

The NWTF state board of directors has heard from a number of our volunteer members and our friends in our state and we recognize that there is a problem with our turkey population in TN. Our farmers see it, our landowners see it, and our hunters see it, now we need to address it.

We have heard your concerns. We understand some of the problems, but certainly don't have all the answers. We want to be proactive.

Many of us remember the successes that hunters have had in the past and we also remember a time when just hearing a turkey gobble was considered a productive hunt. We do not want to return to those good old days.

Representation from the NWTF board of directors of the state of TN went to the TWRA commission meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup> to voice our concern. We did not know if we could affect any change, but knew it was our responsibility to try.

For those reasons we, along with help and strong recommendations from staff NWTF biologists, we sent a letter to the TWRA commission about some proposed turkey season changes. We believe in the adage that "an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure."

While we did not get a significant time to talk directly about our recommendations, we feel that we were somewhat heard. The commission did elect to suspend hunting beardless birds in the fall season for at least the next two seasons. While this is not a big change, it is defiantly a starting point. The commission also voted in an amendment on May 18<sup>th</sup> to reduce the state wide bag limit to 2 birds. That amendment failed.

The TN state board of directors of the NWTF is committed to sustaining the restorative hard work of thousands of volunteers for the past 45 years. We want the same cherished opportunities for interaction with the wild turkey for our children and grandchildren that we had. We will not fail.

We would like to urge anyone with an opinion about the current state of affairs of the turkey and/or their population or welfare to contact us. You can see the contact information for our entire board of directors and NWTF employees at [www.nwtftennesseechapter.org](http://www.nwtftennesseechapter.org).

We would also urge you to contact your TWRA commissioners. You may find all of their contact info at [www.tn.gov/content/tn/twra/tennessee-fish-wildlife-commission.html#meet](http://www.tn.gov/content/tn/twra/tennessee-fish-wildlife-commission.html#meet). No one knows anything about your situation unless you tell them. Please contact someone to let you feelings be known.

Famed TN biologist Jack Murray told our group more than once, "IF you don't have any hens, you won't have any gobblers and if you don't have any gobblers, you won't have any hunters." His words ring as true today as they did then. We appreciate you help in our conservation efforts.

NWTF State Board of Directors  
Joe Shults, President