

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

I am a local resident to umatilla county and the great state of Oregon. I have been utilizing many of Oregons natural resources for my whole life of which includes the mule deer which is native to most of the state east of the cascade mountain range. Since my early childhood I have noticed a very steady decline in the population of these very deer. There are many factors that play into these declines, however the most contributing factor is the mountain lion. The mountain lion is an apex predator in our local mountain range, the blues mountians, and ther diet mainly consists of deer. The mountain lion can consume up to one deer a week according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. This would then mean they could consume up to 52 deer annually and according to the ODFW there is an estimated 6000 mountain lions in Oregon. The ODFW also estimated that Oregon mule deer population is 160,000 this math would then suggest that the mountain lion population could have the potential to cause disaster among the mule deers future in our state. This being said if the state was to allow counties to authorize the use of hounds to pursue mountain lions, we could help our states struggling mule deer. The use of hound hunting mountain lions will help not just mule deer, but also both of our state's two elk species and other ungulates. The effectiveness of hound hunting is unquestionable because of the canines uncanny ability to use scent to locate mountain lions and their superior cardio to pursue and hold the mountain lion in place to allow a hunter or houndsman to then observe the mountain lion. The observation of a mountain lion is key to not only hunt this animal but also to conserve it. The conservation aspect of hound hunting is undeniable for the reasoning that it allows a person to assess the animals sex and tell whether it is a female or male, which is crucial to making a decision whether or not to make a harvest. A decision of sex is crucial because, one is able to discern between a healthy breeding age female or an older more aggressive territorial male. Hound hunting can also bring into question the welfare of the hounds themselves. The answer to that is clear, these hounds are bred to purse and have a drive that is unmatched. The danger to them will always be there, however it is similar to the act of using dogs to hunt waterfowl and upland game bird. The point being that with proper training, competent houndsmen, and resources the danger to the animals welfare is minimal. With the allowance of counties to authorize hound hunting it will not only help benefit wildlife and the cougars themselves but, it would create a whole new revenue stream for ODFW where the agency can charge a fee for an endorsement for those who wish to hound hunt or hunt alongside a houndsman. Revenue generated from implementing a new houndsman program will benefit the natural resources of Oregon even more by having more funds to distribute all across the state. In conclusion the allowance of hound hunting county by county

both satisfies that of urban Oregon's population centers and that of the rural farmers and ranchers, all the while providing aid both financial and physical to the struggling ungulates of our great state. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and hearing not just my opinion but those of all of my other fellow sportsmen.