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To: [FGC](#)
Cc: [Paul McFarland](#)
Subject: WRC May 6 Meeting Suggestions
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2015 2:17:32 PM
Attachments: [Bergstrom et al 2013 Reforming federal wildlife control.pdf](#)

Dear Wildlife Resources Committee:

As you review your predator and coyote regulations, I would like you to consider the following points and suggestions.

-[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->Predators play an important role in an ecosystem. The famous case is the wolf in Yellowstone. See https://www.youtube.com/embed/ysa5OBhXz-Q?feature=player_embedded Attached is a paper by 6 wildlife biologists explaining the importance of predators. An excellent book by E.O. Wilson, The Diversity of Life, explains why biodiversity helps create a stable ecosystem; an ecosystem that can withstand fluctuations in weather, climate, natural disasters, disease, etc. We need to keep the diversity of predators that we have.

-[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->To that end, limits should be set in the categories that don't already have limits: small game (except rabbits which have a limit of 5/day—way too high!), non-game (excluding bobcats which have an ineffective statewide limit), and fur-bearing. By having the limits in place, whether they are too high or too low, having the mechanism in place allows for you to change them more quickly in response to a declining population.

-[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->Require reporting of all small game, non-game, and fur-bearing harvests; not just those taken by traps. We need to use this information to infer a census and to monitor the various populations. All species are going to be stressed with climate change. With hunting, habitat loss, disease, and not climate change, many species won't survive. We can't control many of those factors, but you can control hunting if you have the tools in place to monitor the situation.

-[if !supportLists]-->4. <!--[endif]-->Protect the grey fox by setting low limits. In 2013-2014 just under 1,000 grey fox were harvested (18 from Mono County and 51 from Inyo County). Wildlife in the Eastern Sierra is more valuable to us alive than dead because of our tourism economy. At the very least, exclude grey fox and badger trapping in Mono and Inyo Counties. A badger was sighted walking along the shoreline of Mono Lake last summer. The first one seen in years. Another was spotted at SNARL. We were thrilled. They are rare; not plentiful.

-[if !supportLists]-->5. <!--[endif]-->Create limits by county. The statewide bobcat limit is unmanageable and allows for extirpation in various places throughout the state. Create limits for all small game, non-game, and fur-bearing animals by county. That way, Tehama County can kill everything in sight without Mono County having to suffer for it.

-[if !supportLists]-->6. <!--[endif]-->I think it is a serious problem that locals shoot predators on sight just because the only good predator is a dead one, especially in Bridgeport where locals carry their rifles on a rack in their trucks. They have to park their vehicles outside of the Caltrans yard and walk in because guns aren't allowed at work. Many people shoot rabbits for target practice; kids included. This has to stop. Rabbits are prime food for predators and we've notice a significant decline in our area. If we don't want the predators searching the neighborhoods for cats and dogs, then we need to give them back their rabbits. None of these random, for-fun, kills are reported, yet they represent a significant number. In theory, anyone with a hunting license is to report his kills, but rarely do. In theory, rabbits are only killed for eating (hence called game); yet they carry diseases and that makes it dicey to eat them. Our local DFW staff told me no one kills rabbits except in Kern Co. because of the diseases. I suspect they do; not to eat, but for target practice. Diminishing numbers unreported.

-[if !supportLists]-->7. <!--[endif]-->Have DFW staff talk to the hunting and ranching communities and teach them why wildlife is needed and to warn them that they shouldn't pull out their rifle and kill a predator on sight—in or out of season. Or that shooting bunnies for target practice has to stop. There's a sheriff in June Lake that shoots coyotes for fun. No one reports him because he's the law. Another person in June Lake shot 4 bears two winters ago and then requested a depredation permit from his sheriff buddy. In Bridgeport it is pretty much the old west. This illegal activity going under the radar makes it hard to rely on the data that is collected when it doesn't represent what's really happening.

-[if !supportLists]-->8. <!--[endif]-->It is going to be a hard sell, but even the coyote will need protection. We rarely hear coyotes or rabbit screeches at night anymore. Everyone thinks there are plenty of coyotes that breed like rabbits and are survivors. However, the coyote population in our area has declined. Who is really monitoring it? Only someone who has lived in the area for 20-30 years would know that it has changed. When the alpha coyote is taken out, the group's birth rate goes up. So the more we shoot them, the more there are—unnaturally; not based on the natural food supply.

-[if !supportLists]-->9. <!--[endif]-->Ban all but big game and duck hunting in Mono County as an experiment to gain insight in how well Mother Nature can manage wildlife populations. A 10-year bobcat census started this year out of the Bishop DFW office financed by a grant. The plan is to cover the Inyo National Forest in the Eastern Sierra. This should provide a lot of information about many species: grey fox, coyotes, mountain lions, ringtail cats, etc. Re-evaluate or re-install the hunting regulations in Mono Co. after it is completed.

Sincerely,
Lynn Boulton
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(Mono County)



License to Kill: Reforming Federal Wildlife Control to Restore Biodiversity and Ecosystem Function

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