

From: [Deborah Rose Reeves](#)
To: [Exhibits HNR](#)
Subject: Please OPPOSE legislation to allow trophy hunting of cougars with dogs
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2019 9:54:10 AM

Dear Chairman Witt and members of the committee,

I am a resident of Yamhill County. I live in the Eola Hills on roughly six acres of woodland. While I do everything within my power to protect my backyard animals from predators, I believe that man must live in cooperation with nature and value the wildlife that also make their home here.

Oregon voters have twice opposed the inhumane hunting of cougars for sport, and there is no valid indication that there is large public support to repeal laws that ban trophy hunting. To allow counties to opt out voter-approved measures sets a disturbing precedent for Oregon's democratic institutions. Existing legislation already allows exemptions in the case of threats to property, public safety, and to carry out state wildlife management objectives. That exemption has been successful, and there is no reliable evidence to support claims that there are too many cougars such that they pose an unreasonable threat to public safety or farm animals, or that the only way to sufficiently reduce their numbers is to resume "sport" hunting with dogs.

Having said that, even if there was evidence that cougar populations are out of control, surely it is within our capabilities to come up with alternative solutions that don't include the necessity of killing highly sentient and complex animals. In human society, when we are faced with problems or difficulties, we don't - or should not - resort to murdering each other. Rather, we use our intellect, imagination, creativity, and compassion to discover and develop alternative options and mutually beneficial solutions. There is no logical reason why we cannot extend our compassion and intelligent problem-solving skills to protect and coexist with animals who not only have intrinsic value but also provide benefits to our increasingly precarious ecosystems.

Hounding and trophy hunting cougars is indefensibly cruel. Using radio-collared trailing hounds to chase cougars and bay them into trees so that trophy hunters can shoot the cat at close range is not only unsporting but it is also unfair and unethical. When a child kills a defenseless and innocent animal for fun, we fear mental illness; but when an adult with the capacity for reason and ethical decision making does it, we call it "sport".

Moral, environmental, and ethical reasons aside, from a legislative perspective I urge you to please respect the will of Oregon voters and oppose House Bill 2795 that would authorize counties to opt out of a voter-approved 1994 ballot measure.

Thank you for your consideration,
Deborah Reeves