CONSENT CALENDAR

April 25, 2023

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The Committee on Fish and Game and Marine Resources to which was referred SB 15-FN,

AN ACT relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds. Having considered the same, report the same with the following amendment, and the recommendation that the bill OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT.

Rep. Ellen Read

FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee:	**Fish and Game and Marine Resources**
Bill Number:	**SB 15-FN**
Title:	**relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.**
Date:	**April 25, 2023**
Consent Calendar:	**CONSENT**
Recommendation:	**OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT 2023-1381h**

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The committee unanimously feels that, as amended, this bill correctly balances the rights of the owners of unposted land, and the hunters who are welcomed on the land, by ensuring temporary tree stands and blinds are removed by April 1st unless the landowner provides permission. Temporary stands and blinds should not become permanent fixtures on another person's property, abandoned, and left for property owners to clean, as the law currently allows. This bill puts the onus on the hunter to provide proof of permission if a temporary stand is left past the date of removal. The amendment changes the date of removal from January 1st to April 1st to allow for removal in less dangerous weather.

Vote 19-0.

Rep. Ellen Read
FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

CONSENT CALENDAR

Fish and Game and Marine Resources

SB 15-FN, relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds. **OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT.**

Rep. Ellen Read for Fish and Game and Marine Resources. The committee unanimously feels that, as amended, this bill correctly balances the rights of the owners of unposted land, and the hunters who are welcomed on the land, by ensuring temporary tree stands and blinds are removed by April 1st unless the landowner provides permission. Temporary stands and blinds should not become permanent fixtures on another person's property, abandoned, and left for property owners to clean, as the law currently allows. This bill puts the onus on the hunter to provide proof of permission if a temporary stand is left past the date of removal. The amendment changes the date of removal from January 1st to April 1st to allow for removal in less dangerous weather. **Vote 19-0.**

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

Rep. Spillane, Rock. 2
April 13, 2023
2023-1381h
07/08

Amendment to SB 15-FN

Amend the bill by replacing all after the enacting clause with the following:

1 Use of Tree Stands, Observation Blinds, and Pit Blinds. Amend RSA 207:36-a to read as follows:

207:36-a Use of Tree Stands, Observation Blinds, and Pit Blinds.

I. No person shall erect, build or use a tree stand or observation blind on land of another person that damages or destroys a tree by inserting into the tree any metallic, ceramic, or other object used as part of a ladder or observation deck, without express written permission from the property owner or designee.

II. No person shall erect, build or use a pit blind on land of another person without express written permission from the property owner or designee.

III. No person shall cut any tree in connection with any of the activities regulated under this section without the express written permission of the property owner or designee.

IV. ***Except for permissions granted by property owners in paragraphs V and VI of this section,*** the permittee shall carry such permit on his person while in the field and shall be subject to inspection on demand of any conservation officer.

V. ***No person shall construct a permanent tree stand or observation blind without permission from the property owner or designee.***

VI. A portable or temporary tree stand or observation blind that does not violate paragraph I or II may be erected on the land of another between August 1 and December 31 of a calendar year. All portable or temporary tree stands or observation blinds shall be removed from the property by April 1, unless allowed by permission from the property owner or designee.

[~~V.~~] ***VII.*** All property owner permits shall expire on December 31 of each year unless rescinded by the property owner or designee.

VIII. All tree stands or observation blinds shall be labeled with the name and contact information of the owner of the tree stand or observation blind in a clearly visible manner.

[~~VI.~~] ***IX.*** Any person who violates any provision of this section shall be guilty of a violation and shall be liable for the amount of damage caused by the act, to be recovered by the property owner sustaining the damage ***and/or any fine amount levied by the fish and game department***.

[~~VII.~~] ***X.*** The executive director shall adopt rules, pursuant to RSA 541-A, relative to the form, issuance and filing of property owner permits for the tree stands, observation blinds and pit blinds.

XI. A property owner shall contact a local or state law enforcement officer or conservation officer to remove and seize a permanent, portable, or temporary tree stand or observation blind which was placed, or the owner of which has failed to remove, in violation of this section.

2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2024.

Rep. Spillane, Rock. 2
May 1, 2023
2023-1588h
07/08

Floor Amendment to SB 15-FN

Amend the title of the bill by replacing it with the following:

AN ACT relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds and .repealing the prohibition on the possession or sale of blackjacks, slung shots, and metallic knuckles.

Amend the bill by replacing all after section 1 with the following:

2 Repeal. The following are repealed:

I. RSA 159:16, relative to the prohibition and penalty for carrying or possessing with intent to sell, a blackjack, slung shot, or metallic knuckles.

II. RSA 159:17, relative to exceptions on the prohibition and penalty for carrying or possessing with intent to sell, a blackjack, slung shot, or metallic knuckles.

3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2024.

2023-1588h

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill amends the permissible uses of tree stands, observation blinds, and pit blinds, as well as repeals the prohibition, penalty, and exceptions relating to the carrying and possessing with intent to sell a black jack, slung shot, or metallic knuckles.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISH AND GAME AND MARINE RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE SESSION on SB 15-FN

BILL TITLE: relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

DATE: April 25, 2023

LOB ROOM: 305-307

MOTIONS: OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT

Moved by Rep. Spillane	Seconded by Rep. Kofalt	AM Vote: 18-1

Amendment # 2023-1381h

Moved by Rep. Read	Seconded by Rep. Kofalt	Vote: 19-0

CONSENT CALENDAR: YES

Statement of Intent: Refer to Committee Report

Respectfully submitted,

Rep Carroll Brown, Clerk

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE HOUSE CLERK

2023 SESSION

2/28/2023 11:52:09 AM
Roll Call Committee Registers Report

Fish and Game and Marine Resources

Bill #: SB15 Motion: OTP-A AM #: _____ Exec Session Date: 4-25-23

Members	YEAS	Nays	NV
Spillane, James A. Chairman	1		
Goley, Jeffrey P. Vice Chairman	1		
Khan, Aboul B.			1
~~Smith, Jonathan H.~~ MEBNER	2		
Kofalt, Jim	3		
Tudor, Paul D.	4		
~~Bartlett, Benjamin T~~ NOTER	5		
Brown, Carroll M Clerk	6		
~~Corcoran, Travis J~~ Hill	7		
~~Nutting, Zachary J~~ RENZULLO	8		
~~Ouellet, Mike~~ Boyd	9		
Harvey, Cathryn A.	10		
Read, Ellen D.	11		
Ford, Damond T	12		
~~Foxx, Loren E~~ ~~O'BRIEN~~ Foxx	13		
~~Ming, Ben~~ Massimilla	14		
Morton, Jennifer	15		
Paige, David O'BRIEN	16		
Pare, Gail L	17		
Roesener, James Leon	18		
TOTAL VOTE:	18	0	1

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE HOUSE CLERK

2023 SESSION

2/28/2023 11:52:09 AM
Roll Call Committee Registers Report

Fish and Game and Marine Resources

Bill #: SB15 **Motion:** ~~OTP~~ ~~AM~~ AMENDMENT **AM #:** 1381h **Exec Session Date:** 4-25-23

Members	YEAS	Nays	NV
Spillane, James A. Chairman	18		
Goley, Jeffrey P. Vice Chairman	1		
Khan, Aboul B. Abs			
~~Smith, Jonathan H.~~ MERNAR	2		
Kofalt, Jim	3		
Tudor, Paul D.	4		
~~Bartlett, Benjamin T~~ Notter	5		
Brown, Carroll M Clerk	6		
~~Corcoran, Travis J~~ Hill	7		
~~Nutting, Zachary~~ J Renzul	8		
~~Ouellet, Mike~~ Boyd	9		
Harvey, Cathryn A.		1	
Read, Ellen D.	10		
Ford, Damond T	11		
~~Foxx, Loren E~~ O'Brien Foxx	12		
~~Ming, Ben~~ Massimilla	13		
Morton, Jennifer	14		
Paige, David O'Brien	15		
Pare, Gail L	16		
Roesener, James Leon	17		
TOTAL VOTE:	~~18~~ 18	1	1

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISH AND GAME AND MARINE RESOURCES

PUBLIC HEARING ON SB 15-FN

BILL TITLE: **relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.**

DATE: **April 4, 2023**

LOB ROOM: **305-307** **Time Public Hearing Called to Order:** **1:32 p.m.**

Time Adjourned: **2:33 p.m.**

Committee Members: Reps. Spillane, Goley, C. Brown, Khan, Jonathan Smith, Kofalt, Tudor, Bartlett, Corcoran, Z. Nutting, Ouellet, C. Harvey, Read, D. Ford, L. Foxx, Ming, Morton, D. Paige, Pare and Roesener

Bill Sponsors:
Sen. Pearl **Sen. Watters** **Sen. Gendreau**
Sen. Lang

TESTIMONY

* Use asterisk if written testimony and/or amendments are submitted.

