

SB 2137

Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee,

I am writing in opposition of this bill (SB 2137). I have hunted deer over bait for many years, and find it to be a very effective method. The last few years I haven't been able to due to restrictions. Did I just give up and stop hunting? No, I found other ways to continue to hunt. Did I find my hunting experience less appealing without baiting? No. This bill, in my opinion, is an extremely slippery slope, and it is much bigger than just baiting.

The North Dakota Game and Fish is an agency of wildlife **professionals**, who are also North Dakotans who live, work, fish and hunt in North Dakota. Their mission is to *“protect, conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat for sustained public consumptive and nonconsumptive use.”* This bill limits their ability to do what *might be* (or might not be) necessary to sustain this public resource.

Now I do believe there is alot of science out there on both sides of the baiting/disease transmission topic. It's a daunting task to comb through it all and make sense of it all. But that is why we hire professionals to do this job. It's not always fun and it's certainly not always easy, but let them make the best decisions based on ALL the information out there. Should sportsmen/women be concerned about CWD? Absolutely. Should they be researching and questioning? Yes, that is what science is all about. I think there is a lot of evidence that shows baiting doesn't have a major effect on CWD transmission...

Any time I have reached out to an NDGF employee about something they have been very good at explaining the reasoning, and I trust them in their professional judgment. Anytime we restrict the professionals who have extensive education and let the armchair biologist make decisions I think we are putting ourselves in a tough position.

The North American Wildlife Model Pillar #6 states:

***“Science is the proper tool for discharge of wildlife policy. In order to manage wildlife as a shared resource fairly, objectively, and knowledgeably, decisions must be based on sound science such as annual waterfowl population surveys and the work of professional wildlife biologists.”***

Let the professionals who do this job every day make the decisions they need. This certainly doesn't mean they cannot be questioned, like I said earlier, science is always evolving due to questioning. The legislature should not be playing biologist.

Thank you,

Matt Liebel  
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