

My wife and I own 43 acres west of Veneta near Noti, Oregon. I am a 49 year old outdoorsman and avid blacktail deer hunter. Since the implementation of the disastrous hound hunting ban approved by the voters of Oregon, I have personally witnessed a dramatic drop in the number of deer on the Oregon landscape. While this current condition of our deer herds is something for someone like myself to lament, an even more personal and disturbing reality takes center stage in our daily lives. The ever present danger of mountain lions hunting and killing our pets and livestock drives many decision we have to make concerning the management of our property.

On March 5th, 2021 my son was getting ready to go to work when he saw our herd of goats running across their pasture. He

noticed that the newest addition to our herd and my wife's pride and joy, a young male fainting (Myatonic) goat she had named Leroy was not with them. My son walked to the upper corner of the pasture, a near 90 yards from the house. There he heard a rustle in the brush just inside the treeline and to his dismay found himself staring into the eyes of a very large, very unafraid tom mountain lion at no more than 10 yard distant. My son retreated. That afternoon, we were able to locate the carcass of my wife's adored pet goat right at the spot my son encountered the lion.

My wife was inconsolable. This goat she had just recently nursed back to health from a near death condition and they had a very strong bond because of it. I called a local trapper. Together, we set traps around Leroy's carcass and placed

cameras to capture any activity. That very night around 9:00 pm, that lion came back and took Leroy without getting caught in our traps. Since that day, every decision we make about letting the goats out of their pen or even if we can go on a trip without hiring someone to watch over them is weighed against the danger they face from the ever increasing, ever encroaching and ever emboldened cougar population. I have placed trail cameras around my property and since that day that Leroy was taken, I have captured pictures of 6 different lions.

It is my opinion that the population of mountain lion in Oregon has reached a level that they have started to rely on pets and livestock in near urban locations to supplement a dwindling natural diet of deer and elk. Oregon finds itself in an

untenable position of having no available effective management tool to deal with these apex predators. The only reliable and effective tool to manage mountain lion numbers is the use of hounds. There is no other method. To expect the rural resident of Oregon to just accept death and loss as part of country life is unacceptable. Especially when a highly effective management tool exists. Please vote yes on SB769.

Sincerely, David Rutherford