, if the reported 97,097 non-residents reported purchasing hunting license/tag/stamps in 2016 purchased only an annual license, revenue for KDFWR would increase \$2,912,910. This is only revenue at the state level. As license sales have a 2:1 matching funds ratio from US Fish and Wildlife, there is the potential of \$10,284,170 in increased matching funds for a total increase of \$15,426,255 in revenue.

KDFWR has reported a minimum \$1.5 million shortfall in providing for the Youth Conservation Camps and the Salato Wildlife Education Center. Although increased license sale revenues would be appropriated to the General Fund in order to obtain matching funds, there is no guarantee that the General Fund would budget for these shortfalls. Increases in tag/permit revenues could be ear-marked specifically for these

programs as they are not part of the matching funds program. As these youth programs are essential to the continuation of our hunting and fishing traditions, LKS would have them financed with a sustainable revenue stream.

Kentucky has become a premier vacation destination. Whether it's hunting, fishing, The Bourbon Trail, The Kentucky Horse Park, or any other "only in KY" venue; non-residents are coming to our state in record numbers. It is the position of the League of Kentucky Sportsmen to increase "admission" fees for the tourists who want to hunt and fish our lands and waterways instead of having our residents, seniors and disabled bear the burden of KDFWR's monetary shortfalls.

Sincerely,

League of Kentucky Sportsmen