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5/1/13 hearing Senate Environment and Natural Resources

Points of Opposition to HB2390

1. HB2390 violates the essence of Measure 18 and abuses the intent of the voters

--Voters twice approved the use of bait and hounds only for rare cases of threat to safety and property/livestock, and then only to be used by professionals.

--The Cougar Management Plan promises to honor this, and stakeholders were promised the same.

2. We recognize the appropriate use of hounds, and that there may be the need to quickly locate and remove a specific animal. Law allows this approved use, and that is what hounds are uniquely useful for, discriminately removing the specific animal causing conflict.

2. Use of agents to implement the Cougar Plan's target zones does not reflect this use of hounds to respond to public safety or damage.

3. The Cougar Plan establishes target zones within which all cougars are INDISCRIMINATELY tracked and treed by hounds, or snared and held and then killed by the agents Hb2390 wishes to retain.

4. The target zones are located in remote areas in the Ukiah, Steens, Warner and Wenaha Wildlife Management Units, in prime elk and deer habitat for the purpose of improving hunters' success by removing competition from natural predators.

5. 15 plus years of research in Washington state shows this kind of heavy hunting in deer habitat to increase risk of conflicts with people by resulting in a larger number of juveniles in the population, the age group most associated w conflict.

6. Cost to implement the target zones is not cheap.

--since inception in 2006, average cost per cougar is approx. \$1,500 (\$466,218, 312 cats killed through Jan 11, 2012).

7. Please Vote No on Hb2390 to protect voters' wishes and to avoid increase risk to public safety and livestock.

8. Documents provided include the following:

--ODFW: Table of Cost to Implement Cougar Removals on Target Areas

--ODFW: Trends in Cougar Mortality

--Summary of Washington State University cougar studies