

Raszka Shelley

From: Nova Hamar <nhamar@lkafundraising.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2015 1:20 PM
To: Raszka Shelley
Subject: HB 3515, HB 2050, HB 3140, HB 3188 & HB 3514

Hello Shelly,

I'm very concerned about the house bills being considered by the committee late this afternoon. As a life-long Oregonian and lover of the outdoors, I find these bills troubling and based in fear instead of fact.

In particular, HB 3515 flies in the face of the Endangered Species Act. Wolves are not "an emergency" that need to have protections stripped. Wolves are only beginning to establish themselves in Oregon again, their native territory, and the ESA ensures their protections. This dangerous bill would allow an open-season on wolves in Oregon, ensuring that they will never recover and would ensure that people in this state who love the outdoors and desire a balanced eco-system are ignored.

Also very troubling is HB 2050, which completely ignores state law and instead allows counties to handle cougar populations using hound dogs and hunting. While I don't oppose responsible hunting, this bill does not ensure anything but that rural counties can snub their nose at Oregon voters and do whatever they please. It's a dangerous precedent. Similarly, HB 3140 and HB 3188 seem to be written out of fear instead of with any regard to science and wildlife management. Predators are natural to our state and for many, enhance the wildness and beauty of Oregon. It again seems dangerous to allow fear and ignorance to stand in the way of sound judgement.

Finally, HB 3514 is again another bill directed by wolf-haters. There's no question that there will be wolf and livestock issues and livestock will die, but to give larger tax credits to ranchers without there being a burden of proof established to the cause of the loss is feeding into the stigma about wolves being "bad." Just as easily, a coyote, black bear or cougar could predate on livestock and have for decades. This bill serves only to increase the notion that wolves cause damages and therefore, shouldn't be tolerated. Again, this is based on ignorance and fear and not really what science tells us. Taxpayer money would be better spent on initiatives to reduce conflicts to begin with and educate the public on the true nature of wolves. Other states have had success with reducing conflicts, certainly Oregon can follow suit.

Thank you for your time. I hope that the committee will do what is best for ALL Oregonians and our natural resources, wildlife included, by making sure these bills do not gain traction.

Sincerely,

Nova L. Hamar

Oregon City, Oregon