

From: Downs family [stps@frontiernet.net]

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Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2010 12:31 AM

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Subject: lions

To wildlife commissioners,

9/22/10

I am writing this letter representing the Nevada Houndsmen Association. Please read this at the game commission meeting on sept 24,25 2010. We are strongly opposed to ANY changes you have proposed to the lion status and method of take. We have been arguing this subject for years and the answer is still the same.

As per your support material, lions are listed as a big game animal in nearly every state that allows hunting of them. Why would we want to veer in such a different direction with the management here in Nevada? We already have an open season on lions 24 hrs a day 7 days a week 365 days a year here. In fact you can buy 2 tags over the counter per year and hunt all you want STATEWIDE!! It is by far the most liberal lion season around.

You see, by delisting the lion (making it a furbearer, predator, or unprotected) you make it so anyone can kill every lion they see. It takes away tags (revenue for NDOW) and it removes the ability to track lions with the data that is collected at check in. This opens a door for the anti hunting groups to sue us saying "Nevada has no idea how many lions they have ,where ,ect." They will get lion hunting stopped all together with a lawsuit.

Delisting also makes them ineligible for record books, taking away the trophy quality of a guided hunt. Plus with reduced numbers of lions you will lower the ability for guides and outfitters to sell guided hunts here in Nevada. Most people who hire a guide are only interested in getting record book quality animals. This will kill the cougar guiding industry in Nevada who rely on the money from out of state hunters.

The Nevada trappers have also stated they do not want to target the lions either.

Another thing you people need to realize is the "lion Quota" that you folks always refer to is not really the target harvest. NDOW doesn't set that as what needs to be killed. It is set as the maximum allowable harvest before it would drastically damage the lion population. Your commission just wants more mule deer and you blame mountain lions for the current trend in deer numbers. These people are wrong. There are many factors of why deer numbers are down from the all time high numbers of the 80's and lions are not the cause.

Another great reason not to mess with the lion classification here is that we do not want to attract the attention of the anti hunting groups. In California this year the fish and game proposed a new bear hunt in San Luis Obispo County and they also wanted to allow the use of GPS collars and tree switches on hounds. This seemed logical and was reinforced by sound science. The HSUS came back threatening with a lawsuit and vowed to have an anti hound hunting bill on the 2012 ballot. The F&G removed their proposals but they may still lose their hound hunting over there very soon. Just remember the anti's have lots of money and are just sitting out there waiting for a reason to "save" animals. The last thing anyone wants is for us to get our lion season closed in a lawsuit while taxpayers and

sportsmen dollars are wasted doing lion studies (meanwhile the lion population will blossom until they are hunted again.)

Thank you for your time,

Paul Downs, president, Nevada Houndsmen Associatio