



Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society  
National Headquarters  
451 McCormick Road  
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[www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org)

**RE: Indiana DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife Rule Ideas for 2018 Got Input**

October 31, 2018

To our conservation partners at IN DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife,

Established in 1961, The Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) is North America's foremost conservation organization dedicated to preserving our sporting traditions by creating healthy forest habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and other wildlife. Our sister organization, the American Woodcock Society (AWS), was formed in February 2014 to further advance RGS objectives. Forest conservation is facing important challenges with respect to habitat loss, declining wildlife populations, and unhealthy forest management practices. RGS and AWS employ a team of biologists that collectively possess an abundance and diversity of practical experience and advanced degrees in wildlife and forest management who work to combat those challenges. RGS and AWS exist to protect, create and enhance healthy forests, abundant wildlife and our sporting traditions through scientific management of woodlands while educating and engaging our membership and the public at large.

RGS/AWS recognizes robust scientific data and literature which have long indicated the precipitous decline in ruffed grouse throughout their historic range within the state of Indiana.

In response to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Fish & Wildlife (DFW) Rule Ideas for the 2018 Got INput Period, the Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society support the pursuit of adding ruffed grouse to the list of endangered species of birds in Indiana (312 IAC 9-4-14, repeal 312 IAC 9-4-10). We echo IDNR statements included in the Got INput document, emphasizing that extirpation of this species is virtually inevitable unless significant timber harvests of sufficient intensity are applied on the landscape. These treatments are necessary to create early seral habitats required for this species and numerous other young forest dependent wildlife that are also experiencing declines in Indiana. Our support of the proposed listing comes with the caveat that subsequent environmental reviews in areas where grouse may still persist should strongly favor active forest management. A review process which facilitates recovery rather than hindering habitat creation is of the utmost importance. Additionally, we implore IN DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife to consult RGS/AWS on the development of a recovery plan to ensure that the listing of this species to state endangered is followed up with significant and active science based forest management.

**RUFFED GROUSE  SOCIETY**

**Healthy Forests - Abundant Wildlife - Sporting Traditions**

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Further, we would like to recommend the immediate amendment of the 2015 Indiana State Wildlife Action Plan to include ruffed grouse as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need, and inclusion on all future versions of the Indiana State Wildlife Action Plan in order to outline the steps needed to conserve this species in Indiana.

We value the conservation partnership between RGS/AWS and IN DNR DFW and look forward to working towards a solution.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

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Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society

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