- **Senator Howard Pearl: Prime Sponsor: Introducing bill** - Introducing this bill at the request of Fish and Game Commission to add language to regulate tree stands. Hopefully the Committee will clarify "permanent" tree stands require written permission from the landowner. Current definition does not differentiate between temporary and permanent. Also, it will provide time frames for erecting "portable" tree stands without permission if a property owner allows hunting. Also, will require labeling name and contact of tree stand owner. This was originally brought in Senate amendment in HB 490 last year. Landowners continue to be frustrated that these changes are no in current law. This will help landowners keep lands open. Supported by NH Timberland Association and NH Farm Bureau.
    - **Q; Rep Smith:** Permanent stands is a subjective term? How would you clarify permanent? Some blinds are considered hard sided panel blinds where they can be popped together and take apart. Could this be a gray area were determining permanent. **A:** This bill really refers to tree stands, not anything on the ground. Fish and Game may be able to verify "permanent" includes nail, lag bolt, etc., not straps. Fish and Game can address further.
- **Kyle Baker: Representing NH Wildlife Federation** - They support the bill. It is a basic concept that if you leave gear on someone's property you should leave your name on it. Protects sportsmen/women and prevent gear getting stolen and if it were stolen, helping to get gear back. Landowner to reach out for concerns of where a stand is located.
    - **Q: Rep Brown:** do you have a feeling on the time frame on this**? A:** they are open on that topic. Mainly each stand should be checked once per year for its structure. This also helps with the hunter/landowner interaction. Even if landowner allows it to remain, they believe that each should be checked yearly. The time of year is flexible; whatever everyone agrees on is fine. Winter may not be the best time.
- **Stephen Wood: Poverty Lane Orchards and Mill Ciders [refers to sign that he submitted in testimony on SB14]** - Owns 900 acres land in Lebanon/Plainfield. Supports marginally flawed bill. All that he stated on SB 14 re: civility, etc., applies to this bill as well. Not just permanent, but all stands should require permission. They require permission anyway. Their usual experience is that people by nature ask permission. Every landowner

he has spoken to is amazed that these bills are necessary. People should have the civility to ask permission to place a tree stand, which is almost always given. In his case, permission includes a two-page document including an aerial photo showing property land and any particular requests or requirements. Hunters are glad for this interchange and this bill could encourage this interchange. He supports with the one caveat that it should be required for "all" stands.

- ***Chris Fife: Representing Weyerhaeuser as Public Affairs Manager. Provided written testimony [one document for both SB 14 and 15.** Tree Stands in SB 15 the requirements for labeling and the requirement for removal by Jan 1st are commons steps to protect landowners' rights and still maintain tradition of hunting in NH. [He then reads portion from his written testimony on SB 15]. This is a requirement lands in other State that they manage and it is not a problem. It facilitates their ability to contact a hunter if they are doing a harvest operation in the area. Hunters don't know the plans for harvesting and often they come across the stand. If no way to contact the owner, they must go around that tree or remove the stand. Sometimes the stand is not noticed and they get destroyed by accident. Foresters and loggers don't want to destroy someone's property. This is a common-sense way to increase communication and get an opportunity to know who to contact. The removal date of Jan 1st gives an indication that it is not permanent fixture. They do run across stands that have been left out for years, which is disrespectful to landowner. Certain circumstances beyond hunter's control which prevents getting to the stand all they want is the hunter to contact them. This helps preventing their roads, etc., being damage during the winter. This is an equal sign of respect.
    - **Q: Rep Goley**: if a stand is in the middle of a piece of property which they are going to harvest. This takes time away from the project dealing with this, costing some money to take it down and track down resolution. It costs time and money if they are not labeled. **A:** That is accurate.
- **Jasen Stock – Exec Director NH Timberland Association.** - Speaks in support of bill. Similar to SB 14 this represents commons courtesy. If one leaves up a tree stand for any extended period, a year. At that point the hunter should ask the landowner if it is allowed to leave it up. Most do this already, but this codifies in law. Any logging garage or forester's office you will find may tree stands, game cameras, etc. in November. There is no contact to resolve where they belong. This bill works both ways. Typically, harvesters/foresters leave business card on stand and get no response. This results that the tree can't be cut down, costs time and energy. Re: permanent versus temporary was considered during drafting this bill. A climbing stand is not really a permanent stand and is barely a temporary stand. Tried to craft this bill to incorporate common sense that is appears to be more permanent and permission should be obtained. This induces dialog between landowner. They are in full support of SB15.
    - **Q: Rep Pare:** Paragraph 5, line 14. Portable stands versus permanent stands. It says that they can be erected without permission and can be removed by Jan 1st. Is your definition of a stand that goes up for the day and comes down when you leave, this sounds like a semi-permanent stand. Was something lost in translation? A: They are both. A climber is a temporary stand. His own stand is taken down at end of season. Definition between permanent and temporary really is about driving pins, nails, screws into tree make it affixed to tree. Temporary are strapped on. **Chair Spillane asks** "ladder stands". **A:** ladder stands are the same, they have a nylon strap that hugs the tree and doesn't cut into the tree. **FU:** Any stand that will be up longer than today's hunt should be labeled? **A:** They should all be labeled.
- ***Diane Richardson -citizen. Provided written testimony** - Supports the bill. The only caveat putting name on it. She sees many posts where people target hunters. Stands get vandalized or stolen. Putting a name on it asks for more trouble than already have.
- ***Ginny Christenson: Tree Farm Owner. Supplied written testimony** - She and her husband own a 700-acre tree farm, open to hunting since 1972. Manage for timber, wildlife and recreation. They ask to be told where the tree stands are; will it be safe for their hikers. This is our backyard; lots of hikers also come through. Will the hunters put their tree stands

far enough apart. They have had some older stands put in with hardware and they lose the value of that wood. Tree stands with straps that are left in for a long time also can impact the value of the wood from the impact of the straps. Her husband fell once taking down a tree stand; it would be easier if the stand had a name on it. Additionally, she couldn't make the testimony this morning for the cameras. This is their backyard and they don't want cameras there taking pictures of them. She supports both SB 14 and 15 as written.

- **Robert Johnson II. NH Farm Bureau Policy Director** - Speaking in support of HB 15. Worked with NHTA and Fish and Game to work on this. Labeling piece of the bill is supported. Many members think it is already a requirement. They would want a phone number at a minimum. If not a name, then the license number. The date of removal of the stand is not important, but there should be a "check in" to be sure stands are removed by whatever the final date is legislated.
    - **Q: Rep. Brown:** What do you mean by "check in"? A: Currently there is a date of Jan 1st, which is not that important. As long as there is a check-in.
    - **Q: Rep Goley**: The Check in date means that you don't want them permanent without you knowing about them? **A:** Correct**.**
- **Dan Dockham** - Has confusion. He doesn't mind them but he wants people to ask for permission to assure that only portable stands are used. He has story of how an oak was impacted by a tree stand with screw steps ruining the veneer quality of the tree. The screws can't be detected easily and can be a problem at the sawmill. He wants to make sure that is in the new proposal. Chair Spillane comments: It is already in the law; he reads from existing language in the bill. This bill is to deal with the portable type. Mr. Dockham says that he is in favor so that he can tell people that they must use a portable stand.
- **Colonel Kevin Jordan: NH Fish and Game** - There is a belief in the hunting community that this is already a requirement. The only change that they see is that they are asking for names and contact information. They believe that the names should be put on. He has no objection to the license number. One landowner stated that sometimes they want to handle this on their own without getting law enforcement involved to not anger hunter, prefer to have the name on it. He doesn't have a problem with the name being put on. They don't have many problems with people causing trouble to those who have names on it. Many hunters leave a stand in place to "mark" their territory. He always removes his personal stand after getting his deer. They considered this when the bill was drafted, which is why the permission from landowner was included. The difference between a permanent and a climber is: a permanent stand causes any damage to a tree. Any time you insert a peg, hanger or anything that goes into tree. Also, if you cut branches for view. These make a stand permanent. This bill requires you to put your name on them and remove them unless the landowner gives permission. This is about courtesy and respect issue. Fish and Game tries to teach this and include when laws are created so hunters know that someone owns the property and pays for it and should be gracious for its use. The date of Jan 1 was chosen as it was the beginning of a ne year. Chair Spillane had a good point that we may not want people trying to take out a stand in the winter. He is fine with a spring date, except that many cuts happen in the winter when ground is frozen. Therefore, that would not be conducive to get stands out. If name is on it then the person could be called. A cut off date is important, not specifically not a specific date. Another concern raised was for liability. Landowner has a stand on their property and someone falls out of a tree stand they might be held liable. Costs money to fight a lawsuit.
    - **Q: Rep Smith:** There is no penalty in the bill. Paragraph IX. This implies damage to the tree. But no penalties for labeling or keeping it out past the deadline. **A: T**here is a penalty in RSA 207. Many laws don't' have a penalty within them because it is covered elsewhere. **FU:** Liability. He had a call from a landowners concerned of liability. RSA 508:14 landowner liability law. RSA 213:34 duty of care law. Is it correct to understand that the owner is free of liability and cost of attorney. Law states owner can recover costs. Is that correct? **A**: Yes, but doesn't happen very often. Often cost money to defend and courts don't feel its appropriate as the person

could bring a law suit. What if it's a child, not a hunter? Don't know if liability applies there.

- **Q: Chair Spillane:** Permanent stands are already covered under existing law, not part of this bill. A: Correct, we are not changing any of that. Straps around a ladder stand are not permanent.
- **Q: Rep Goley:** Bill says that they shall be removed by Jan 1st, which doesn't stop them from removing any time before? A: Correct. The only argument is that coyote hunt a stand would stay in longer. As long as landowners know who it is they probably won't have a problem. **FU:** when the bill says that they should be labeled does it include climbing tree stands? **A: Yes. FU:** would it include an observation blind that he pulls over his chair? A: That should be labeled with a marker just to make sure. **FU:** Earlier suggestion about license numbers he reconsidered because your license number doesn't always stay the same as it must be changed. **A:** Agree, and the landowner that said he doesn't want to call law enforcement every time. He doesn't see the issues with anti-hunting people; they don't receive those calls. Chair Spillane comments: He has always labeled and prints a new label each year. **A:** Didn't specify how to label so people can do that however they want to. As long as the owner is identified the method is not important.
- **Q: Rep Kahn :** Any harm to putting the penalty amount in the bill to make is easier to find the penalty in the law. **A:** No problem with changing it for that purpose.
- **Q: Rep Brown:** Comment that there is a legitimate point about anti-hunters per Diane Richardson's comments. **A:** He does take the point. No issues right now with labeling; there have been no issues with the trapping. As long as we can find out whose it is.
- **Q: Chair Spillane:** There is no info about who can remove them**. A:** No there isn't it wasn't put in. A combination of solutions. Landowners can do it; there is no restriction that only Fish and Game can do it. Might have been an oversight. He has concerns with landowners doing removals for liability. He prefers they call Fish and Game. **FU:** Are you concerning a date other than January? **A:** Yes, the date is not critical, just consider harvesting. It is important to pick an absolute date. **FU:** Chair Spillane: written permission is required. Was that intentional? **A:** That was in the law. FU: You have express written permission? **A:** yes that's because of the need for a permit. **FU**: Below it says without written permission? **A:** The law has been that way for years. Never made a case if a landowner doesn't ask for it written. **FU:** if a landowner needs to give written permission, they may be hesitant. A: They will be as he has heard many times from landowners. FU: Would you mind if that was permission only, not written? **A:** That is acceptable. **FU:** Effective date of 60 days after passage is too soon**. A:** He believes that OLS chose that date. Next calendar year is fine.
- **Q: Rep Smith:** Clarify that a you stated if a homeowner moves a stand it would be considered theft. We discussed with game camera bill and you said that it wasn't? **A:** "Could be". Example: If a landowner removes and didn't get around to returning it and the owner of the stand knows you have it, then it could be reported stolen. [Mr. ?? who previously testified joins Colonel Jordan at the table]. He asks about the liability issue. If you have a tree stand and kids play on them would landowner be liable if they were hurt? Who gets sued? A: Anyone can be sued for anything. Point was that the law is specific to outdoor recreation, which is not what a kid is doing running up a tree stand. The case would cost money to defend. **Chair Spillane** suggests that attractive nuisance laws might apply. This requires that you take reasonable precautions to prevent and deter. Similar to the swing set example.

