

Dear Commissioners,

I am a resident of North Orange County. I have children, grandchildren, horses and dogs. I have had problems with deer dog hunting on my property for years. I respectfully ask that you ban deer dog hunting in North Orange County just as it is banned in South Orange County, Durham County, and Alamance County.

My concerns about Deer Dog Hunting in North Orange County arise from Safety Concerns, Property Rights, and Peace and Quiet.

A strip of land with mostly clear with little woods backs up to our home, our horse pastures and yard where our children and grandchildren play. The land is leased every year by a hunting club that consist of 40 – 50 hunters. The land has an abandoned house and cages where the hunting club house their dogs, hang out, and meet during deer hunting season. The dogs remain housed on the property even when the hunters are not there. The noise of barking and howling can be heard all hours of the day and night. We are currently working with Orange County Animal control for that. We were required to spend countless hours to keep logs of the dogs barking to provide evidence so that Orange County Animal Control could take action against the dog owners. As of today, the dogs are still housed on the abandoned property violating the noise ordinance of Orange County which disrupts our home life.

Deer dog hunters routinely shoot from the road which is illegal and unsafe. In addition, they run their dogs over private posted property without permission. They claim they cannot control their dogs. This alone should be cause to ban the practice. Finally, listening to their big trucks speed up and down the road for hours and days, listening to the dogs bark as they run through my property, and listening to people shooting close to my home (whom I do not know) is both disturbing and alarming.

Not only do the dogs run onto our property, they run into our pastures and run our horses, and run the deer which in turn causes damage to our fencing and injuries to our scared horses.

A dangerous confrontation occurred on a hunting day when we approached the hunters as they were lined up along the road sitting on chairs with loaded guns waiting for deer to run out and we asked them not to shoot from the road near our pastures and horses. They were upsetting our horses and we were feared one of them could be shot or cause injuries to each other. Rather than moving up the road away from our home and horses the hunters became agitated, argumentative and pointed their guns at us.

We have on numerous occasions contacted the Wildlife Commissioner in Raleigh, and they took messages and said they would pass them along to the Orange County Wildlife Officer.

Another dangerous confrontation occurred when we were home and a hunter from the club was standing in the middle of our horse pasture. When we approached him, he said he was new to the club; he was lost and looking for his dog. He had a loaded gun and we asked him to leave our property immediately.

We have our pet dogs that we keep confined during deer hunting season. Unfortunately, one day my son and I were in the back yard with our Black Labrador Sadie and she ran into our woods where the hunters were and we heard a shot go off among others, but this was very loud and right behind where we stood. We called Sadie over and over, but she never returned. After almost a month of endless walking in our woods, sleepless nights and endless posters, searching for her, Sadie came home. She could hardly walk, and was very thin. We took her to our vet and they did x-rays. To our shock and dismay, there was a slug embedded her body. The vet told us "Sadie has been shot!" We were then told to take Sadie to a surgeon for options.

Who should bear the costs of acts such as these? It is the property owners who pay the vet bills, fence repairs, etc. Property owners pay Orange County hefty property taxes, but yet Orange County does not protect property rights. Why is that?

What's next.....will I be in the emergency room with my children, my grandchildren, or one of us with a slug embedded in our bodies? What if the slug kills one of us? Then whatwho suffers from the loss of a family member or pet? It's not the hunters.....

If Orange County continues to allow these dangerous activities, then Orange County should be fully responsible for the consequences.

In conclusion let me state again that I have had deer dog problems, and I respectfully ask that you ban deer dog hunting in North Orange County just as it is banned in South Orange County, Durham County, and Alamance County.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this very important matter.

Regards,

Northern Orange County Resident
Cedar Grove

Dear Commissioners:

First, I would like to update you on my dog hunting experiences for the year. On Saturday, the day after Christmas, we had our wildest day. From 7:00 to 9:00 am we saw an uncountable number of dogs (maybe 20 to 40) run through the yard and heard 44 shots audible inside the house.

We have been discussing how to better capture the sentiments of landowners in Orange County to help provide you with more information as you consider the future of dog deer hunting in North Orange County. Something that came up was trying to put a petition together. While researching the possibilities for this, I found a study done by the Wildlife Resource Commission

which captured many land owner opinions on deer hunting, including opinions on dog hunting. I have attached the survey to this email for your consideration.

This survey was done statewide, but Orange County ranks 4th in number of respondents. Thus it should accurately reflect the opinions of orange county residents.

Please allow me to point out a few highlights from the Executive Summary at the beginning of the Survey:

- 55% of landowners felt their land was too small to allow other people to hunt their property
- 66% of landowners were concerned about injury as a result of others hunting their property
- 64% of landowners were concerned about trespassing
- 70% of landowners said deer dog hunting should be illegal (report actually states that 30% say it should be legal)

Further down in the report there is a graph on page 89 that shows that only 15% strongly agree that dog hunting should be legal.

