

Submitter: Tom Romanowski
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB769

To whom it may concern,

I spent my entire adult life on the west coast and have explored lands far and near. Never in my 36 years of life of exploring our public lands have I encountered so many cougars than in our great state of Oregon. I've been stalked (visual confirmation) by 4 cougars in the last 3 years. I've bumped into and seen or accidentally treed a dozen or so in the last 10 years. Of all these encounters not once has it been much further than 5 miles from Monmouth. Luckily none of those encounters were life threatening towards me, but let me tell you what else I've seen. In the last 10 years of hunting Oregon deer/elk I have stumbled onto 27 cougar kills. You can tell it's a cougar kill by how they stash their kills, the prints around the site, and usually there is fur left over.

I'm not the only one experiencing these issues. All hunters, outdoorsman/outdoorswomen and people living in rural areas have seen the dramatic increase in cougar populations and the drastic decrease in ungulates populations as well as other smaller game animals.

I think it's time we put the trust into the counties hands and allow houndsmen to legally hunt and manage cougars. I support this bill whole heartedly.

And let me be clear, the use of hounds is not intended to round up every cat and eradicate them. If you actually speak to outdoorsman they still want them on the landscape, it's why the North American model works well. We want more of ALL animals. But right now we are seeing less and less and less of everything so it's time we step in and mitigate the situation and pursue all avenues to help make a fix.