

SB 2197

Darrell Belisle

North Dakota Bowhunters Association

The North Dakota Bowhunters Association has a long standing objection to the introduction of crossbows in North Dakotas Archery season. We believe the Archery season should be reserved for those who accept the challenges of harvesting a game animal with conventional archery equipment. Crossbows have evolved many fold in the last few years, and greatly reduce the challenges of Bowhunting. The introduction opportunity of Crossbows into our North Dakota archery season would certainly cause harm to archery season and opportunity. However, in this case of SB 2197, it may be somewhat unnecessary to go into detail about the harmful effects of crossbows.

North Dakota allows the use of crossbows in two other, already existing scenarios. One is, crossbows are allowed in our November “any weapon” season for use with a hunters lottery drawn tag. I agree, this option may not be of interest to some of our older generation hunters.

The other opportunity, **which the North Dakota Bowhunters Association supports**, is the Handicap crossbow permit. To acquire this permit, a hunter must obtain an application from the North Dakota Game & Fish Department and have it signed by a medical professional. The ND Game and Fish Department provides a 5 year permit for those with severe disability and a one year permit for those with lesser handicap. As the requirements seem fairly lenient, I can only imagine that most hunters 75 years of age and older would qualify for a permit.

Another note to understand is, the minimum legal draw weight (amount of pull) for conventional archery equipment in North Dakota is 35 pounds. To put this in perspective, 27 years ago, when my son was 9, he had no trouble drawing a 40 pound bow and harvested his first deer. In the last 27 years, conventional archery bows have remained about the same. One thing which has changed is they are now easier to draw than before.

The North Dakota Bowhunters Association would like you to consider the information I have provided and discourage you from adding another section to our current Archery opportunity.

Sincerely,

Darrell Belisle

NDBA Government and Conservation Director