



**BACKCOUNTRY
HUNTERS & ANGLERS
NORTH DAKOTA**

**TESTIMONY OF BROCK WAHL
NORTH DAKOTA BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS AND ANGLERS
HOUSE BILL 1260
HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCE COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 2, 2023**

The North Dakota Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers supports the passage of HB 1260.

We believe the North Dakota Game and Fish needs the appropriate tools to address localized, problematic elk populations. We also believe it is our responsibility as hunters, to ensure that landowners dealing with these problems have resources available to them to do that. We think this tool can work to both of those ends.

It is common knowledge that effectively and efficiently controlling problematic elk populations is done directly through targeting antlerless cows in those specific populations. But that can't be done with a single landowner depredation tag. If populations are an issue, cow elk will need to be harvested at higher quantities and with higher success rates.

With that being said, our support is tied to a guaranteed public access component. Because these elk are a public trust, we believe that the public hunter should be a part of this management tool and we believe access to those problematic populations fulfills an important public access component, furthers management effectiveness, makes strides to strengthen landowner/hunter relationships and helps put elk meat in the freezer for all involved. We look forward to seeing the relationships this initiative will forge between hunters and landowners, and think this will benefit all parties involved.

We are confident that the Game and Fish will work with all stakeholders to ensure equitable opportunity and a cooperative plan that includes public hunters, as well as prioritizing respect for private property.

We support a friendly amendment to subsection 7, page 4, line 10 of the proposed language. After "The director may issue special antlerless elk depredation management licenses to landowners" we'd like to include, "who provide free public hunting access to private property."



Brock Wahl
Chairman
North Dakota Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
northdakota@backcountryhunters.org



WWW.BACKCOUNTRYHUNTERS.ORG/NORTH_DAKOTA_BHA
NORTHDAKOTA@BACKCOUNTRYHUNTERS.ORG