



## QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 12 November 2019  
To: United States Forest Service  
From: Jacob Pries, Policy Intern  
Re: Pete King Wildlife Restoration Project

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On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association, we would like to state our support for the laudable goals set forth in the Pete King Wildlife Restoration project. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. The QDMA has over 60,000 members nationwide and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

Forest management as we know it today has vastly changed over the past few decades. No longer is it responsible to simply leave forests unmanaged or unmaintained. The current science supports sound principles of forest management activities to preserve quality wildlife habitat, ensure wildfire resilience, and to prevent the spread of diseases. There are a vast number of species that benefit from the proper forest management activities in this proposal beyond the Elk that are intended to benefit. One of these species is the white-tailed deer. Whitetails are the most popular big game animal in the U.S., and whitetail hunters are the foundation of a nearly \$67 billion hunting industry. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, approximately three of every four hunters pursue whitetails.

Additionally, hunters in the state of Idaho are an extremely important driver of the state's economy. According to the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, Idaho's hunters help contribute \$1.02 billion annually while supporting 15,261 jobs. Additionally, hunters contribute approximately 80% of state fish and wildlife agencies' budgets every year. They continually support conservation through excise taxes on hunting gear and license fees. It is vitally important that their interests be taken into account in this proposal moving forward. We request that public access to these lands is a priority with habitat enhancement moving forward so that hunters can continue to garner invaluable experiences afield thus maintaining the flow of funds to the economy and conservation.

A healthy white-tailed deer population is critical to, not only the time-honored tradition of hunting, but to the ecological stability of the region. Therefore, habitat improvements that have been proposed that increase the resiliency of forests that wildlife depend are crucial. We respectfully urge the United States Forest Service to continually move forward the habitat improvement activities outlined in this proposal. We will always be a staunch advocate for the improvement of wildlife habitat for the benefit of wildlife and the hunters that have pursued those species for generations. On behalf of the QDMA, we would like to thank you for your time and consideration of our comments.

Respectfully,

Jacob Pries  
Policy Intern  
Quality Deer Management Association