



2018 Gubernatorial Candidate Questionnaire

In addition to strong support within the hunting community for the Second Amendment, Ohio sportsmen and women have other serious concerns about the quality of hunting, fishing and trapping in Ohio. These invaluable parts of our heritage are increasingly threatened by a fiscal crisis facing the agency, and the direction of that agency that has exacerbated relations with the paying constituency – Ohio's hunters, anglers and trappers. Ohio needs a governor and an administration that values the partnership of sportsmen and women, and wants to work with us to address this crisis, and restore Ohio's natural resources to the quality people deserve. To help ensure this outcome, the Sportsmen's Alliance formed the Protect What's Right Campaign, which includes the Buckeye Firearms Association, Central Ohio Chapter of Safari Club International, Ducks Unlimited, Greene County Fish and Game Association, Ohio Conservation Federation, Ohio State Trappers Association, Pheasants Forever Chapters, Columbiana Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs and Hocking County Fish and Game. The questionnaire should be sent to Luke Houghton, associate director of state services, Sportsmen's Alliance, 801 Kingsmill Parkway, Columbus, Ohio 43229. The questionnaire can also be emailed to lhoughton@sportsmensalliance.org.

1. The Ohio Division of Wildlife is facing a funding shortfall of \$185 million over the next ten years. Ohio's sportsmen's organizations overwhelmingly support modest increases in resident hunting, fishing and trapping fees to offset this crisis threatening hunting, fishing, trapping and quality habitat. Will you work with sportsmen's groups to create a plan that will be included in your first biennial budget to fully address the financial shortfalls of the Ohio Division of Wildlife?

Please circle one and provide written justification below:

Yes

No

Absolutely. It's in Ohio's best interest to preserve our natural resources for use by sportsmen and women, as well as all Ohioans and visitors to the state who value hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife protection. This would be a broadly beneficial use of funds in our state budget.

In the end, it's about priorities. Recent state budgets have made drastic cuts to programs that matter to Ohioans. We need to invest in our state in order to increase tourism value, bolster our economy, and encourage young Ohioans to live and work in the communities that raised them.

Camping and fishing have always been a big part of my family's life. Every Ohioan deserves a chance to experience everything our state has to offer. I look forward to working with all interested parties to figure out the best way to move forward on this issue. It's our next governor's job to make sure future generations of sportsmen and women are able to enjoy the activities they love.

2. Because Ohio's hunting, fishing and trapping fees have not increased since 2004, the Ohio Division of Wildlife has a \$129 million backlog of capital projects that include \$50 million in dam repairs, \$25.5 million in shooting range development needs, and \$32.4 million in boat ramp and lake access. Will you agree to create a plan to utilize capital bill bond dollars to address this backlog, and work to see the plan enacted in your first term as Governor?

Please circle one and provide written justification below:

Yes

No

As a state senator and former Senate Minority Leader, I have introduced several bills to upgrade Ohio's crumbling infrastructure and aging water systems using bond dollars. I've also worked with my Republican colleagues to move a bipartisan bill to expand broadband internet access using existing Third Frontier bond revenue. My staff and I have worked with local leaders to secure capital budget dollars for these types of projects over several capital budget cycles. We have an in-depth understanding of the capital budget process and years of experience advocating for the use of bond dollars in needed upgrades and improvements.

I would be happy to utilize capital budget and/or bond dollars to address the backlog of projects supported by the Division of Wildlife and sportsmen's organizations. We need these resources to be around for generations to come.

I loved camping and fishing with my family growing up, and still enjoy it to this day. I want to be able to give my sons the same experience. Ohio sportsmen and women can feel confident that I would work with them in my capacity as governor to help maintain Ohio's natural assets.

3. Ohio sportsmen and women have long supported the Ohio Division of Wildlife because it has consistently produced quality hunting, fishing and trapping, and abundant habitat to enjoy these activities. Additionally, the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation is designed to remove undue political influence and instead rely upon science-based wildlife management professionals. Since its creation, the Ohio Division of Wildlife has operated under this model, to great success. The agency has been seen as a leader nationally, while working to address the needs of all Ohioans and the customers who fund conservation programs. The agency has been recently politicized, which threatens these programs and support for the agency itself.

A.) Will you restore civil service protection for senior staff of the agency that will serve the interest of the paying public?

Please circle one and provide written justification below:

Yes

No

Yes. Sportsmen and women who have dedicated their entire lives to this profession should never be on the chopping block to make way for political favors and games. The industry is best served by civil servants who are well trained in the needs of the people they'll be working with on a daily basis. A political appointee will never be able to produce the same quality results as someone who is in the position because they are passionate about it.

B) Additionally, will you commit to appointing a Chief and senior leadership of the Division of Wildlife based on sound wildlife management and leadership experience, as well as, their passion for hunting, fishing, trapping and the shooting sports?

Please circle one and provide written justification below:

Yes

No

100%. The Division of Wildlife must be staffed, especially at the highest levels, with individuals who have the best interest of sportsmen and women at heart. It is unacceptable that recent administrations have focused on staffing agencies with people who care more about state government than the agencies they oversee.

