

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

I am in support of Senate Bill 769 to allow counties to vote for the right to use more effective tools like hounds to manage cougar populations.

Not only do I think it would be a better management tool for the cougar population but would very likely take some of the stress off of our depleted ungulate populations, and reduce human conflicts in rural Oregon.

The other point I would urge you all to consider is that the bill that banned the use of hounds to pursue Bears and Cougars was passed in 1994. Many of the voters in today's Oregon were not even able to vote in 1994 including myself. Not only that but in the 31 years since that bill passed, the population of cougars and their effects on the ecosystems have drastically changed. It is documented that there are far more human/Cougar conflicts, and we have had several documented attacks and a death in Oregon, Washington and California.

It is hard for lawmakers to know what it is like for rural residents in Oregon who make their homes where these predators are a constant threat. At least give them a chance to vote within their county to see if a different management style might work better for them. ODFW still has oversight on the number of animals that would or could be harvested.

This is not an effort to "extinct" cats from the landscape, like the opposition to this bill will claim. This would simply give a more effective tool to control the population at a safer level for humans and prey alike to achieve a better balance.

Please give the current voter a chance to vote our opinion on a subject that was decided for us 31 years ago.

Thank you.

Brad Mombert