

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Please send your letters to us at Boone and Crockett Club, Old Milwaukee Depot, 250 Station Drive, Missoula, MT 59801. We welcome a lively exchange of ideas and suggestions. Associates are encouraged to send their hunting and trophy room stories along with photographs. If you have questions, please call the editors at 406.542-1888. We try to publish as many letters as possible. Letters are published as written but may be edited for brevity.

## PRIVATE LANDOWNERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Before you criticize the "Agricultural land owners" further, a decision needs to be made as to just who decides what "over grazing" and proof of "harmful residual effects" are. There are those in the non-hunting community who would argue that hunting might have "harmful effects." We need to be very careful what we teach as "problems that face our country's besieged natural resources." I hope you will read *Trashing the Planet and Environmental Overkill* by Dixie Lee Ray before you proceed much further in these endeavors.

Thank you,  
Aubrey F. Taylor  
Port Townsend, WA

## FEE HUNTING

The lack of compensation to our farmers for use of their land has brought about the leasing of their land for hunting. The fear of losing tag fees has conservation agencies scrambling. There is a problem in America when it comes to conservation departments, wildlife and farming. Farmers enjoy wildlife, but the joy ceases when the cost of enjoyment digs deep into the farmers pockets, from damage to their crops and properties.

The problem here is failure by the departments of conservation to recognize farming as a business in agriculture, and not a public recreational facility for hunters to enjoy. Farming is a business and leasing property for profit, is business. If the paying of tag fees to farmers had been implemented several years ago, the leasing of property may have never come about. Are our conservation agencies and departments really worried about wildlife, or are they worried about their big budgets?

Farmers have been paying for everyone's enjoyment when it comes to land use, most land hunted is private. It is a joke when I hear how low income people will be unable to hunt when fee hunting is done. Get real, the conservation departments charge these low income people tons of money for fees and licenses every year to hunt and fish, on land they do not own. I guess the farmer is supposed to make nothing while states make millions on tag fees to hunt on their lands. The farmer just spends

thousands of dollars every year to farm so you and I can hunt.

What I would like to see done is an increase in tag fees and pay three-quarters of tag fees back to landowners. But only if the landowner does not charge a fee to hunt their properties. Wildlife, hunters and landowners would all benefit from this. The bottom line to me is wildlife well-being and its longevity. But unless we do something to get landowners involved in profit sharing from tags, we are going to see more leasing of our lands for hunting rights.

Enjoy Wildlife,  
Dale H. Ream  
Unionville, MO

## MULE DEER AND BLACKTAIL MINIMUMS

Being an official measurer for the Boone and Crockett Club, I am concerned with the article that was written by Mr. Randy Byers in our last *Fair Chase*, about changing the minimums for mule deer and blacktail deer. Most of the deer that I measure are well earned "trophies." Our area has one heck of a lot of deer hunter's both mule and blacktail deer.

I am more concerned with the areas in Oregon and Washington that are considered blacktail deer areas. If I receive a trophy that has greater than 2-3/8" between the horn burrs at the skull plate I am concerned that this may not be a pure blacktail. I have harvested over 100 blacktails myself and have been lucky to have harvested four that exceed the 130 point minimum.

I do not feel that raising the blacktail deer minimums or decreasing the mule deer minimums would be fair to all of the hunters that spend there time chasing the trophy bucks on the coast or in the Rocky Mountains. I would like to lend my expertise if it may help the Club. I am very proud of the Boone and Crockett Associates Program and of being an official measurer for the same.

Sincerely,  
Mitchell  
Santa Rosa, CA

It was quite a thrill to take a record book cougar in January after just entering a Stone's sheep from August. The Stone's sheep was pictured in the last issue of *Fair Chase*. When I read in that issue the mule



ASSOCIATE, DON TRAVIS, WITH HIS CARIBOU. DON DID A LIFE-SIZE MOUNT OF THIS BEAUTIFUL TROPHY.

deer minimums had been lowered, I was ecstatic. My 1992 mule deer has always made my record book but fell short of the awards book at the time. The Records book isn't everything and I've even passed on entering an extremely large caribou to leave it in the velvet and never regretted the decision.

The *Fair Chase* newsletter in the new evolving format is great. I'm proud to be an Associate. The Book isn't everything, but it's close. Those Award Certificates sure are nice.

Sincerely,  
Don Travis

I have hunted in excellent blacktail country, north Mendocino County, California, for the last 46 years. During this time I can recall seeing maybe three or four bucks that might have made the book. It is unusual to see a full 4x4 buck in this area. For a buck to develop this type of rack it takes time and many other factors. Although I take a buck or two every year its been about two decades since I've taken a 4x4.

I am sure you are aware of the fact that of the 599 entries in this category (10th edition, *Records of North American Big Game*) you would eliminate 298 or approximately 50% of the entries in the book.

I feel that this is too severe a hike in the minimum score, please reconsider a lesser move if necessary.

Cordially,  
Jess Jones  
Belmont, CA

## COMMENTS ON THE NEW PUBLICATION

Just a matter of interest, I have a thoroughbred race horse prospect, which I named, "Fair Chase" three years ago when I had him registered with the jockey club.

I hope your new name for the Associate's magazine will be a good luck omen for this horse of mine.

Mr. W. Bell-Watkins

In my opinion, *Fair Chase*, is a first class publication and I believe you're doing a great job. The layout and content is very appealing and I wish it came out more often than quarterly. I eagerly await the next edition and will encourage others to also become Associates of the Boone and Crockett Club.

Sincerely,  
Merle Shuyler

The new *Fair Chase* magazine is great! Good stories, good pictures, good balance of sport and management information. Don't change a thing!

Reid E. Stevens

I enjoyed your premier issue. I think it's a great name for the book, perhaps as good as the hound hunters', *FULL CRY*, one of the great periodical names in history.

You will no doubt get a lot of letters. Not so many will be from guys like me who have themselves put together first issues. I know how you feel and it's great.

You deserve it.  
Yours very truly,  
Ken Warner  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
*Gun Digest*