Respectfully submitted,
Rep. Carroll Brown, Clerk

House Remote Testify

Fish and Game and Marine Resources Committee Testify List for Bill SB15 on 2023-04-04

Support: 29 Oppose: 34 Neutral: 0 Total to Testify: 0

Export to Excel

Name	City, State Email Address	Title	Representing	Position	Testifying	Non-Germane	Signed Up
Lang, Senator Tim	Sanbornton, NH kathryn.cummings@leg.state.nh.us	An Elected Official	Senate District 2	Support	No	No	3/24/2023 11:12 AM
LOSO, Jeremy	Allenstown, NH jloso@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/24/2023 4:22 PM
SZUMIESZ, DANIEL	Strafford, NH dszumiesz@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/24/2023 4:31 PM
Williams, Dan	Concord, NH ren_man_67@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/25/2023 12:55 PM
Bisson, Paul	Keene, NH Bissonp01@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/25/2023 2:21 PM
Lovett, Barbara	Somersworth, NH barb124_124@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/25/2023 9:00 PM
Codding, Joseph	Wakefield, NH coddingjoe@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/25/2023 9:45 PM
Dumont, Michael	Greenfield, NH mdumont@alumni.unity.edu	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/25/2023 10:13 PM
Snyder, Kristina	Chester, NH khsnyder22@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/25/2023 11:30 PM
Lemoine, Ronald	Berlin, NH ronlemoine1@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/25/2023 11:47 PM
Moore, Joe	Wolfeboro, NH joemoore2920@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/26/2023 6:22 AM
snyder, patricia	Durham, NH penguinbird2@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 6:24 AM
Sinclair, Julia	Newmarket, NH Juliaesinclair@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 7:16 AM

Breton, Mike	Milton Mills, NH bretonmike43@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/26/2023 7:36 AM
Fife, Kathie	Canterbury, NH Kathie@kathiefife.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 8:13 AM
Zarse, Curti	wo, NH curtis@zarse.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/26/2023 8:51 AM
Dutil, Jeremy	Hudson, NH Jeredutl@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/26/2023 9:00 AM
Slade, Andy	Chester, NH sladea888@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 9:41 AM
SOFISH, ELIZABETH	GRANTHAM, NH ELIZ.SOFISH@GMAIL.COM	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 9:50 AM
Hartford, Trell	Wolfeboro, NH srxyam700@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/26/2023 11:32 AM
Wahl, BJ	Sullivan, NH bjwahl@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 12:23 PM
Hurley, Jack	Claremont, NH jrhurjd@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 12:30 PM
snyder, John	durham, NH glencovesnyder@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 1:19 PM
Marsh, Kelly	Moultonboro, NH kellyemarsh@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/26/2023 3:30 PM
Fallon, Matt	Webster, NH cfdpiper7@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/26/2023 6:07 PM
Reed, Brandon	Concord NH, NH brandonreed@burnellarchitects.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/27/2023 9:24 AM
page, george	loudon, NH looneyshome@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/27/2023 6:50 PM
Stonis, Nathan	Alexandria, NH ndstonis@gmail	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/28/2023 10:10 AM
Hurley, Margaret	Claremont, NH mdaisshurley@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/28/2023 10:20 AM
Watters, David	Dover, NH david.watters@leg.state.nh.us	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	No	3/28/2023 11:13 AM
Downs, Connor	Lebanon, NH cdowns2018@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/28/2023 11:49 AM

Ball, Darlene	Claremont, NH darleneball3@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/28/2023 11:58 AM
Kenney, Mark	Northfield, NH Markkenney80@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/28/2023 4:35 PM
Richardson, Diane	Georges mills, NH Workingclasscanine@msn.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/28/2023 11:58 PM
THOMPSON, LAURA	CHESTER, NH nicnmom@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/29/2023 6:49 PM
McLaughlin, Patrick	Chester, NH patrickmclaughlin@duck.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/29/2023 7:26 PM
Psaradelis, Timothy	Goffstown, NH Redsoxfan5521@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/30/2023 7:35 AM
Henson, Justin	Haverhill, NH Nhsugaring@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/30/2023 9:18 AM
Stearns, Brad	Charlestown, NH Primeshooter21@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/30/2023 10:02 AM
LaBounty, Ryan	Sharon, VT Ryan.labounty@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/30/2023 12:05 PM
Richardson, Daniel	Nashua, NH daniel6_22@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/30/2023 5:31 PM
Bain, Robert	Campton, NH rhoo69@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/30/2023 5:50 PM
Keleher, Dan	Somersworth, NH Bearcat64@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	3/30/2023 9:51 PM
SAWTELLE, ERICK	LEE, NH esawtelles@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	3/31/2023 8:11 PM
Laurence, Barbara	New London, NH soonipi97@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	4/1/2023 8:01 AM
McAdam, Kyle	Gilmanton, NH kjmcadam1@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	4/1/2023 2:29 PM
Duffy, Jocelyn	Peterborough, NH jd.chai@outlook.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	4/2/2023 7:45 AM
roberge, Lance	Franklin, NH lancerbrg33@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/2/2023 8:24 AM
Smith, Cheryl	Nottingham, NH Newthollow@earthlink.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	4/2/2023 8:37 AM

Stover, Matthew	Chester, NH m.j.stover@verizon.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	4/2/2023 1:05 PM
Davis, Ann	Wilmot, NH woodswithoutgile@tds.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	4/2/2023 1:50 PM
DOW, ANTHONY	KENSINGTON, NH delta3804@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/2/2023 8:09 PM
Moore, Scott	Wolfeboro, NH duckslayer@metrocast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/2/2023 8:44 PM
Chouinard, Victor	Chester, NH vchouinard@gsinet.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	4/2/2023 10:34 PM
BOSWORTH, WELDON	Gilford, NH bosworthw@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	4/3/2023 9:00 AM
Bishevsky-Weeks, Susan	Kensington, NH katahdinlily@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/3/2023 12:07 PM
Leahy, Matt	Concord, NH mleahy@forestsociety.org	A Lobbyist	Society for the Protection of NH Forests	Support	No	No	4/3/2023 3:25 PM
POOLE, DAVID	RUMNEY, NH fish4fun.dp@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	New Hampshire Guide's Association	Support	No	No	4/3/2023 4:52 PM
HALLOCK, LINDA	CORNISH, NH lindash@mail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/3/2023 6:26 PM
Dow, Randy	Concord, NH rdow369@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/3/2023 9:58 PM
Page, Rodney	Sunapee, NH cbmech40@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/4/2023 6:33 AM
Childs, David	Goshen, NH Dchilds@sau43.org	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/4/2023 8:32 AM
Medeiros, Jesse	Plainfield, NH bgtrck458@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	4/4/2023 10:13 AM

SIGN UP SHEET

To Register Opinion If Not Speaking

Bill # SB 15 Date APRIL 4, 2023

Committee Fish + Game

** Please Print All Information **

Name	Address	Phone	Representing	(check one) Pro	Con
Diane Richardson	Georges Mills		Self	X	
WALTER LACEY	KEENE	603-352-2292	SELF	X	
KEVIN JORDAN	NHFG			X	
Denis Ward	Monroe NH		Self	X	
Chris Fife	Bingham ME		Weyerhaeuser	X	
David Marsden	Stratham			X	
Henry Ahern	Plymouth NH		Self	X	
~~Tammy~~ Tom Chrisenton	Londonderry		self	X	
~~Tammy~~ Chrisenton	~~Londonderry~~		~~self~~	~~X~~	
Chuck Souther	Concord	6037311889	self	X	
Stephen Wood	Lebanon	603 252 5796		X	

4-4-25

Dear Committee

My name is Diane Richardson and I live in the Lake Sunapee region. I'm here to testify in support of SB 15 with one reservation

This bill would:

*<u>Require written permission for all stands left beyond 1/1</u>
—which I ABSOLUTELY agree with—

*<u>Require labeling of all stands with a name and contact information</u>
—I ABSOLUTELY agree with this IF it's just a valid working telephone number not a name

Requiring a name would allow the doxxing and harassment of hunters by anti hunters and animal rights activists. It would also allow targeting of specific hunters by others.

This will increase property theft & vandalism as well as increase odds of a conflicts in and out of the woods. A name on stands will be potentially dangerous.

Telephone number though? ABSOLUTELY YES!—

I could fully support this bill IF we changed the labeling requirement to JUST a valid working telephone number

Thank you so much for your time
Diane Richardson
Springfield NH

Apple Hill Farm

580 Mountain Rd.

Concord, NH

Members of the House Fish and Game Committee 3/4/2023

SB 15

I am writing full support of SB15 as introduced. My wife Diane and I own Apple Hill Farm in Concord. We support hunting, and numerous hunters access our property each year. We do require permission to hunt as our farm is open to the public for Pick Your Own, hiking and for the enjoyment of our neighbors and customers. By asking for permission it gives us an opportunity to inform hunters where the public may be and to some degree gives us the ability to know who is on the property. We have several archery hunters who ask and receive written permission to put up portable tree stands each year and trim branches to allow for good shooting avenues. These stands are removed at the end of the hunting season.

