From:	Team Spokane (DFW)
To:	Wildthing (DFW)
Subject:	FW: Comments in response to 232-12-078 Baiting for the purposes of hunting deer and elk.
Date:	Wednesday, February 18, 2015 11:17:48 AM
Attachments:	Anti-baiting proposal.docx

One for you. Thank you.
Teamspokane

-----Original Message-----
From: SPISAK, DANIEL C GS-11 USAF AETC 336 TRSS/DOTC [mailto:daniel.spisak.1@us.af.mil]
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 3:15 PM
To: Team Spokane (DFW)
Subject: Comments in response to 232-12-078 Baiting for the purposes of hunting deer and elk.

I would like to comment on the anti-baiting proposal but the comment box is too restrictive. Please forward this to the appropriate office.

Comments in response to 232-12-078 Baiting for the purposes of hunting deer and elk.

I am a 52 yr. old male, disabled veteran and avid outdoorsman. I have been deer and elk hunting in WA my entire adult life. Although I am listed as disabled, I do not afford the privileges of a disabled hunter and can't hike the mountains like I used to in my youth. This proposal would severely limit my ability to harvest an elk or deer and will probably end my big game hunting in this state. The proposal to change the regulation based solely on social issues is irrelevant to the WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Office that is supposed to manage wildlife populations not determine the moral issue of hunting.

Deer and elk populations are healthy and currently well managed by the state and according to this proposal, "the Department has no data at this time to suggest that the practice of baiting for deer and elk hunting has a negative population or natural resource effect." One thing that is not addressed in this proposal is the second or third order effects that would result from this proposal. The comment prepared under chapter 19.85 RCW "These rules apply to recreational hunting and do not affect small business" has not considered any of the fiscal impacts that this proposal would affect.

Currently, hunting in WA is big business, and much of that is because hunters can hunt trophy whitetail and elk. With few exceptions, the vast majority of those animals are harvested through baiting efforts. This will seriously curtail archery and muzzleloader hunting because of the close distance required during the hunt. Companies that manufacture trail cameras and tree stands will suffer because there is no reason to use them if you can't bring animals into a specific area. Local feed and supply stores that furnish alfalfa, corn, etc. will suffer. Some of the small towns that provide goods and services during the hunting seasons will lose their business. Hunters like me spend the entire spring and summer in preparation for the fall season. We drive to and from our hunting areas and spend money in restaurants and other local establishments throughout the summer. That will all stop.

Other things that have not been considered in proposal are the advantages of hunting over bait and some of the unintended consequences this proposal will inevitably create. Most hunters who use bait are experienced hunters and not the weekend warriors who purchase a rifle and go see if they can kill something. Hunting over bait provides a hunter an opportunity to take a carefully placed humane shot. Hunters who rely on stalking techniques or shooting at a running animals often take hurried or misplaced shots potentially wounding animals or worse hitting something beyond the running target. Additionally, this proposal will encourage more "road hunting" because you can cover more ground than you can on foot and the potential for poaching increases as well.

Bear hunting in this state is a great example of what could happen with this no-baiting proposal. Most of my friends who bear hunted for years, only hunt by chance now. Meaning, they only take a bear if one happens to show itself during the regular hunting seasons. No one bear hunts anymore because it is not worth the effort. Outfitters who used to offer bear hunts either shifted to something else or went out of business. If your intent is to discourage deer and elk hunting altogether in the state of WA, this is a great step in that direction. I believe your hunter numbers will decrease over the years because the odds of harvesting an animal will diminish to the point where people simply stop hunting.

Please reconsider this proposal. I love to hunt, and my success rate in the last 10 years has been about 50%. But if the odds drop from 50% to 1% I will probably stop hunting.

Concerned hunter,
Daniel Spisak (wild id# 39420003115)