



NORTH CAROLINA SPORTING DOG ASSOCIATION – END OF SESSION NEWSLETTER

The North Carolina Constitution acknowledges the right to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife by traditional means. Hunting with dogs has been a human tradition for thousands of years and has been a part of our culture in North Carolina since its founding. The North Carolina Sporting Dog Association and its lobbyists are working to make sure this tradition is protected for generations to come. We are working to ensure that everyone in our state and our legislative leaders are educated about our way of life. Please see below for an update from the organization, the lobbying team's accomplishments from last year, General Assembly Schedule, and agenda for the upcoming 2024 Legislative Session.

2023 Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors:

As a reminder, we are governed by an 11-member Board which is listed below. The Board of Directors of the Association will meet in Raleigh soon to conduct all regular business. The agenda for this year's meeting will include technical changes to the bylaws, a legislative update from our lobbyists, fundraising strategy and membership development, and social media/website development.

Our 11-member Board is listed as follows:

- **Keith Loudermilt – Tar Heel Beagle Club**
- **Butler Anderson – Burgaw Hunting Club**
- **Reg Cook – Ole School Hunt Club**
- **Chris Alphin – Duplin-Onslow Hunters Association**
- **Gerald Chandler – Western NC Houndsmen Association**
- **Gary Cox – Western NC Houndsmen Association**
- **Jason Ashe – Big Dog Hunt Club**
- **Bryan Bray – Price & Richardson Hunt Club**
- **John Morse – Albemarle Houndsmen Association**
- **Jonathan Bender – Warren County Houndsmen Association**
- **Marshall Conrad – Odell Adams Hunt Club**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- **PRESIDENT: Keith Loudermilt**

- **VICE PRESIDENT:** Butler Anderson
- **TREASURER:** Reg Cook
- **SECRETARY:** Marshall Conrad

As a reminder, the information for the corporation including address and contact info is as follows:

North Carolina Sporting Dog Association, Inc.
 150 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1130
 Raleigh, NC 27601

WEB: <https://ncsportingdog.com>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/NC-Sporting-Dog-Association-Inc-91748479183>

2023 LONG Session Accomplishments

S686 and H600 - REGULATORY REFORM ACT OF 2023 – AMENDED

The first draft of the Senate’s Regulatory Reform Act of 2023 (S586) contained a section which would be problematic for many hunters across the state:

Any person who willfully goes on the land, waters, ponds, or a legally established waterfowl blind of another to hunt, fish, or trap without verbal or written permission from the landowner, lessee, or agent of such property shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor. Written permission shall be dated within the last 12 months. Information establishing permission shall be provided to any law enforcement officer with general subject matter jurisdiction upon request.

This language came from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. We opposed this change for several reasons:

1. This change to the law is unnecessary and it would have created an undue burden on hunting clubs across the state.
2. This is a slippery slope and could lead to further restrictions in the future
3. There are existing protections in the Landowner Protection Act allowing landowners to post their land with signage or purple paint to prevent anyone from trespassing without written permission.
4. Hunt club members would need separate written permission for each tract of land the club hunts, and each note would need to be signed by every owner of every tract of land. It would be difficult to comply when a piece of property is owned by multiple people, or owned by a legal entity such as a trust or LLC.
5. The new requirement would put many people in violation of the law unintentionally.

Our lobbying team made this our top priority, and after discussions with members in both chambers there was an agreement to remove this section. The House version of the Regulatory Reform bill eventually passed (House Bill 600) and this section was not included.

House Bill 540 – PETA Bill – DEFEATED

House Bill 540 was a bill sponsored by a Wake County legislator at the request of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). The full bill text can be found here:

<https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2023/Bills/House/PDF/H540v1.pdf>. This is another version of a bill which we discussed and defeated in the 2022 Legislative Session – House Bill 1116. **The bill was never given a hearing and is no longer eligible for consideration for the rest of the biennium (through December 2024).**

Just like the previous version of the bill, H540 would have created ambiguous space and shelter requirements for animals including sporting dogs. In the very first line of the North Carolina Sporting Dog Association’s Code of Ethics (Click [here](#)) we make it clear that our members are to care for their animals. We know that hunters are the best animal advocates, as they know firsthand the value of their dogs from using them in the field. If a law is passed such as H540, it will be used by animal rights activists to prosecute good people who are law-abiding citizens. We have existing laws which are strong protections against animal cruelty, and we must enforce those laws while defending against proposals which could be used as weapons by animal rights activists.

House Bill 93 – ALLOW PRESERVES TO PURCHASE RABBITS – PASSED NC HOUSE

One of our Association’s best friends in the legislature, Rep. Ben Moss, introduced helpful legislation to allow rabbit pen operators to purchase rabbits. Coyote pens and fox pens have always been allowed to purchase animals to stock the pen. When rabbit pens were licensed a few years ago, this permission was left out. We support Rep. Moss’ efforts in ensuring rabbit preserves are treated equal to other preserves. **The bill passed the NC House of Representatives by a vote of 101-14.** The NC Senate must now act to approve the bill if it is to become law.

