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16 Meriden Road
Rockfall, Connecticut
06481-2961

T 860 346-TREE

F 860 347-7463

Email: info@ctwoodlands.org

www.ctwoodlands.org

Testimony of Eric Hammerling, Executive Director, Connecticut Forest & Park Association

Legislation before the Environment Committee on February 25, 2013	Support/ Oppose
RAISED BILL 915: AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON SUNDAY UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.	Support

The Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA) is the first conservation organization established in Connecticut in 1895. CFPA has offered testimony before the General Assembly every year since 1897 on issues such as sustainable forestry, state parks and forests, trail recreation, natural resource protection, and land conservation.

On behalf of CFPA, I testify in support of Raised Bill 915 for a few reasons:

1) There is great scientific evidence that Connecticut's forests are not regenerating properly in areas where deer populations have grown beyond the carrying capacity of the land. In these areas, particularly where there are many private landowners with relatively small landholdings, bow hunting is the best option to accommodate safety and multiple recreational uses simultaneously.

2) CFPA would not support legislation in support of Sunday hunting if it were extended to state lands, or to forms of hunting beyond bow and arrow based on the scientific evidence that we have seen to date.

3) We appreciate the provision included in the bill that would provide a 40 yard buffer from hunting for trail users on private lands. About 50% of the blue-blazed hiking trails traverse private lands and this is an important consideration that would likely add to the peace of mind to owners of property that include trails and of trail users in areas that may allow Sunday hunting in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill, and I am glad to respond to any questions you may have.