

August 16, 2017

Mr. Steve Zahn  
Regional Director - Region 2  
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
47-40 21st Street  
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Mr. Zahn,

I hope this letter finds you well.


I noted with interest a news report concerning the town of Port Washington, Long Island, regarding the release of 28 Bobwhite Quail into the local environment. Bobwhite Quail devour ticks, and the expectation is that this will result in a reduction of public exposure to tick-borne diseases.

I would like to make a formal request to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to analyze the feasibility of initiating a similar program on Staten Island, involving the release of Bobwhite Quail into our natural areas and monitoring the impact on tick populations. While I understand there is an existing small population of Bobwhite Quail in southeastern Staten Island, I would be interested in DEC's feedback on the idea of increasing the Staten Island population with an on-going breeding and release program. Since Bobwhites are a native New York species, increasing the population can be considered a positive environmental step whether it has significant impacts on tick populations or not. I would also like to know if there is any hard data indicating that Quail do indeed eat ticks, and in what quantities.

Please know that I share the view of many Staten Islanders that it is encouraging to see native wildlife - like Bald Eagles - returning to our Borough. If the Bobwhite Quail likewise exhibit a nurtured comeback, I believe this would offer an excellent opportunity for public education about co-existing with wildlife and raising the awareness of tick-borne illnesses.

Thank you for your kind attention, and I await your detailed response.

Sincerely,

  
James S. Oddo  
President, Borough of Staten Island