PROPOSED RULE RESTRICTING HUNTING in COLUMBUS COUNTY - DEFEATED

After receiving requests from members of the public, the Wildlife Resources Commission proposed a rule which would have banned pursuing or chasing deer with dogs for the purposes of training or hunting on that portion of the Wannanish tract south of NC 214, Columbus County Game Lands. **After public comment and further discussion with the Commission staff and Executive Director Cam Ingram, the Commission decided not to move forward with this rule.** To the best of our knowledge, none of our Association members were involved in the situations which caused the complaints. We trust that our members will always be good examples of how to hunt responsibly.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE

The North Carolina General Assembly operates on a biennium – a two-year legislative cycle. Legislation, including the state budget, is introduced in the long session and then it will be adjusted in the short session the following year. Unlike some states, North Carolina has no restriction on when the General Assembly must meet and no limits on how long each session should last. 2023 was a long session year. Thousands of bills were filed on all subjects, and a state budget was introduced as planned. Only a handful of bills will ultimately become law, and our lobbying team is in place to make sure that something does not slip through which could negatively affect us. This year's long Session was originally scheduled to end July 1. Budget discussions kept the legislature in session much longer than expected. The state budget was finally enacted on October 3, but technically the legislature is still in Session at this time. They will remain in Session until the end of the year before eventually adjourning until sometime in April 2024, when the short session begins. There will be very few bills discussed from now until the end of the year, except for those dealing with redistricting. In the coming days, the Republican majority in each chamber will pass new maps for Congress, State House and State Senate. These maps will likely be used in the upcoming 2024 election, although they will likely be challenged in court after they are passed.

WHAT TO EXPECT: 2024 SHORT SESSION

Here are some items we believe will be considered in the 2024 Short Session:

1. **2023-2024 Budget Technical Corrections Bill:** This year's state budget is the largest in our state's history. With record surpluses and a growing population, there were a lot of financial needs addressed by the budget bill and many policy items also included. Because the state budget is so lengthy and complex, there will likely need to be some corrections next year.
2. **2024 State Budget:** In addition to technical corrections, there will be a 2024 Appropriations Bill which builds on the 2023-2024 State Budget passed in the Long Session. If revenue projections are strong, the General Assembly may be willing to go even further than the 2023-2024 Budget to fund salary increases or additional projects across the state. On the other hand, if revenues decline, adjustments may be made to keep the budget balanced.
3. **2024 Farm Bill:** Traditionally, Senator Brent Jackson introduces a Farm Bill even in short Session years. This bill makes changes to policy which helps North Carolina agriculture. We always look forward to working with Senator Jackson and his colleagues to help our clients and the rest of the agriculture community.
4. **Casino Legislation:** There was a lot of debate this year whether North Carolina would allow additional casinos to be built in the state, outside the current locations owned by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Catawba Indian Nation. The plan was to place the authorization in the state budget. Ultimately, too many Republican legislators vowed to vote against the budget if it contained casinos, so the proposal was

abandoned. The idea to authorize new casinos has some very powerful supporters, including Senator Berger and Speaker Moore, and so it is likely to come up again in the short session.

NCSDA Legislative Agenda for 2024 - NO DOG BILLS

In the Short Session, no new bills can be filed. The only bills eligible for consideration are those which passed one chamber or another in the Long Session. This is helpful for us as we do not want any additional regulation from the state government. However, provisions can always be added to an existing bill which is still eligible. Our lobbyists will be on the ground in Raleigh to make sure that any unfriendly proposal is defeated. However, we need your help and the help of other dog hunters to be successful.

As you can see, your right to own, hunt and work sporting dogs is constantly under attack by anti-dog and anti-hunting politicians, animal rights groups and people moving into our state that want to take away our heritage and way of life. These efforts are well-organized and well-funded. And they will not quit...

If you want to protect our heritage and protect your way of life, please talk to your family, friends, organizations and hunting clubs about the importance of staying involved and joining our organization. It is incumbent on us to protect our rights now and in the future. Please consider rejoining, and having everyone you know join the North Carolina Sporting Dogs Association today!

For a fraction of what it costs to buy dogs, dog food, and hunting gear, you can STAND and FIGHT with the North Carolina Sporting Dogs Association to defend our heritage and way of life.

Membership benefits include:

- Protection of your rights at the NC General Assembly, NC Wildlife Resource Commission and local County Commissions.
- Free legal consultation with NCSDA Counsel in the event that you face harassment, criminal or civil action in regards to dog ownership or use.
- Member Sticker to proudly represent your membership.
- Security in knowing your rights and your children's right to own and use sporting dogs is protected.

Sincerely yours,

Keith Loudermilt
President
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