It has become apparent to us that there are a couple of tree stands placed on our property without our knowledge. This became an issue when we were conducting a selective timber harvest in 2021 When the logger was doing the harvesting brought me out to see a tree that had been clearly marked by our forester with a tree stand in it. This was in mid winter, hunting season was well over, when asked, our forester said he would have noticed the stand when he was marking the tree. There was no name or identification on the stand and I asked the hunters that I had given permission to hunt the previous fall if it was theirs. They replied no but they had seen other stands placed in the fall. I authorized the logger to cut the tree and leave the heavily damaged stand on the ground. When I checked later that summer it was gone. Had there been a name on the tree stand and a requirement to ask permission this could have been avaoided.

SB15 is a reasonable way to solve this issue, responsible hunters should have no objection, they already have to ask for permission to place a pit blind, or place bait as allowed by law, and are required to put their names on arrows and bolts.

I ask that you support this bill,

Chuck Souther

Josh Stock - NH Timberland
4-4-23

TO: Rep. James Spillane, chairman, NH House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee
CC: Rep. James Goley, vice chairman, NH House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee
Committee members: Aboul Kahn, Jonathan Smith, Jim Kofalt, Paul Tudor, Benjamin Bartlett, Travis Corcoran, Zachary Nutting, Mike Ouellet, Cathryn Harvey, Ellen Reed, Damond Ford, Loren Foxx, Ben Ming, Jennifer Morton, David Paige, Gail Pare, and James Roesener

FROM: Ann and Marc Davis, landowners, members of NH Timberland Owners Association & NH Farm Bureau Federation
RE: Support SB14 and SB15 as drafted
04/02/23

We encourage members of the NH House Fish, Game and Marine Resources Committee to support SB 14 and SB 15 as drafted.

We own 500 acres in Springfield and Wilmot that abut the John F. Gile Memorial State Forest. This land, known as the Woods Without Gile, was the 2022 NH Tree Farm of the Year. We live in Wilmot on 24 acres. The 500 acres is open to hunting and is not posted. We know most of the people who hunt that land. They are respectful and normally let us know when they plan to hunt the property.

In the past, tree stands have not been an issue for us at the Woods Without Gile. But four years ago a hunter placed a deer stand adjacent to one of our hiking trails. We were uncomfortable about having this stand so close to a trail we frequently walk. I left a note in a waterproof sleeve asking the owner to move the stand away from the trail. He called us and said he was reluctant to move the stand - citing that the location was convenient for him. We insisted that for safety reasons he must move the stand. Eventually he moved it. The process would have been easier for all concerned if he had been required to seek permission before setting up the stand.

We also allow hunting on our land in Wilmot. But we require written permission - it's close to our house. Although it's a relatively small parcel, the habitat is great for deer and game birds - five acres of open fields surrounded by managed forest including a two-acre sugar bush. Safety is a concern, so we give written permission to only one hunter a year. The man who hunted our property last fall also asked for and received permission to put up a tree stand and a game camera - both were placed about 1,500 feet away from our home - well out of sight. It was a true pleasure to have him hunt on our land. We have become friends.

New Hampshire Fish and Game Department encourages hunters to develop good relationships with landowners. All the people who have hunted our land have appreciated the opportunity to seek game on a beautiful, well-managed woodlot. Requiring hunters to seek written permission to set up a tree stand that would remain on the property beyond January 1 and requiring written permission for game cameras on private property are reasonable requirements that could open new avenues of communication between landowners and hunters. If written permission for the privilege of leaving a tree stand or setting up a game camera is not required, it could result in the posting/closing many acres of private lands to hunting. We want to know who is setting up game cameras and tree stands on our property - and where. If we don't have that assurance, then we will consider posting the Woods Without Gile, where, by the way, hunters have harvested five moose since 2004.

We support SB14 and SB15. We hope you will, too, and will approve both as drafted.

We also thank all the members of the NH House Fish, Game and Marine Resources Committee for your service on behalf of the residents of New Hampshire.

Sincerely,
Ann and Marc Davis
Wilmot, NH

From: Tom Thomson <thomsontreefarm@yahoo.com>

To: HouseFishandGameCommittee@leg.state.nh.us <housefishandgamecommittee@leg.state.nh.us>

Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2023, 10:58:38 PM EDT

Subject: Fw: Support for Senate Bill 14 and 15

Thomson Family Tree Farm

173 Strawberry Hill Road

Orford, New Hampshire 03777

April 4, 2023

Representative James Spillane, Chair

N.H. House of Representatives Fish, Game, and Marine Resources Committee

Legislative Office Building, Room 307

Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairman James Spillane and Committee Members,

My name is Tom Thomson owner of the Thomson Family Tree Farm with my wife Sheila.We own 2400 acres in Orford and Wentworth NH and manage it as a sustainable forest. I have owned forestland for over 65 years and have been an advocate for years of opening and sharing our forestland with both the state of NH as well as the general public. We have over 12 miles of roads that we allow the Snowmobile Clubs to use, we also open our land for many other activities for foot traffic such as Hunting, Hiking, Photography, Birding, Annual Butterfly Counts, Snow Shoeing, Cross Country Skiing along with many Tours that we give each year.

I support Senate Bill 14 relative to the use of Game Cameras and Senate Bill 15 relative to the use of Tree Stands and Observation Blinds as written in these bills.

New Hampshire is the 2nd most forested state in the US and New Hampshire has a total of 4.8 million acres of forestland, which is 84% of our state's land base, and of that percentage, private forest landowners like ourselves own 76% of New Hampshire's total forest.

Remember good Forest Management is only one of the many benefits private forest landowners provide to our state. Good Forestry brings into our state's economy $1.4 billion and has nearly 7,400 workers employed in the forest products industry. Sustainable Forestry in NH also adds to our tourism and

recreational industries. One example is snowmobiling which brings in annually, direct and indirect, over $600 million because forest landowners continue to open and share our forestlands and trails which were built for forestry; 84% of our state's 7200 mile trail system is on private lands such as ours. Also in New Hampshire is the tradition of allowing foot traffic to the general public for recreational activities such as hunting. In many other parts of the country, land is assumed posted and to enter it for any activity landowner permission is required.

As forest landowners many of us want to continue sharing our land with state agencies and the general public but request the common courtesy of knowing if someone wants to place a game camera, a tree stand or an observation blind on our private property. It's not too much for us to ask a hunter or a person who has a hunting guide business who wants to use our forestland to get permission before placing a game camera, a tree stand or observation blind, especially if it will be left in-place beyond hunting season.

As a landowner I would ask you, assuming you own land, (any size) how would you feel if you woke up tomorrow morning and found a game camera strapped to one of your trees, or a deer stand hooked up in another tree or a observation blind in a favorite spot on your property? I think I know the answer, as I and many other landowners go through this ever year. I'm also sure that when and if you were confronted with any or all of the above the same though would go through your mind as it does ours; Is it time to "Post My Land". For this reason alone I encourage you to pass both Senate Bill 14 and 15.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and thank you for your willingness to serve our State.

Sincerely yours,

Tom Thomson

Jasen Stock

From: Dennis McKenney <dennis_mckenney@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, April 1, 2023 9:51 AM
To: Jasen Stock
Subject: Senate Bill 15

I write in support of SB15 as a land owner and land manager. For reasons of safety, permissible use of private property as a guest, timber harvest planning and active harvesting, the proposed changes to existing law are a welcome revision from both the perspective of a private land owner with land open to hunting as well as a land manger for thousands of acres open to public recreation of many kinds not just hunting.

Thank you for your service to the citizens of our state.

Dennis D. McKenney, LPF #61/LLS #691
ACF Consulting Forester and Land Surveyor

ISA Certified Arborist NE 7287A

USDA Technical Service Provider: TSP-19-22806
New England Forestry Consultants, Inc.
569 North Bennington Road
Bennington, NH 03442-4505
603-588-2638 v/f 603-533-0283 cell
www.neforestryconsultants.com like us on Facebook

Weyerhaeuser

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

Christopher Fife
Weyerhaeuser Public Affairs Manager
P.O. Box 646, Bingham, Maine 04920
207.453.1051 (w) | 802.473.0866 (m)
Chris.fife@wy.com

April 4, 2023

Representative James Spillane, Chair
N.H. House of Representatives Fish, Game, and Marine Resources Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 307
Concord, NH 03301

RE: Senate Bill 14 - relative to the use of game cameras.
Senate Bill 15 - relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

Chairman Spillane and Distinguished Members of the House Fish, Game, and Marine Resources Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of both SB 14 and SB 15 as presented.

Weyerhaeuser owns approximately 24,000 acres of timberland in Coos County in the towns of Errol, Dummer, Cambridge and Wentworth Location. Our forest management is certified to sustainable forestry standards through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Additionally, our New Hampshire Timberlands are managed under a working forest conservation easement ensuring the land will be managed for timber, will never be developed and will remain open to the public for snowmobiling and dispersed recreation including hunting.

New Hampshire has a rich hunting tradition underpinned by hunters respect for private landowners who allow them access to hunt on private property. Weyerhaeuser recognizes that this tradition supports sound game management as well as important recreation economies in many of New Hampshire's rural communities. We welcome hunting, fishing and other disbursed recreation on our property and strive to maintain a relationship of mutual respect. These users are often the first to alert us if they observe a problem or bad behavior of others. SB 14 and SB 15 will enhance our relationship with hunters by providing for clear communication and expectations regarding game cameras and tree stands.

Game cameras are not an essential part of the New Hampshire hunting tradition. In fact, they are a relatively new technology that can conduct hidden surveillance of a landowner's property without the landowner's knowledge. Landowners have no opportunity to view the images or data captured by game cameras and, usually, no knowledge of where game cameras are placed. SB 14's requirement of permission for placement of game cameras on private property is a commonsense step that respects landowner's rights while maintaining New Hampshire's hunting tradition.

