

# **Exhibit C**

**Public Testimony Received at Meeting  
October 7, 2017**

## Roxann B Borisch

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**From:** Sally Mackler <sally@predatordefense.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 06, 2016 5:41 PM  
**To:** ODFW Commission  
**Subject:** Predator Defense comment citations attached  
**Attachments:** George et al (2016) Changes in attitudes toward animals.pdf; or wldlife attitude survey .pdf; PD comments OR Cougar Plan Review 10-7-2016.docx

Chair Finley and Commission Members,

I neglected to attach the citations for the references in my comments on the Cougar Management Plan review which is on the agenda for tomorrow's meeting. I have attached them below, along with another copy of my comments for your review.

Thank you.

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October 4, 2016

Dear Chair Finley and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on efforts to review and update the Oregon Cougar Management Plan.

From the very limited and late communication we received from staff, we now understand that: 1. The update of the Plan is delayed with no draft available until next year and 2. There are no plans to substantively revise or rework the existing plan.

We are seriously disappointed by the lack of promise for a new and progressive Plan, one that incorporates substantive changes in response to our concerns and those expressed through peer review of the 2006 Plan.

Our comments from the April Commission meeting are still current since nothing has changed since that initial meeting on the Plan review. We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the major concerns we continue to have and request once again that they be incorporated into the new plan:

1. A complete revision of the current Plan, which is based exclusively on increasing and maximizing mortality. Instead, we recommend and ask for a Plan focused on conservation of the species. A Plan with emphasis on specific programs for education of the public with regard to minimizing conflicts through better husbandry and use of nonlethal controls, and an appreciation of how cougars are a part of and bring value and benefit to Oregon's ecosystem.
2. Eliminate the Plan's Objectives entirely which are based on outdated criteria from 1994 and are solely focused on increasing mortality up to minimum arbitrary population size
3. Immediate closure of all target areas defined by the Plan's adaptive management strategy. Almost all 6 thousand square miles of cougar killing target areas are in place to benefit mule deer populations, in spite of abundant peer reviewed research showing removal of predators does not increase mule deer.
4. Discontinue use of the current widely criticized population model and develop new model subject to peer review.

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5. Read, consider and respond to the entire body of peer reviewed comments received on the current Plan, especially the target areas, adaptive management and population modeling.
6. Incorporate current research findings in designing management strategies. The current strategy of maximizing mortality through liberalized hunting regulations and target areas may well be the cause of increased predation on ungulates and livestock. It's time to recognize that this strategy has been in place for over 20 years and has not reduced conflicts.

We believe our recommendations are reflective of the general trend of changing cultural and societal attitudes and values relating to the environment and wildlife, especially those shared by the majority of Oregonians. The results of recent surveys demonstrate this change in how the public views animals and management of wildlife.

An in depth survey designed to determine Oregon residents' attitudes toward wildlife and management (Oregon Residents' Opinions on and Values Related to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife) was recently undertaken by Responsive Management for the Oregon Legislative Task Force on Funding for Fish, Wildlife and Related Outdoor Recreation and Education. The results of questions about values and management direction show Oregonians value conservation and protection of wildlife over hunting. The top 2 values respondents chose were ecological in nature, to protect wildlife populations and habitat, as opposed to provision for hunting and other utilitarian pursuits, which ranked much lower.

A paper recently published in Biological Conservation titled 'Changes in attitudes toward animals in the United States from 1978 to 2014' found little change in attitude toward the majority of species, with the exception of a few. Wolves and coyotes received an over 40% increase in positive attitudes. While attitudes toward cougars were not measured in 1978, 61% of respondents reported positive attitude toward the species in 2014.

We again ask and recommend that Oregon change its strategy for cougar management from one heavily biased toward hunting and maximizing killing of cougars and instead adopt a Plan based on conservation and education, which represents the majority of Oregonians and reflects their values toward wildlife.

Sincerely,

Sally Mackler  
Senior Native Carnivore Advocate  
Predator Defense



October 7, 2016

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission  
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE  
Salem, OR 97302

RE: Cougar Plan Review

Chair Finley, Commissioners, for the record my name is Nick Cady. I am the legal director for Cascadia Wildlands. I live in Eugene, where our principal office is located.

Cascadia Wildlands has been in conversations with the Department regarding the revision of the cougar management plan, and feel there are some areas of agreement and opportunities for collaboration developing, but we do have a few concerns based on the original plan and our interactions with Department staff up until this point.

Our primary request concerning this plan is that it incorporates and relies upon the best available science regarding predators and specifically predator control. We are worried that the target area approach that has been taken by the Department in the past is not effective or supported by science. We would ask the Department and the Commission to ensure that the plan consider and integrate current research findings on predator removal related to the long term effects on ungulate populations (mule deer) and on livestock predation.

We would also encourage the Commission to assist the Department in finishing and incorporating data that the Department has been gathering so that the new plan can rely upon a data-based, population model. Just guessing population numbers based upon habitat and reported mortalities seems very unreliable and unscientific. It would be beneficial as well for the Department to have the go ahead and funding to peer review their data collection and population monitoring techniques so Oregon can get ahead of the curve.

We understand the Department is behind schedule, but just wanted to reiterate these points to the Commission. Thank you.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Nick Cady, Cascadia Wildlands