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Andrew E. Johnston
[REDACTED]

June 2, 2014

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
1416 9th Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sirs:

I just reviewed my 2014 California Big Game Hunting booklet. Again, I am amazed at your statistics, specifically the "2013 Estimated Hunter Success" beginning on page 29.

I have hunted area X5A since the late 1950's. Last year it took me nine preference points to draw that area. We hunted five days. We never saw a buck in the field or in twenty-one other camps we saw. Your aforementioned "success" column noted an estimated hunter's success of 93%. There were seventy-five tags allotted for area X5A, to reach a 93% success ratio, seventy bucks had to have been harvested. On page 22, you note thirty-nine bucks were reported harvested. That figure I find highly suspicious. Even if that figure of thirty-nine bucks were correct, the success rate would be 52%. Of the thirty-six hunters who, I guess, did not report, to reach a 93% success rate, thirty-one of the thirty-six non-reporting hunters would have to have harvested a buck.....astounding!

While you do say the success column is estimated, you are so far off it is embarrassing.

Your figures are bogus because I personally know seven hunters who did not harvest a buck. Three were with our group. These seven "non-successful" hunters would, just themselves, have brought your success ratio to less than 93% meaning everyone else was successful! Come on, let's be honest. Hunters rely on these phony figures and it is just criminal that you print them year after year.

I have hunted X5A probably thirty times. I know the area better than 99% of other hunters. I first hunted there with my uncle who was a game warden in 1958. My stepson is a game warden (not in California). We know about deer numbers! I also know the hunting will never again reach the peaks we had in the 50's and 60's but, for Fish and Wildlife to falsify statistics to make this look better is abominable. I don't know the reasons for this falsification but it certainly should be investigated.

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Give the hunters real information based upon facts, not guesstimates. We pay a great deal of money for licenses, tags, etc. and deserve reliable information.

I was not trying to be a mathematician here but your own figures prove the statistics are fabricated and I am sending this letter to anyone who will read it because this is not right. Falsifying data to make your deer harvest look good is criminal.

Sincerely,



Andy Johnston

cc:

Governor Edmund G. Brown
Fish and Game Commission
Fish and Wildlife Director Charlton H. Bonham
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Assemblyman Wesley Chesbro
State Senator Noreen Evans
Representative Jared Huffman
Western Outdoor News
Better Business Bureau
Field and Stream
Mule Deer Foundation
Gerald Duit, Discovery Bay
Jeff Johnston, Johnston Ranch
Wilderness Unlimited