When a hunter contacts us asking permission to place a game camera, it will provide an opportunity for us to ensure that we do not have operational plans for the location. This communication will help to avoid conflict and to provide a safe experience for the hunter, logging contractors and our foresters.

SB 15 will likewise improve the opportunity for communication between our foresters and the owner of a tree stand or observation blind through the requirement for labeling with the name and contact

information of the owner of the tree stand or observation blind in a clearly visible manner. SB 15 will also allow us as a landowner to know if a tree stand has been abandoned by setting January 1 as the final date for removal of all temporary tree stands and blinds. It is common for our foresters and logging contractors to discover a tree stand during layout for a harvest or even during the harvest. Unfortunately, there is usually with no contact information for the owner and we have no way to know if the tree stand has been abandoned.

Importantly, SB 15 provides opportunity for a private landowner to grant a hunter permission to leave a tree stand in place after January 1st further encouraging communication between the hunter and the landowner.

SB 14 and SB 15 will strengthen New Hampshire's hunting tradition and encourage landowners to continue to generously share their land with recreational users, a practice that benefits local communities and the state.

As a New Hampshire timberland owner, Weyerhaeuser respectfully urges the Committee to **pass both SB 14 and SB 15 as presented.**

Sincerely,

Christopher Fife

Male copies

4 April 2023

To: NH House Fish, Game & Marine Resources Committee
Subject: Senate Bills 14 & 15

I am Walter Lacey from Keene and my wife and I own 650 acres of land in Keene, Swanzey and Chesterfield. Although not a hunter myself I believe very strongly in traditional uses of the land and hunting is certainly one of them. Our land has always been open to hunting and trapping; I can't imagine that changing. That being said I have had a problem with tree stands over the years, twice with associated game cameras. In two instances healthy, valuable oak trees were damaged. None of the stands or cameras had contact information on them and all my efforts to communicate with the owners by leaving my contact information on flagging tape was unsuccessful. In the most recent incident, because of the nature of the camera involved, a Fish & Game officer was able to identify the offender. The mutual benefits of having contact information on this equipment seem undeniable. A simple phone call could clear up any question a landowner might have and a hunter might get back a misplaced stand or camera.

The increasing use and sophistication of game cameras should require permission for their use on private land. The idea that something is allowed in my backyard but not yours is unacceptable!

It all seems to me a matter of common courtesy. If you want to leave a piece of gear on someone else's land you get permission and put your name on it. What could be simpler than that!

I don't like to see land posted; I think it's a short sighted measure. If the common sense requirements of Senate Bills 14 & 15 are not enacted, however, I'm afraid land owners may be left with no other choice. With privileges come some responsibilities.

Thank you.

Walter Lacey
230 Daniels Hill Road
Keene, NH 03431

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS
SINCE 1901

54 Portsmouth Street
Concord, NH 03301
Tel. 603.224.9945
Fax 603.228.0423
info@forestsociety.org
www.forestsociety.org

April 4, 2023

The Honorable James Spillane, Chairman
Committee on Fish and Game and Marine Resources
New Hampshire House of Representatives
Legislative Office Building, Room 307
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairman Spillane and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for accepting this testimony from the Society for the Protection of NH Forests (Forest Society) in support of Senate Bill 15, legislation regarding the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

As you may know, the Forest Society is a private, non-profit land trust. We own approximately 60,000 acres over 191 different properties throughout New Hampshire. Because hunting and hunter access to privately-owned is part of our state's traditions, we allow hunting, as well as fishing and trapping, on all these properties.

Our current policy for the use of tree stands is as follows:

- Tree stands that are affixed to trees with screws, nails, or other hardware that is inserted into the tree are prohibited.
- Temporary (strapped) tree stands are allowed although we encourage owners to list their name and contact information on their stand.
- Temporary stands must be removed following the hunting season for which they were erected.

We are supportive of SB 15 for two reasons. First, it clarifies that landowner permission is required only for permanent tree stands. This is a huge point of confusion for many people. Second, it includes a labeling requirement. Section VIII states that all tree stands or observation blinds shall be labeled with the name and contact information of the owner of the tree stand or observation blind in a clearly visible manner. The labeling requirement is important because there have been times when we have found permanent tree stands on our properties but we have no way of knowing who they belong to. If we have a timber harvest planned, for example, the prescense of a tree stand may interfere with our ability conduct that harvest. The labeling requirement will allow to easily notify the owner of the need to move their tree stand.

To summarize, we believe SB 15 will help strengthen the relationship between private landowners and hunters. We encourage the committee to support the bill. Thank you again for considering this testimony.

Sincerely,

Matt Leahy, Public Policy Director
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

Jeremy LOSO

Putting a tree stand that does not damage any trees in the woods does no harm to anyone I believe. If a landowner comes across a tree stand that they do not want there, a simple note, or the contact information left on the tree stand would enable the landowner to have you remove it. This is why i leave my contact information.

Dan Williams

I am opposed to this bill because it is a solution in search of a problem that doesn't exist except in very rare instances and therefore to create a law to punish the majority would run counter to NH's spirit of "live free or die" and its commitment to land access.

Michael Dumont

This bill is also bogus.

Ronald Lemoine

Onn the record opposed to the bill

Joe Moore

I believe that any further restrictions on hunting equipment is unnecessary.

Kathie Fife

It’s an eye sore to see tree stands left to rot on trees. I pass one that has been abandoned for years. It leaves a negative view on the hunting community.

Curti Zarse

As a NH taxpayer and avid outdoors-man I oppose this bill. The access to private property is under the control of each individual landowner. If landowners do not want the general public accessing their property, posting the property "no hunting" is the easiest way to do so, they can also post "permission only" to limit and control access. Many large landowners place their parcels in Recreational Current Use to save a bit on property taxes, having a permission only aspect to the RecCurrent Use status is confusion and misleading, and honestly borders on entrapment.
Make no mistake, this bill is being sponsored and supported by the anti-hunting establishment and goes against New Hampshire's long standing hunting traditions.

Trell Hartford

We have enough laws at this time to protect and safety of all

Brandon Reed

I am against this bill as written.
Permit should not have to be carried.
Permit should not expire if landowner accepts
How do you explain all of this to out of state land owners and larger companies so they dont feel liable when hunters want to hunt the land they are responsible for?

totally unneeded law for NH

Nathan Stonis

I oppose sb15. It is vey difficult in many situations to get ahold of a landowner. The 1000 acres I hunt is owned by somebody out of state, I know many people hunt the same piece of land and most landowners would not want to have to sign permission for stands and blinds to dozens of hunters yearly. Most hunters are very respectful of private land they hunt on. Present law allows a landowner to ask whoever they want to leave. Current law is working just fine.

Thank you,
Nathan Stonis

Connor Downs

This bill would lead to the potential for needing permission to hunt/access any unposted land in NH. The majority of hunters who hang tree stands do so in a manner that does not hurt the trees. The stands and blinds made today stray away from anything that damages the trees as that has always been a rule. Every hunter would agree that we shouldn’t hang anything that damages the trees nor cut any limbs if it’s not our land. The need to get permission to hang a tree stand on non posted land is another gateway to needing permission to hunt on anyone’s property posted or not posted.

Diane Richardson

Support bill except contact info should only be a valid telephone number

Patrick McLaughlin

This bill protects the property rights of a landowner.

All it obliges a Hunter to do is to seek and get the owner’s,*permission* to use their property. This seems more than reasonable to me.

Timothy Psaradelis

NH is full of rich hunting tradition that was worked for a very long time. I’m opposed to changing a system that has a proven track record. Some of the best quality time I spend with my son is out checking cameras and sitting in blinds during hunting season. Property owners have every right to post their land and if done so ethical law abiding outdoorsmen and women respect that and move on to a new track of land. Like any activity there will be individuals who break rules and regulations set forth. But the laws shouldn’t be written for those people. The laws should be written for the law abiding people and not the small percentage of people who blatantly break rules.

Thank you for your time,

Tim

Justin Henson

We have law’s already to protect the landowners and there property. The access of unposted private property for hunting is what makes New Hampshire unique. I believe this law will be detrimental to hunting participation in NH.

Daniel Richardson

Clear up the confusion is this bill. What does "permit" refer to? Is it the hunting permit? Or is it the "express written permission from the property owner" by another name? If permit is to mean "express written permission from the property owner", then make that clear.

Robert Bain

our f&g department is grossly understaffed as it is,the bill if passed will be a huge wastes of a Co's time trying to enforce it.we hunters/fisherman fund this department,so why take this away ?just to impress a few select groups.this state every year looses more and more hunters and f&g are rescuing more and more hikers at us sportsman expense,fix that problem before knocking away at us hunter.Please do not pass this bill....these alleged problems land owners are having are very isolated,I personally take care of a large trek of land with zero problems.all these big land owners should give up there recreational tax break if they do not want cams,trestands etc....kill these bills....or come back with a compromise like no cams,stands etc.within three hundred feet of a occupied dwelling.then No one gets allegedly recorded.

Dan Keleher

I am writing in opposition to SB 15-FN, the act relative to the use of tree stands, as it is currently written.

Revised item IV “No person shall construct a permanent tree stand or observation blind…” is not sufficiently distinct enough from item I statement of “No person shall erect, build… that damages or destroys a tree by inserting into the tree any metallic, ceramic, or other object used as part of …” to warrant a separate classification.

New item V “…may be erected on the land of another between August 1 and December 31… shall be removed… by January 1, unless allowed by written permission from the property owner or designee.” but this does not allow for placement of a stand before August 1 with property owner permission.

New item VII “….shall be labeled with the name and contact information…” needs further clarification on “contact information” especially in today’s society where that could be someone’s Instagram.

Thank you for your time.

Kyle McAdam

I do not think it should be correct for someone to place a tree stand, permanent or temporary, on another person's property without permission. I should have the right to tell someone they do not have permission to be on my property.

