2010—08

RUFFED GROUSE & OFF ROAD VEHICLES

With the increased use of ATV and other recreational vehicles since the 1980's, there has been a trend by ATV users to involve their machines in hunting small game such as grouse. The recent relaxation of restrictions of machine use (distance the hunter must be from the ATV, etc.) has been a discouraging development.

The Izaak Walton League of America has a long had a historic support for hunting and fishing, but has always predicated that support on the concept of fair chase and a high regard for the game species being sought.

The recent relaxations have put technology and convenience ahead of a quality and; respectful experience. The non-hunting public's image of hunters is not enhanced by what may appear to them to be the conversion away from a sporting tradition that encourages exercise and ethics, to one of convenience and expediency.

Recently the DNR has suggested returning to requiring an increased distance from the machines before use of a gun is allowed. This is an encouraging sign, and we support the MNDNR. However, we believe all vehicles used for hunting game large and small, should be used for travel only; and that all hunting should be on foot, and away from the machines, no exceptions. Before removing a gun from its case and loading the gun, the machine must be turned off. While on the machines guns must be encased, and unloaded. Effort to designate certain distances and other nuanced considerations, merely serve to complicate a very black and white situation.

Therefore be it resolved the Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America in Convention, April 11, 2010 requests that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources require that all hunting should be on foot, and away from the off road vehicle with the only exceptions being those that are physically disabled. Before removing a gun from its case and loading the gun, the off road vehicle must be turned off. While on or in the off road vehicle, guns must be cased and unloaded.

Submitted by: W.J. McCabe Chapter