



HUMANE VOTERS | OREGON

Testimony of Humane Voters Oregon on HB 5509 (Department of Fish and Wildlife Funding)
Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources

March 21, 2023

Co-chairs Dembrow and Pham, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Humane Voters Oregon is a nonprofit organization that works in Oregon’s political process and elections to promote humane treatment of animals. We are not affiliated with any other state or national organization.

Humane Voters Oregon supports the Governor’s recommendation to eliminate \$407,532 in so-called “predator control” funding from the 2023-25 budget for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).

“Predator control” funding would be used, as it has in the past, to help pay for operation of “Wildlife Services” in Oregon. Wildlife services is a controversial program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that carries out “predator control” activities on public and private lands. (See [Exposed – USDA’s Secret War on Wildlife](#) (short documentary film); [The Rogue Agency](#), Harper’s Magazine (2016).)

Wildlife Services over-emphasizes cruel lethal measures to address human-wildlife conflict. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 (the most recent year for which we have data), Wildlife Services killed 201,606 animals in Oregon, including 210 bears, 2,147 coyotes and 92 mountain lions, using methods including neck and leg snares, leghold traps and aerial gunning. ([Wildlife Services Data Reports 2019-2020](#), pp. 210-26.)

Science increasingly shows that killing wildlife does not reduce conflict and may increase it. (E.g., [Killing Coyotes Is Not As Effective As Once Thought, Researchers Say](#), National Public Radio (2019); [Scientific Opinion Letter](#), Yellowstone Ecological Research Center (2012).) Nonlethal measures have been shown to be more effective and humane.¹

For the above reasons, we urge you not to restore the funding cuts in the Governor’s Recommended Budget for “predator control.” Any additional funding in the ODFW budget to address human-wildlife conflict should include conditions that require the funding to be directed to a program other than Wildlife Services and to require an emphasis on nonlethal techniques that promote co-existence with wildlife instead of killing wildlife.

¹ Nonlethal measures include fencing, protective housing, electronic scare devices and guard dogs. For more information on nonlethal techniques, see [this](#) website for a Benton County program that emphasizes the use of these tools.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Brian Posewitz
Director