



BROOKLINE BIRD CLUB
Established 1913

February 1, 2026

Attn: Hunting Laws
1 Rabbit Hill Road
Westborough, MA, 01581

RE: Proposal to Remove Prohibition on Sunday Hunting

I am writing on behalf of the Brookline Bird Club, a 113 year old organization with over 1,400 members, the great majority of whom reside in Massachusetts.

We write to offer objections to one of the proposals under discussion at the 2026 MassWildlife listening sessions, namely the removal of the prohibition on Sunday hunting.

We preface our comments by noting that our organization takes no position on hunting overall. We further recognize that the Commonwealth would benefit from some measures to better manage and reduce the size of the deer herd in much of the state.

Our overriding concern is continued shared public access to the outdoors for passive recreational users, including birders, hikers, and others. The Commonwealth is blessed with an extensive amount of natural open space. This includes both public and private lands that welcome visitors. Much of this area is already open to hunting six days per week for over the half the year. We believe that allowing Sunday hunting unreasonably limits access for those engaged in other open space pursuits on the single day of the week lands are now reserved for their use during hunting season.

The great majority of our members are Massachusetts taxpayers. Like all state residents, we share a stake in policies that regulate open space use in the

Commonwealth. Taxpayers as a whole fund the purchase and maintenance of many types of open space – state forest, parks and wildlife management areas among others. An equitable public access policy takes into account the open space recreational needs of the 99.1% of Massachusetts residents who do not hunt. Reserving one day per week where these users can visit open space areas without concerns about safety or noise from gunfire is an essential part of such a policy.

Many non-hunting recreational users have safety concerns about the use of guns and other weaponry and will simply not visit open space areas while hunting takes place. This is particularly true for activities that involve children or pets. It is unrealistic to expect other outdoor users, particularly casual users, to be well versed in the safety steps expected of persons outdoors in active hunting areas. By expanding hunting to Sunday these users are effectively deprived of access to natural open space for up to seven months of the year.

Thank you for your review of these comments. Our organization would be pleased to discuss this or other relevant topics with MassWildlife. My contact information is found below my signature.

Sincerely,

Clifford Cook
President
Brookline Bird Club, Inc.

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