



Oppose SB 199 – Predatory Animal Management Must Remain Under ODA

Our coalition asks for you to oppose SB 199, which ***gives authority to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to establish rules, requirements or prohibitions relating to predatory animals.*** The Oregon Department of Agriculture is the appropriate agency to oversee the management of predatory animals as defined by statute that are destructive to agricultural crops, products and activities.

Many agricultural sectors rely on effective predator management to prevent costly depredation on their crops, orchards, vineyards, livestock or timber. Under current law our operators have been able to effectively manage predatory animal damage and mitigate economic losses to their operations. However, this is only because ODA's mission includes agriculture and therefore they consider the effect predatory animals have on cultivated private lands. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) is an agency tasked with enhancing wildlife in their habitats, i.e. the natural world. While our operations are working lands and certainly outdoors, they are not natural habitats for these unprotected predatory animals, and when they enter our agricultural lands and begin to cause damage, they are no longer under the purview of ODFW. It would be inappropriate for the ODFW Commission to have authority to make rules and regulations related to predatory animal management on agricultural operations, especially considering nowhere in their mission or as part of their agency operations do they consider the value of agriculture to Oregon, or the economic cost of predatory animal management and damage, including health and sanitation concerns, to this important economic sector.

Additionally, SB 199 is incredibly expansive. **ORS 610 defines “predatory animal” or “predatory animals” to include feral swine, coyotes, rabbits, rodents and birds that are or may be destructive to agricultural crops, products and activities.** Below is a list of some of the predatory animals that varying agricultural commodity groups currently manage that would fall under this legislation.

- Gray Tailed Voles in grass seed production.
- Pocket gophers eat fruit tree roots in orchards.
- Mice can contaminate grain in storage areas with droppings if not properly controlled.
- Gopher mounds disturb wheat roots, killing the whole plant.
- Squirrels and chipmunks girdle hazelnut branches and eat nuts.
- Beavers and nutria chew and girdle hazelnut trees.
- Voles and mice chew and girdle hazelnut roots and stems.
- Gophers chew on roots and girdle hazelnut bark.
- Moles interfere with mechanical harvest of hazelnuts.
- Stellar jays, scrub jays, and crows consume large quantities of nuts.
- Voles, nutria, squirrels, beavers, and other types of rodents can cause detrimental and dangerous impacts to water infrastructure systems, digging into the sides of canals, or

causing debris to block canals and other infrastructure, leading to serious structural damage to the infrastructure. When these instances occur, action needs to be taken quickly to avert catastrophic structural failure, property damage, and risk of injury.

- Mice chew the wires in farm equipment and vehicles, which creates a safety risk and is costly to repair.
- Coyotes chew into drip systems in orchards.
- Nutria, beavers, rats and mice are problematic for us. Contamination of feed will cause miscarriage and other serious health impacts to dairy cattle and their calves.
- Pocket gopher, mountain beaver (boomer), and other rodents that damage forest tree seedlings and saplings.
- Voles, moles, gophers, ground squirrels, and birds in vineyards.
- Starlings can transmit pathogens to livestock.
- Coyotes prey on sheep, cattle, and poultry.
- Starlings and other pest birds cause feed loss from the consumption of cattle feed and nutritional depletion of the feed.
- Rats prey on live birds and chicks in poultry farms.

Without effective predator control, our producers would experience significant losses of crop types, orchard trees, livestock (and their offspring) or timber that they cannot absorb. Continued management of predatory animals by the appropriate state agency, ODA, is important to the successful continuation of production agriculture in our state.

Please Vote NO SB 199.