



April 13, 2020

Governor John Carney
Tatnall Building
150 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Carney,

As our state continues to grapple with the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 outbreak, we want to urge you to continue to promote responsible outdoor recreation.

As we head into our second month under a State of Emergency, it is important that we consider not only keeping our citizens safe from COVID-19, but also protecting them from other health threats.

Long periods of confinement are detrimental to good mental health. Additionally, too many of our citizens have become sedentary over the last few weeks, impacting their physical well-being.

Responsible outdoor activity, such as fishing, hiking, and recreational shooting, are solutions to both concerns. Outdoor physical exercise has been clinically shown to reduce depression, increase metabolic activity, and heighten immune system response – among many other benefits.

For these reasons, we urge the implementation of the following suggestions:

- For a period extending 15-days beyond the end of the State of Emergency in Delaware, give our citizens an opportunity to fish and crab without the economic burden of purchasing a license. A fishing license waiver will allow out-of-work Delawareans a chance to feed their families, while potentially recruiting new anglers and increasing future participation in the sport. As Brent A. Miller, a senior director with the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation recently noted, several states (i.e. Maine, Missouri, and West Virginia) have already taken this action.

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- Remove the current restrictions on Ommelanden Range, which is currently operating by appointment only. Instead, allow the facility to operate normally, while implementing best social distancing and sanitary practices.
- Last Thursday, the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) announced a policy that it would limit the number of visitors allowed within state parks and wildlife areas. While we understand the need for practicing safe social distancing, urge DNREC police to implement this policy as a last resort, instead educating the public to engage in best anti-viral practices, including the use of face masks, while enjoying these resources.
- Encourage DNREC to provide short videos on YouTube, highlighting features of ponds and waterways under their control, summarizing what fish are present, underwater topography, successful fish techniques, etc.

We hope you will carefully consider and implement these suggestions to help our citizens weather the COVID-19 crisis. While this outbreak has visited a great deal of hardship on our state and nation, it also presents an opportunity to encourage the establishment of new habits that will pay future dividends.

Sincerely,



State Rep. William Carson
Delaware Sportsmen's Caucus Co-chairman



State Sen. Brian Pettyjohn
Delaware Sportsmen's Caucus Co-chairman



State Sen. Bruce Ennis
Delaware Sportsmen's Caucus Co-chairman



State Rep. Jeff Spiegelman
Delaware Sportsmen's Caucus Co-chairman