ANTHONY DOW

This bill is nothing more than age discrimination. The majority of hunters in NH are older than 45, so as to require them to have to drag a 75lb ladder stand in and out of the woods every year is asinine. Simply put your name and phone number on your stand and if the landowner does not want the stand on his or her property they can call you to remove it. VOTE NO SB15

Scott Moore

I oppose this bill because labeling stands with personal information will open up hunters to harassment from non hunters or other hunters who have issues with other hunters.

Victor Chouinard

I support this bill. Consistent rules across the state will reduce confusion and be better for everyone.

Susan Bishevsky-Weeks

I am a disabled, older woman who enjoys hunting and fishing as a way to relax and enjoy God's blessings. My significant other is older than I am, and despite his being a Marine Veteran, he too has limitations.

The Bill as proposed will totally limit our abilities to hunt. There is NO PHYSICAL WAY for me to keep putting up and taking down each of my tree stands before season and after season. Especially when I use some of the stands for Turkey hunting as well as deer and coyote. These stands can weigh at least 80# each!! What does the committee whom proposed such RESTRICTIONS actually intend to make better??? I can only see the negative impacts such a bill can cause...totally or severely restricting not only elderly and disabled hunters but also women hunters, young hunters and low income hunters. Do non-hunters believe we only use one area to hunt?? No, it all depends on the weather, winds, the moon phase and our individual health that day.

If a land owner wishes to post their property, then by all means. The government should leave this up to the hunter and landowner. I TOTALLY OBJECT TO ANY LADDER STAND or BLIND RESTRICTIONS.

DAVID POOLE

This bill supports the landowners that graciously allow hunters to erect stands on their land. The requirement for the stand owner's name and contact information allows a landowner to contact the individual if there is concern or a problem with the stand. The requirement to get permission or remove the stand will allow the landowner to know of a possible fall hazard and it's location or to deny that it remains after the hunting seasons. Landowners have legitimate concerns and should have the ability limit the chance that an unauthorized person could climb the stand and possibly fall, or to have a stand that is improperly erected or not maintained removed by the stand owner.

Randy Dow

SB 15: As an avid New Hampshire hunter, I am now 69 years old and have participated in NH fishing and hunting since I was 8 years old. I also have multiple health issues including heart, lung and diabetes.

This bill as written - is extremely discriminatory to older hunters, especially hunters such as myself. A typical carry stand weighs 15-25 lbs and a ladder stand (which I prefer) weighs up to 80 lbs in weight. The ladder stand is much safer for hunters such as myself.

I do accept that any tree stands should be labelled with the owner's name and phone number for the land owner for any issues.

But- to request the removal of the stand every year will essentially eliminate my ability to hunt in a stand, This section of the bill is what I am vehemently opposed to.

Also - putting up a ladder or climbing stand causes bit of bark impact on a tree - though not destructive to the the life of the tree. I have seen many a tree stand in the woods on a tree that have been there for well over 20 years. Frankly the tree grows around the stand. When a tree stand stays in place - better for the health of the tree.

Please - let's not continue down the path of Massachusetts type legislation which constantly blocks the hobby of hunting and fishing in New Hampshire - a right that has existed for well over 400 years.

Land owner's have rights - but let's remember that most land owners with over 10 acres of property take advantage of current usage taxation rates which already allows free hunting on that property with no restrictions within the laws of New Hampshire fish and game regulations.

Let's keep New Hampshire pro hunting! Thank you Randy Dow

SB 15-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2023 SESSION

23-0793
04/05

SENATE BILL ***15-FN***

AN ACT relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

SPONSORS: Sen. Pearl, Dist 17; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Gendreau, Dist 1; Sen. Lang, Dist 2

COMMITTEE: Energy and Natural Resources

ANALYSIS

This bill amends the permissible uses of tree stands, observation blinds, and pit blinds.

- -

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics.***
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

23-0793
04/05

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three

AN ACT relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 Use of Tree Stands, Observation Blinds, and Pit Blinds. Amend RSA 207:36-a to read as follows:

207:36-a Use of Tree Stands, Observation Blinds, and Pit Blinds.

I. No person shall erect, build or use a tree stand or observation blind on land of another person that damages or destroys a tree by inserting into the tree any metallic, ceramic, or other object used as part of a ladder or observation deck, without express written permission from the property owner or designee.

II. No person shall erect, build or use a pit blind on land of another person without express written permission from the property owner or designee.

III. No person shall cut any tree in connection with any of the activities regulated under this section without the express written permission of the property owner or designee.

IV. ***No person shall construct a permanent tree stand or observation blind without written permission from the property owner or designee.***

V. A portable or temporary tree stand or observation blind that does not violate paragraph I or II may be erected on the land of another between August 1 and December 31 of a calendar year. All portable or temporary tree stands or observation blinds shall be removed from the property by January 1, unless allowed by written permission from the property owner or designee.

VI. The permittee shall carry such permit on his person while in the field and shall be subject to inspection on demand of any conservation officer.

[~~V.~~] ***VII.*** All property owner permits shall expire on December 31 of each year unless rescinded by the property owner or designee.

VIII. All tree stands or observation blinds shall be labeled with the name and contact information of the owner of the tree stand or observation blind in a clearly visible manner.

[~~VI.~~] ***IX.*** Any person who violates any provision of this section shall be guilty of a violation and shall be liable for the amount of damage caused by the act, to be recovered by the property owner sustaining the damage.

[~~VII.~~] ***X.*** The executive director shall adopt rules, pursuant to RSA 541-A, relative to the form, issuance and filing of property owner permits for the tree stands, observation blinds and pit blinds.

2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

LBA
23-0793
12/28/22

SB 15-FN - FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED

AN ACT relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

FISCAL IMPACT: [X] State [ ] County [ ] Local [ ] None

	Estimated Increase / (Decrease)			
STATE:	**FY 2023**	**FY 2024**	**FY 2025**	**FY 2026**
Appropriation	$0	$0	$0	$0
Revenue	$0	$0	$0	$0
Expenditures	$0	Indeterminable	Indeterminable	Indeterminable
Funding Source:	[X] General	[ ] Education	[ ] Highway	[ ] Other

METHODOLOGY:

This bill expands on the existing statute relative to the use of tree stands, observation blinds, and pit blinds, which carries an associated violation level offense. There is no method to determine how many charges, if any, would be brought as a result of this bill to determine the fiscal impact on expenditures. The Judicial Branch has indicated the potential cost per case for violation/misdemeanor level offenses would be $122 in FY 2024 (not including appeals).

It is assumed any fiscal impact, if any, would occur after FY 2023.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Judicial Branch

SB 15-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2023 SESSION

23-0793
04/05

SENATE BILL ***15-FN***

AN ACT relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

SPONSORS: Sen. Pearl, Dist 17; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Gendreau, Dist 1; Sen. Lang, Dist 2

COMMITTEE: Energy and Natural Resources

ANALYSIS

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Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.
23-0793
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III. No person shall cut any tree in connection with any of the activities regulated under this section without the express written permission of the property owner or designee.
IV. ***No person shall construct a permanent tree stand or observation blind without written permission from the property owner or designee.***
V. A portable or temporary tree stand or observation blind that does not violate paragraph I or II may be erected on the land of another between August 1 and December 31 of a calendar year. All portable or temporary tree stands or observation blinds shall be removed from the property by January 1, unless allowed by written permission from the property owner or designee.
VI. The permittee shall carry such permit on his person while in the field and shall be subject to inspection on demand of any conservation officer.

[~~V.~~] ***VII.*** All property owner permits shall expire on December 31 of each year unless rescinded by the property owner or designee.

VIII. All tree stands or observation blinds shall be labeled with the name and contact information of the owner of the tree stand or observation blind in a clearly visible manner.

[~~VI.~~] ***IX.*** Any person who violates any provision of this section shall be guilty of a violation and shall be liable for the amount of damage caused by the act, to be recovered by the property owner sustaining the damage.

[~~VII.~~] ***X.*** The executive director shall adopt rules, pursuant to RSA 541-A, relative to the form, issuance and filing of property owner permits for the tree stands, observation blinds and pit blinds.

2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

LBA
23-0793
12/28/22

SB 15-FN - FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED

AN ACT relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

FISCAL IMPACT: [X] State [ ] County [ ] Local [ ] None

	Estimated Increase / (Decrease)			
STATE:	**FY 2023**	**FY 2024**	**FY 2025**	**FY 2026**
Appropriation	$0	$0	$0	$0
Revenue	$0	$0	$0	$0
Expenditures	$0	Indeterminable	Indeterminable	Indeterminable
Funding Source:	[X] General	[ ] Education	[ ] Highway	[ ] Other

METHODOLOGY:

This bill expands on the existing statute relative to the use of tree stands, observation blinds, and pit blinds, which carries an associated violation level offense. There is no method to determine how many charges, if any, would be brought as a result of this bill to determine the fiscal impact on expenditures. The Judicial Branch has indicated the potential cost per case for violation/misdemeanor level offenses would be $122 in FY 2024 (not including appeals).

It is assumed any fiscal impact, if any, would occur after FY 2023.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Judicial Branch

CONSENT CALENDAR

May 17, 2023

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety to which was referred SB 15-FN,

AN ACT relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds. Having considered the same, report the same with the recommendation that the bill OUGHT TO PASS.

Rep. Terry Roy

FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee:	**Criminal Justice and Public Safety**
Bill Number:	**SB 15-FN**
Title:	**relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.**
Date:	**May 17, 2023**
Consent Calendar:	**CONSENT**
Recommendation:	**OUGHT TO PASS**

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This bill would make the placement of a tree stand or hunting blind on the property of another illegal without first obtaining written land owner permission. It further requires that all such stands and blinds be labeled with the owners contact information. The committee heard testimony that often times hunters place stands in places where the landowner would rather not have them or damage valuable timber by allowing the stand to remain for years, causing the tree to grow around the stand attaching material. With this bill, the committee again heard testimony that if the bill failed, many landowners would post their property against all hunting. The committee agreed that it should be a common courtesy to seek permission from the owner of a property before installing equipment on their land.

