

Submitter: Troy Rodakowski
On Behalf Of: Support For SB 769
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB769

To: Whom It Concerns & All Committe Members,

My name is Troy Rodakowski. I'm an outdoor writer and current president of the Northwest Outdoor Writers Association and have been published in many outdoor / hunting and fishing magazines / newspapers across the country. I have spent my entire life in Oregon born here and residing here since 1976. Being an avid outdoorsman, I have seen many changes in wildlife management over the decades throughout Oregon. Mainly, I have seen changes in deer / elk herds / big horn sheep / pronghorn due to predation. Mountain lions are a major factor in these decreases in population.

Since 1994 when hound hunting was banned here in Oregon the state has seen major increases in cougar and bear populations. Why? There really is no way to effectively control these predators. I spend a large majority of time in the woods (boots on the ground) every year and have seen the impact on livestock, domestic pets and other animals. There have been attacks on hikers, joggers and other outdoor enthusiasts. Not to mention, many close calls that are never reported.

Two years ago, while hunting deer I was stalked by a mountain lion. This lion came very close to a full attack on me as it believed me to be a deer or a threat to its territory. Luckily, I am still here to tell the story. This was not my first encounter with a lion, and I am sure it won't be my last. State and local trappers are inundated with calls of lions attacking livestock. Why are these cats going after the livestock and pets? There are many factors as you will likely hear in testimony from Eric Lee. The main reason is that there are too many cats and not enough territory for the robust population. ODFW estimates that there are roughly 6,000 mountain lions across the state of Oregon. In my professional opinion I believe this number is a very low estimate and in fact there are likely closer to 10,000 or more big cats roaming our wildlands.

Something needs to be done, and hunters are the best answer. Hunters need to be given the tools (hounds) to effectively harvest these animals. I fully support HB 769. I believe Oregon needs to do a better job allowing responsible harvest of these Apex predators.

Sincerely,
Troy Rodakowski

Junction City, Oregon
President Northwest Outdoor Writers Association