

Hello! I am Barbara Sollner-Webb, a long-time member of the Executive Board of Trail Riders of Today (or TROT for short), a 40-plus year old group of equestrians that has numbered over 1000 in some years, who all enjoy getting out on Maryland's gorgeous trails and appreciating the state's beauty. And it is quite hard to be out enjoying the state's parks when one is in fear of being shot by an errant bullet or arrow. TROT has taken numerous membership surveys over the years and invariably our membership is impressible united in not wanting to have taken away that one day each week when we can safely ride throughout the fall, winter and spring, without fear of being shot at. The other six days per week hunting is already permitted in most locations (except immediately abutting residences).

I personally have been shot at three times while out riding my horse, always when riding on land where hunting was not permitted but the bullet or arrow fired from neighboring land where hunting was permitted, presumably by some hunter who mistook my white riding helmet or my horse for a 5-point buck. It most definitely is not fun to be shot at – actually, a very scary experience.

Indeed, you colleague, Delegate Ben Barnes has recounted to me about his hiking in an area park and getting shot at, also fired by someone from abutting land, and he said he did not enjoy the experiences one bit either.

Notably, bullets and arrows do not respect property boundaries.

I know you have received a large amount of very eloquent and well-researched testimony from many outdoor enthusiasts who do not want their one safe day per week taken away for the benefit of the less than 2% of the population who are hunters, so I will not recount their facts and figures. Let me just beg you to keep what is left of Sundays safe for the 98-plus percent of residents who are not hunters to be out and enjoy nature safely.