Vote 20-0.

Rep. Terry Roy
FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

CONSENT CALENDAR

Criminal Justice and Public Safety
SB 15-FN, relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds. **OUGHT TO PASS.**
Rep. Terry Roy for Criminal Justice and Public Safety. This bill would make the placement of a tree stand or hunting blind on the property of another illegal without first obtaining written land owner permission. It further requires that all such stands and blinds be labeled with the owners contact information. The committee heard testimony that often times hunters place stands in places where the landowner would rather not have them or damage valuable timber by allowing the stand to remain for years, causing the tree to grow around the stand attaching material. With this bill, the committee again heard testimony that if the bill failed, many landowners would post their property against all hunting. The committee agreed that it should be a common courtesy to seek permission from the owner of a property before installing equipment on their land. **Vote 20-0.**

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

SIGN UP SHEET

To Register Opinion If Not Speaking

Bill #: SB 15-FN Date: 5/17/23

Committee: CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

**** Please Print All Information ****

Name	Address	Phone	Representing	Pro	Con
COLONEL KEVIN JORDAN		NHFG		✓	
Rep Jeff Goley				✓	
Rep Judy Aron	Sull	Acwork	self	✓	
Robert Johnson, II			NH Farm Bureau	X	
Jason Stock		603 674-8148	NHTCA	X	
Jeff Eames		603-344-4459		✓	
Tom Thomson		603-353-4488		✓	
Sheila Thomson		" "	"	✓	

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

PUBLIC HEARING ON SB 15-FN

BILL TITLE: **relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.**

DATE: **May 17, 2023**

LOB ROOM: **202-204** **Time Public Hearing Called to Order:** **12:02 p.m.**

Time Adjourned: **12:26 p.m.**

Committee Members: Reps. Roy, Rhodes, A. Murray, Pratt, Sytek, Proulx, Janvrin, D. Mannion, Reid, Stone, Tenczar, Harriott-Gathright, Meuse, Bouldin, Bradley, N. Murphy, R. Newman, Newell, Selig and Wheeler

Bill Sponsors:
Sen. Pearl **Sen. Watters** **Sen. Gendreau**
Sen. Lang

TESTIMONY

* Use asterisk if written testimony and/or amendments are submitted.

Daley Frenette, Senate Majority Caucus Director, introduces the bill on behalf of Senator Pearl

- Senator Pearl hopes that giving landowner's more rights over their property it will incentivize them to leave it open to the public

Susan Price, Carroll County F&G commissioner

- Supports the bill

Kyle Baker, NH Wildlife Federation

- Supports the bill

Ann Davis

- Supports the bill

Tom Thomson

- Supports the bill

Walter Lacey

- Supports the bill

Jason Stock, NH Timberland Owner Association

- Supports the bill
- If portable tree stands are left up for a period of time they can cause damage to trees that could otherwise be worth hundreds of dollars

Carsten Springs

- Supports the bill

Colonel Kevin Jordan, Chief Law Enforcement NHFG

- Supports the bill

- Any permanent tree stands require written permission and your required to hold on to that permit, currently there is no such requirement for portable tree stands.
- Portable tree stands may often be left up as a way to claim certain hunting territory, and the bill is written in a way to allow that to happen as long as there is landowner permission to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

Rep. Alissandra Murray, Clerk

House Remote Testify

Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee Testify List for Bill SB15 on 2023-05-17

Support: 4 Oppose: 35 Neutral: 0 Total to Testify: 0

Export to Excel

Name	City, State Email Address	Title	Representing	Position	Testifying	Non-Germane	Signed Up
Gendreau, Senate Carrie	Littleton, NH kathryn.cummings@leg.state.nh.us	An Elected Official	Senate District 1	Support	No	No	5/12/2023 2:53 PM
Lang, Senator Tim	Sanbornton, NH kathryn.cummings@leg.state.nh.us	An Elected Official	Senate District 2	Support	No	No	5/12/2023 2:53 PM
Lemoine, Ronald	Berlin, NH ronlemoine1@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/14/2023 8:51 AM
Richard, Gary	Berlin, NH garyr3531@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself/Hunters	Oppose	No	No	5/14/2023 9:33 AM
NICKERSON, DANIEL	MILAN, NH nickersondaniel9@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/14/2023 9:53 AM
LHeureux, Eddy	Berlin, NH happylheureux@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/14/2023 1:39 PM
Folger, Sheridan	Sanbornville, NH sheridan@sheridanfolger.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/14/2023 6:52 PM
Smith, Aaron	Mont Vernon, NH Amsmithhome@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/14/2023 8:09 PM
Simula, Tracy	New Hampton, NH trsimula@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/14/2023 8:58 PM
Hayes, Liz	Peterborough, NH ehayes3624@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 6:02 AM
serzans, Peteris	Penacook, NH pserzans@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 6:10 AM
Zale, Eric	Milford, NH esz1000@wildcats.unh.edu	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 6:20 AM
Holland, Ryan	Center Tuftonboro, NH rholland16@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 6:32 AM

Stearns, Brad	Charlestown, NH primeshooter21@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 6:34 AM
Niemaszyk, Joe	Londonderry, NH Joeniemasyk@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 6:43 AM
Cillo, Jon	Henniker, NH cjonnh@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 6:46 AM
Roy, Rene	Bow, NH Renecar @comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 8:01 AM
Roberts, Scott	Strafford, NH Theghab@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 8:14 AM
crowley, zach	DOVER, NH zachcrowley21@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 8:53 AM
Nelson, Seth	Plainfield, NH Foreverfriends1@live.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 8:56 AM
Lyford, Nick	Northfield, NH N.lyford5@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 9:06 AM
Miller, William	Canaan, NH buckdad3@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 9:44 AM
Lemoine, Jeffrey	Berlin, NH Jlemoine31@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 9:45 AM
Cacciatore, Joe	East Kingston, NH jcacciatore75@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 9:48 AM
Hardin, William	Conway, NH williamhardin1979@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 10:06 AM
DeCamp, Travis	Canaan, NH Travis@latva.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	Yes	5/15/2023 10:29 AM
Torrisi, Joseph	Londonderry, NH Joeyt5687@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 10:31 AM
Woodman, John	Belmont, NH jwoodman1955@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 10:51 AM
TROMBLEY, JOSEPH	Epping, NH joseph.trombley@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 10:57 AM
Deturris, Frank	Hinsdale, NH nhbowhunter77@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 12:12 PM
Leischner, Paul	Washington, NH paul.leischner@icloud.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 12:20 PM

Gordon, Shae	Franconia, NH shaegordon1998@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 1:30 PM
Snow, Arthur	Troy, NH Bowhunter12368@aim.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/15/2023 7:50 PM
Snyder, Kristina	Chester, NH khsnyder22@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	5/15/2023 9:05 PM
Chouinard, Victor	Chester, NH vchouinard@gsinet.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	5/15/2023 9:08 PM
Newell, Scott	Groveton, NH newellscott603@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/16/2023 12:29 PM
L'Heureux, Peter	Gorham, NH peterlheureux@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/16/2023 1:47 PM
Vacca, Derek	Kingston, NH derekvacca@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/17/2023 5:44 AM
Belanger, Ben	Berlin, NH Belangerbenjamin8@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	5/17/2023 9:05 PM

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS
SINCE 1901

54 Portsmouth Street
Concord, NH 03301
Tel. 603.224.9945
Fax 603.228.0423
info@forestsociety.org
www.forestsociety.org

April 4, 2023

The Honorable James Spillane, Chairman
Committee on Fish and Game and Marine Resources
New Hampshire House of Representatives
Legislative Office Building, Room 307
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairman Spillane and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for accepting this testimony from the Society for the Protection of NH Forests (Forest Society) in support of Senate Bill 15, legislation regarding the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

As you may know, the Forest Society is a private, non-profit land trust. We own approximately 60,000 acres over 191 different properties throughout New Hampshire. Because hunting and hunter access to privately-owned is part of our state's traditions, we allow hunting, as well as fishing and trapping, on all these properties.

Our current policy for the use of tree stands is as follows:

- Tree stands that are affixed to trees with screws, nails, or other hardware that is inserted into the tree are prohibited.
- Temporary (strapped) tree stands are allowed although we encourage owners to list their name and contact information on their stand.
- Temporary stands must be removed following the hunting season for which they were erected.

We are supportive of SB 15 for two reasons. First, it clarifies that landowner permission is required only for permanent tree stands. This is a huge point of confusion for many people. Second, it includes a labeling requirement. Section VIII states that all tree stands or observation blinds shall be labeled with the name and contact information of the owner of the tree stand or observation blind in a clearly visible manner. The labeling requirement is important because there have been times when we have found permanent tree stands on our properties but we have no way of knowing who they belong to. If we have a timber harvest planned, for example, the prescense of a tree stand may interfere with our ability conduct that harvest. The labeling requirement will allow to easily notify the owner of the need to move their tree stand.

To summarize, we believe SB 15 will help strengthen the relationship between private landowners and hunters. We encourage the committee to support the bill. Thank you again for considering this testimony.

Sincerely,

Matt Leahy, Public Policy Director
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

Jeremy LOSO

Putting a tree stand that does not damage any trees in the woods does no harm to anyone I believe. If a landowner comes across a tree stand that they do not want there, a simple note, or the contact information left on the tree stand would enable the landowner to have you remove it. This is why i leave my contact information.

Dan Williams

I am opposed to this bill because it is a solution in search of a problem that doesn't exist except in very rare instances and therefore to create a law to punish the majority would run counter to NH's spirit of "live free or die" and its commitment to land access.

This bill is also bogus.

Ronald Lemoine

Onn the record opposed to the bill

Joe Moore

I believe that any further restrictions on hunting equipment is unnecessary.

Kathie Fife

It’s an eye sore to see tree stands left to rot on trees. I pass one that has been abandoned for years. It leaves a negative view on the hunting community.

