



For 15 years I have been involved in running a booth at the Washington State Fair (formally The Puyallup Fair). The booth sponsored by Washingtonians for Wildlife Conservation, has one simple, but very important goal: To educate the public regarding the substantial role that hunting, and hunters have in wildlife conservation. We tell the truth. We dispel myths. We provide facts and information. We represent. We do something that is almost unheard of: We reach out beyond the choir, putting hunters in the light that we deserve. The light we have earned.

It's hard to calculate how many contacts we make during the 17 days of this event, which attracts one million people every year, but it is substantial. Some stop and talk, while many more just read the message banner, which reads "Sportsmen Contribute \$2.9 Billion to Conservation Annually." Others collect information to read later.

We have a lot of company in the "Northwest Outdoors: Go Play Outside" building at this fair. Hiking groups, native plant societies, conservation districts, Metro Parks, Mount Rainier National Park, Nature Conservancy, Foresters, Trout Unlimited and more. One group of volunteers kept track, and tabulated over 8,000 personal, face to face contacts. Of course, our literature and banner speaks for us, so those we don't talk to are still getting our message: The "hunters are conservationists" message.

I have always said that if hunters were half as committed to the future of hunting as anti-hunters are committed to ending it, we would have few problems to contend with. Our adversaries spreading lies, misrepresentations and half-truths about us is their everyday mission. Washingtonians for Wildlife Conservation's public outreach program is a proactive counter to that propaganda. The Washington State Fair, located in the same region that virtually controls the politics of this state is a very important event for the hunting community, and the reason that I am asking for your help.

This event can't and won't survive without you. That's a short sentence, so please read it again; it is the reason for my writing this letter to you.

This event is, by any standard, important, effective and extremely necessary. I would say that it, and those like it, are essential to ensuring your, and your children's hunting future. I know you're busy, so am I. I know you have limited time off from work, I'm in the same boat. I know you believe the general public won't listen, but they do, and we make an impact. Most of all, I know you think someone else will show up and fill a shift, but I can tell you for fact positive that "they" won't – That I have been using up to two weeks of vacation every year to ensure the 34 shifts at this event are filled testifies to that fact.

I am not asking for money, and I'm not asking for a lifelong commitment. I'm asking for a few hours one day in September to support the future of hunting.

More information about this event can be found at w4wc.org or by contacting me, Jeff Christensen, at Jeff@w4wc.org or by calling me at 425-308-7583.