

3/28/2023

RE: HB 3390 Opposition

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to and concern over the pending legislation meant to shut down any fur trade in Oregon.

What I feel is the most important misunderstanding and misdirected aspect of this legislation regards how such a law would distort the science-based management of our state's wildlife. In short all species of wildlife in this country has been managed for long term sustainability and healthy population since the early 1900s after market hunting severely depleted numbers to the point of near extinction. Since that time, scientific management of our wildlife THAT HAS INCLUDED HUNTING AS AN INTEGRAL TOOL, brought those numbers back to what we now have today - sustainable numbers that allow for the continued existence and enjoyment of wildlife that otherwise would be gone. This management has included the systematic hunting and harvest of animals to maintain numbers commensurate with the carrying capacity of the habitat to say nothing of the FUNDING that hunters and trappers have provided to financially support wildlife management. To date, hunters are the main supporters and true boots-on-the-ground workers and defenders of our state's wildlife.

I have personally hunted coyotes and bobcats for over 20 years in this state. Oregon Fish and Wildlife has had a very well-informed and sustainable harvest management policy for bobcats that has stood the test of time. I have seen more bobcats and sign thereof this winter than anytime in the past few decades. OUR FURBEARERS AND PREDATOR NUMBERS ARE NOT HURTING in this state. Fact based research will support that claim. Our wildlife management needs to be rooted in science and facts not emotional and political notions. The latter is a recipe for disaster. If we take away the harvest of predators, we will further upset the balance of predator/prey interaction and hasten the depletion of our state's deer, elk and antelope populations. Take a look at how other western states manage their wildlife. They all include predator and furbearer harvest - because that is the accepted and proven methodology for maintaining healthy numbers of all wildlife. If Oregon upends that strategy we will see the opposite of what we intend to accomplish.

I understand that we as sensitive people don't want to see the suffering and harming of animals. What people who don't regularly interact with wildlife fail to understand is that nature functions in a cruel manner. Animal predation is brutal. Starvation is ugly and drawn and out. We cannot escape that reality unfortunately. But to try and eliminate the integral management tool of predator hunting, will only make things worse. If legislators doubt this, then have them solicit testimony from wildlife biologists and other scientists.

So please vote NO on HB 3390 if it comes to the house floor or better yet discontinue it in committee.

Thank you.

Troy Waite