No matter the issue, people who are on the ground dealing with that issue every day are the ones who understand it best. That's how I approach every bill I write, and it's how I will appoint leadership at every level when I am governor. Leaders who care deeply about the duties of the agency will produce better results than any political appointee ever would.

4. Ohio sportsmen and women have long enjoyed access to 60,000 acres of American Electric Power's ReCreation lands. Recently AEP announced its intention to sell the property, which comprises approximately 10% of all available public lands in Ohio. Estimates on retaining the property run as high as \$150 million dollars, which is more than the Ohio Division of Wildlife can afford on its own. Will you create a multi-faceted plan that includes bond dollars, general revenue funds and other sources to help secure the preservation of this critical public access to conservation habitat?

Please circle one and provide written justification below:

Yes

No

While fishing with several sportsmen on Fish Ohio Day, I learned about this and other critical Division of Wildlife issues in great detail. The ReCreation lands have been an incredibly valuable asset to Ohio sportsmen and women for years.

This issue has to be a priority. Ohio's next governor must take a hands-on approach and help the Division of Wildlife negotiate to either buy these lands, lease them, or find a way to continue to allow Ohio sportsmen and women to utilize them. As governor, I will gladly meet with all interested parties to keep these lands available to sportsmen's organizations in the most fiscally responsible manner possible.

5. The Ohio Division of Wildlife's wildlife officer ranks are currently understaffed by 25 officers, a historic low. Will you restore wildlife officer ranks to full staffing levels, including a minimum of one wildlife officer per county, and a fully-staffed Lake Erie unit?

Please circle one and provide written justification below:

Yes

No

Yes. People expect their hunting, fishing and trapping license fees to be used to staff the offices they interact with as sportsmen. There is no reason these positions should not be filled, and leaving them vacant is detrimental to our state.

As stated above, The Division of Wildlife must be staffed with individuals who care deeply about sportsmen's issues and understand them better than any politician ever would. These roles are critical to not only Ohio outdoorsmen but to the preservation and protection of our state's natural resources. We cannot continue to allow these roles to go unfilled.

This is especially true when it comes to Lake Erie. I've recently been traveling the state speaking to experts about major Ohio water issues, such as the algae blooms in Lake Erie. This past Summer, I went out with a scientist from the Ohio Sea Grant Program to see the algal bloom in person and ask questions about how we can address this growing issue.

A fully staffed Lake Erie unit is a solid step we can take right now to monitor and help address issues that arise in our Great Lake. As governor, I will make sure this issue is a state priority. I will fight to keep Ohio's water safe, clean, and protected for future generations.

6. Wildlife law enforcement requires specific and comprehensive training unique to hunting, fishing and trapping, separate from other, more traditional law enforcement agencies in the ODNR and the state of Ohio. Will you commit to maintaining the unique and separate wildlife law enforcement section under the direction of the Chief of the Ohio Division of Wildlife?

Please circle one and provide written justification below:

Yes

No

Absolutely. Like you said, wildlife law enforcement requires specific training and experience that is directly related to the position. These individuals need to be able to work closely with other sportsmen and women every single day. That means they must be working with, not working against, the Ohioans they are serving.

I never write bills without the help of the people on the ground who understand the issue best. It's the same idea here. The people who know the issues related to wildlife law enforcement are the ones who deal with it in their daily lives. A good leader recognizes this fact and makes sure the most qualified people continue to fill each position.

7. Because hunting, fishing and trapping license fees are only raised every 10-15 years, the fee hikes are often high enough to shock license sales and reduce participation by 5-10%. Studies have been shown that granting the executive branch the authority to raise fees administratively in smaller increments, on a more frequent basis, would address funding concerns, and help prevent the loss of customers that come with higher increases.

In your executive budget will you include language that grants fee increase authority to the Chief of the Division of Wildlife, while still remaining under the controls of the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review?

Please circle one and provide written justification below:

Yes

No

I always trust the people on the front lines of each issue to understand the issue better than politicians. Licensing fees and related responsibilities should be entrusted to a Division of Wildlife Chief who understands the needs of sportsmen and women, and who is knowledgeable about the impact of laws governing the agency. If the Chief of the Division of Wildlife feels incremental license fee increases will benefit the field, then their judgement is the one we should trust.



Senator Joe Schiavoni ✓

July 11, 2017 · 🌐

I'm excited about fishing with my dad today at #FishOhio Day up in Port Clinton. But I'm hoping to find out why the Governor and ODNR Chief fired five Division of Wildlife employees in the past week. These are the same people who have worked incredibly hard to allow us the opportunity to enjoy today's event.

👤 2,135 people reached

Boost Post



John-Jack Glenellen, Eric Monell and 31 others

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Senator Joe Schiavoni ✓

April 27, 2017 · 🌐

Yesterday I spoke w/ the ODNR director about protecting the future of the Ohio Division of Wildlife. We need to keep the agencies and money separate.

That way, sportsmen-generated dollars will only be used to preserve and protect our wildlife and sporting traditions.

Candidate's Name:

Senator Joe Schiavoni

Candidate's Signature/Date:

Joe Schim:

February 8, 2018

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