Curti Zarse

As a NH taxpayer and avid outdoors-man I oppose this bill. The access to private property is under the control of each individual landowner. If landowners do not want the general public accessing their property, posting the property "no hunting" is the easiest way to do so, they can also post "permission only" to limit and control access. Many large landowners place their parcels in Recreational Current Use to save a bit on property taxes, having a permission only aspect to the RecCurrent Use status is confusion and misleading, and honestly borders on entrapment.
Make no mistake, this bill is being sponsored and supported by the anti-hunting establishment and goes against New Hampshire's long standing hunting traditions.

Trell Hartford

We have enough laws at this time to protect and safety of all

Brandon Reed

I am against this bill as written.
Permit should not have to be carried.
Permit should not expire if landowner accepts
How do you explain all of this to out of state land owners and larger companies so they dont feel liable when hunters want to hunt the land they are responsible for?

totally unneeded law for NH

Nathan Stonis

I oppose sb15. It is vey difficult in many situations to get ahold of a landowner. The 1000 acres I hunt is owned by somebody out of state, I know many people hunt the same piece of land and most landowners would not want to have to sign permission for stands and blinds to dozens of hunters yearly. Most hunters are very respectful of private land they hunt on. Present law allows a landowner to ask whoever they want to leave. Current law is working just fine.

Thank you,
Nathan Stonis

Connor Downs

This bill would lead to the potential for needing permission to hunt/access any unposted land in NH. The majority of hunters who hang tree stands do so in a manner that does not hurt the trees. The stands and blinds made today stray away from anything that damages the trees as that has always been a rule. Every hunter would agree that we shouldn't hang anything that damages the trees nor cut any limbs if it's not our land. The need to get permission to hang a tree stand on non posted land is another gateway to needing permission to hunt on anyone's property posted or not posted.

Diane Richardson

Support bill except contact info should only be a valid telephone number

Patrick McLaughlin

This bill protects the property rights of a landowner.

All it obliges a Hunter to do is to seek and get the owner’s,*permission* to use their property. This seems more than reasonable to me.

Timothy Psaradelis

NH is full of rich hunting tradition that was worked for a very long time. I'm opposed to changing a system that has a proven track record. Some of the best quality time I spend with my son is out checking cameras and sitting in blinds during hunting season. Property owners have every right to post their land and if done so ethical law abiding outdoorsmen and women respect that and move on to a new track of land. Like any activity there will be individuals who break rules and regulations set forth. But the laws shouldn't be written for those people. The laws should be written for the law abiding people and not the small percentage of people who blatantly break rules.

Thank you for your time,

Tim

Justin Henson

We have law’s already to protect the landowners and there property. The access of unposted private property for hunting is what makes New Hampshire unique. I believe this law will be detrimental to hunting participation in NH.

Daniel Richardson

Clear up the confusion is this bill. What does "permit" refer to? Is it the hunting permit? Or is it the "express written permission from the property owner" by another name? If permit is to mean "express written permission from the property owner", then make that clear.

Robert Bain

our f&g department is grossly understaffed as it is,the bill if passed will be a huge wastes of a Co's time trying to enforce it.we hunters/fisherman fund this department,so why take this away ?just to impress a few select groups.this state every year looses more and more hunters and f&g are rescuing more and more hikers at us sportsman expense,fix that problem before knocking away at us hunter.Please do not pass this bill....these alleged problems land owners are having are very isolated,I personally take care of a large trek of land with zero problems.all these big land owners should give up there recreational tax break if they do not want cams,trestands etc....kill these bills....or come back with a compromise like no cams,stands etc.within three hundred feet of a occupied dwelling.then No one gets allegedly recorded.

Dan Keleher

I am writing in opposition to SB 15-FN, the act relative to the use of tree stands, as it is currently written.

Revised item IV "No person shall construct a permanent tree stand or observation blind…" is not sufficiently distinct enough from item I statement of "No person shall erect, build… that damages or destroys a tree by inserting into the tree any metallic, ceramic, or other object used as part of …" to warrant a separate classification.

New item V "…may be erected on the land of another between August 1 and December 31… shall be removed… by January 1, unless allowed by written permission from the property owner or designee." but this does not allow for placement of a stand before August 1 with property owner permission.

New item VII "….shall be labeled with the name and contact information…" needs further clarification on "contact information" especially in today's society where that could be someone's Instagram.

Thank you for your time.

Kyle McAdam

I do not think it should be correct for someone to place a tree stand, permanent or temporary, on another person's property without permission. I should have the right to tell someone they do not have permission to be on my property.

ANTHONY DOW

This bill is nothing more than age discrimination. The majority of hunters in NH are older than 45, so as to require them to have to drag a 75lb ladder stand in and out of the woods every year is asinine. Simply put your name and phone number on your stand and if the landowner does not want the stand on his or her property they can call you to remove it. VOTE NO SB15

Scott Moore

I oppose this bill because labeling stands with personal information will open up hunters to harassment from non hunters or other hunters who have issues with other hunters.

Victor Chouinard

I support this bill. Consistent rules across the state will reduce confusion and be better for everyone.

Susan Bishevsky-Weeks

I am a disabled, older woman who enjoys hunting and fishing as a way to relax and enjoy God's blessings. My significant other is older than I am, and despite his being a Marine Veteran, he too has limitations.

The Bill as proposed will totally limit our abilities to hunt. There is NO PHYSICAL WAY for me to keep putting up and taking down each of my tree stands before season and after season. Especially when I use some of the stands for Turkey hunting as well as deer and coyote. These stands can weigh at least 80# each!! What does the committee whom proposed such RESTRICTIONS actually intend to make better??? I can only see the negative impacts such a bill can cause...totally or severely restricting not only elderly and disabled hunters but also women hunters, young hunters and low income hunters. Do non-hunters believe we only use one area to hunt?? No, it all depends on the weather, winds, the moon phase and our individual health that day.

If a land owner wishes to post their property, then by all means. The government should leave this up to the hunter and landowner. I TOTALLY OBJECT TO ANY LADDER STAND or BLIND RESTRICTIONS.

DAVID POOLE

This bill supports the landowners that graciously allow hunters to erect stands on their land. The requirement for the stand owner's name and contact information allows a landowner to contact the individual if there is concern or a problem with the stand. The requirement to get permission or remove the stand will allow the landowner to know of a possible fall hazard and it's location or to deny that it remains after the hunting seasons. Landowners have legitimate concerns and should have the ability limit the chance that an unauthorized person could climb the stand and possibly fall, or to have a stand that is improperly erected or not maintained removed by the stand owner.

Randy Dow

SB 15: As an avid New Hampshire hunter, I am now 69 years old and have participated in NH fishing and hunting since I was 8 years old. I also have multiple health issues including heart, lung and diabetes.

This bill as written - is extremely discriminatory to older hunters, especially hunters such as myself. A typical carry stand weighs 15-25 lbs and a ladder stand (which I prefer) weighs up to 80 lbs in weight. The ladder stand is much safer for hunters such as myself.

I do accept that any tree stands should be labelled with the owner's name and phone number for the land owner for any issues.

But- to request the removal of the stand every year will essentially eliminate my ability to hunt in a stand, This section of the bill is what I am vehemently opposed to.

Also - putting up a ladder or climbing stand causes bit of bark impact on a tree - though not destructive to the the life of the tree. I have seen many a tree stand in the woods on a tree that have been there for well over 20 years. Frankly the tree grows around the stand. When a tree stand stays in place - better for the health of the tree.

Please - let's not continue down the path of Massachusetts type legislation which constantly blocks the hobby of hunting and fishing in New Hampshire - a right that has existed for well over 400 years.

Land owner's have rights - but let's remember that most land owners with over 10 acres of property take advantage of current usage taxation rates which already allows free hunting on that property with no restrictions within the laws of New Hampshire fish and game regulations.

Let's keep New Hampshire pro hunting! Thank you Randy Dow

Ronald Lemoine

As President of the Androscoggin Valley Fish and Game Association our board of directors has voted to officially oppose SB 15 on behalf of our members.

Sheridan Folger

I strongly oppose this over-reach and intrusion.

Aaron Smith

I am against this bill in its entirety.

Scott Roberts

This will hurt the hunting community. A tree stand hung correctly does not hurt the environment. I would support not putting them up till 14 days prior to season and 14 days after close of season they need to be removed

Jeffrey Lemoine

As a resident, property owner and hunter I strongly oppose this bill. The state has no right to dictate what landowners allow on their own property. This bill is also one more step towards regulating hunting out of existence in our state.

JOSEPH TROMBLEY

While I agree with portions of this bill and understand some of the concerns, I am opposed to it due to its lack of definition. As it relates to stands and blinds, if there is no harm or damage to property caused by the blind or stand, my feeling is that it should be allowed (unless it is truly "private" property). For public access lands, I do support restrictions on gaining permission on the installation of anything that is considered "permanent" or causes damage to the property.

My bigger concern is with the lack of definition around property ownership and permissions. Any property that is owned by the state, conservation commissions or groups (that have written into their allowed uses "hunting"), and properties that are in current use or recreational current use should not require permission since they are public access and in some cases, supported by public funds. Specifically, current use properties receive tax discounts that are then supplemented by the rest of the tax payers.

I would be in support of a bill like this that protects individual property owners (or actual private property owners) and their property from damage. I would also support a bill that requires owners of stands and blinds to check maintain identification as well as some removal/replacement process to ensure that they do not become abandoned property.

Paul Leischner

Chipping away at hunting and New Hampshire's proud history of open land. Pursue and prosecute those who do wrong not EVERY hunter.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

EXECUTIVE SESSION on SB 15-FN

BILL TITLE: relative to the use of tree stands and observation blinds.

DATE: May 17, 2023

LOB ROOM: 202-204

MOTIONS: OUGHT TO PASS

Moved by Rep. Roy Seconded by Rep. Harriott-Gathright Vote: 20-0

CONSENT CALENDAR: YES

Statement of Intent: Refer to Committee Report

Respectfully submitted,

Rep Alissandra Murray, Clerk