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WILDLIFE PROGRAM

Dear Sirs,

I was reading through the 2015-2017 proposed hunting regulations and could not believe the amount of hunting area and hunting opportunity you are proposing on taking away from the archery hunters on the Olympic Peninsula. Your proposal would take away GMUs 602, 603, 607 and 612 which have been mostly part of the early archery season for the past 20 years and leave the archery hunters with only GMUs 601 and 615. This is an unbelievable blow to the archery hunters. I have always felt that the archery hunters should be allowed some bit of advantage in regards to hunting areas and hunting season due to the overall handicap that they possess. Over my 20 years of hunting, the archery hunters have consistently lost days and hunting areas while the rifle and muzzle loader hunters continually gain.

Allowing this much new area to muzzle loaders and abandoning the archery hunters is going to have an incredible impact on the elk herds. With today's technology muzzle loaders are accurate to 150 – 250 yards. Last year alone while hunting in GMU #s 615 & 612 I can recall 9 different bull elk that I could have harvested quit easily with a muzzle loader; however, I never was able to harvest any of them because I was hunting archery. I also notice that you plan on taking an incredible amount of deer hunting opportunities away from the Olympic Peninsula archery hunters.

I sure hope that these proposals end up being nothing more than that. If we are seriously trying to manage our wildlife we need to take a close look at exactly what it is that we are proposing. I feel the archery hunters should be gaining ground and not continually losing it. I also feel like we as a state are slowly starting to sacrifice wildlife in exchange for revenue. These proposals may bring in some extra revenue do the huge increase in muzzle loaders; however 'we will also be losing the archery hunters. If these new proposals pass, all of the archery elk hunters on the Olympic Peninsula who are normally spread out between GMUs 601 ,602 ,603 ,607 ,612 and 615 will be forced to pile into the last two GMUs 601 and 615. GMU # 615 is going to explode with hunters. And on top of that you will be allowing the muzzle loaders into this area shortly after the early archery season. I hope this letter is not just put on the side burner. I feel by writing this letter that I represent all of those archery hunters who are at home and unaware of the drastic changes awaiting them. Thank you,

Patrick Jacobsen (Port Angeles, WA)

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