We feel that this impartial survey done by a state organization should carry more weight with you than a petition. We encourage you to study the survey in detail. We believe this survey substantiates our concerns that lot sizes are too small to allow dog hunting, which causes a lot of trespassing and raises the possibility of safety problems.

We look forward to your continued consideration of this matter and hope that you will approve an ordinance that will ban deer dog hunting county wide including North Orange County. This will allow North Orange County residents the same quality of life that residents of South Orange County, Alamance County, and Durham County now enjoy.

Thank you for your time, and happy new year!

Northern Orange County Resident

... I see the main problem here as being a trespass and safety issue instead of a hunting issue. We have the same problems with people hunting and fishing on our property, and when challenged, claiming to have verbal permission. ...anyone hunting or fishing must have written permission to be on the property or they will have a chat with a deputy. Also, I talked to the local hunting club members privately about our expectations on behavior. This of course does nothing to control someone unknown or who is determined to do as they please. Please let me know (OCVs) thinking on this because I am afraid a ban on hunting deer with dogs will lead to efforts to ban their use in other areas such as rabbit and bird hunting....

Northern Orange County Resident

Dear Commissioners,

I want to thank you for your continued interest in the issue of Deer Dog Hunting in North Orange County and for the meeting last night which included concerned land owners as well as representatives from the wildlife department and our sheriff.

Gwen Harvey did an excellent job of coordinating and conducting the meeting. Everyone had a chance to express their viewpoints and the meeting was very productive.

I hope that when the meeting minutes have been produced and provided to you that you will review them and conclude that this issue deserves the full attention of the BOCC and needs to be addressed in a meeting of the BOCC in the near future.

On behalf of the landowners of North Orange County, and indeed the entire rural community represented by the Orange County Voice, I respectfully ask that you consider stopping dog deer hunting in north Orange County as it has been stopped in the southern part of the county and our neighboring counties. In our opinion, dog deer hunting cannot be continued in light of the safety concerns and property rights of landowners which arise from the ever decreasing lot sizes.

We look forward to your attention to this matter in the near future.

Thank you.

Steve Graf

Dear Commissioners and Manager:

The purpose of this email is to once again voice a concern I have had for many years, and have communicated to you in the past. I hope you will bear with me.

I own about 50 acres in Cedar Grove and have had a lot of trouble with deer dog hunters over the years. I myself am an avid hunter and that was a major motivation in moving my family to the country. The reason I mention my hunting is to show that I am not opposed to hunting in general. But my specific concern is that since dog hunting is not allowed south of 85, the area of the county north of 85 gets a lot of attention from the hunters. They run their dogs across my posted property incessantly. I also see license plates from Greensboro and farther.

My property is posted and I have to "patrol" it regularly after gun season opens to keep dog hunters from parking their vehicles on my property. I also must keep my kids close to the house so that they are not put in jeopardy by the fast moving vehicles or shooting that occurs from the road. I also have to replace the posted signs at least once a season as they seem to "disappear" or get destroyed.

While I don't feel qualified to make any judgments about how people conduct their hunting, I do feel it is my right to control what happens on my property and to feel that my children are safe on my property. I believe that the county is too populated, and that the private land tracks are too small for hunters to adequately control their dogs and their activities. Aside from the property and safety issues, the issue of "peace and quiet" is also a concern. Every Saturday morning sounds like a NASCAR race on our road as hunters race back and forth trying to get ahead of the deer and dogs. And where do they shoot? I expect it is usually from the road, which is illegal.

I respectfully ask that the county consider making dog hunting illegal in all of Orange county, period. Alternatively, I ask that Orange County follow the lead of other counties that have made it illegal for hunters to run their dogs on private property without permission. Please see the Wildlife regulations for the following examples:

The following is unlawful

- Page 64 Anson County : "...During the gun deer season, allowing a dog under one's ownership, possession, or control to run upon or across another's land constitutes hunting thereon."
- Page 71 Tyrrell County : "To hunt, take, or kill, or to attempt to hunt, take or kill, any wild animal or wild bird with a firearm,...or dogs...on the land of another without written permission..."
- Page 71 Wake County : "Hunt deer with dog on another's land without written permission of the owner"
- Page 71 Washington County : "Hunt, take or kill a wild animal or wild bird with firearms and dogs....on the land of another, without the permission of the landowner"

If the second option is considered, I would ask that you consider how you will enforce such a law. I believe that such a law, without enforcement, would be meaningless.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Northern Orange County Resident
Cedar Grove
