



AB 1254 – Stop Trophy Hunting Bobcats

IN BRIEF

AB 1254 would prohibit the cruel and unnecessary trophy hunting of bobcats in California. The bill includes commonsense exemptions to the taking of bobcats that present a threat to human safety or are damaging property, including domestic livestock.

BACKGROUND & PROBLEM

California is a leader in wildlife protection and yet the state allows bobcats to be killed merely as trophies. Hunting these magnificent creatures is without practical necessity. Nobody hunts bobcats as food. The population of these small predators is self-regulating naturally.

Bobcats are native to North America and inhabit all lower 48 states. They range from southern Canada to central Mexico and can be found in all environmental zones in California. Typically they prey upon rabbits, squirrels, rodents, birds and smaller game. Bobcat attacks on humans are rare.

Over the past few years, voters, the California Legislature and the Department of Fish and Wildlife have taken significant steps to protect bobcats – including the 1998 passage of Proposition 4 which banned body-gripping traps, a 2012 legislative ban on hound hunting of bobcats (and bears), passage of the Bobcat Protection Act in 2013 and a complete ban by the Fish and Game Commission in 2015 on recreational and commercial trapping of bobcats.

However, even with these protections, trophy hunting of bobcats continues. Nearly 10,000 bobcats have been killed in California during the last 10 years. Although the annual number of bobcats killed has decreased since trapping was banned in 2015, hundreds of bobcats still are slaughtered each year in California by a handful of trophy hunters.

Furthermore, bobcat tags cost only \$3.24, barely making a contribution to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (less than \$40,000 annually). The entire income from the bobcat trophy-hunting season is less than the salary of a single game warden.

SOLUTION

AB 1254 would establish in statute a prohibition on the trophy hunting of bobcats while maintaining reasonable exceptions to the law to protect against threats to humans, livestock and property.

Bobcats in California face increasing pressure from incessant loss of habitat and are struggling to forage and survive in their changing landscape after the recent deadly wildfires.

Enacting this prohibition would spare the hundreds of bobcats that are killed in this state every year for nothing more than a trophy and preserve the ecological balance that bobcats bring to their environment – including keeping populations of rodents, rabbits and other small animals at healthy levels.

SUPPORT

- Animal Legal Defense Fund
- Big Cat Rescue
- Born Free USA
- Center for Biological Diversity
- Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW)
- Doris Day Animal League
- Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
- FixNation
- Global March for Elephants and Rhinos
- Humane Society Legislative Fund
- Humane Society of the United States
- Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association
- Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust
- Live Oak Associated, Inc,

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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SUPPORT (Continued)

- Los Padres ForestWatch
- Marin Humane Society
- Project Coyote
- Project Coyote
- Santa Paula Animal Rescue Center
(S.P.A.R.C)
- Social Compassion in Legislation
- Social Compassion in Legislation
- Stray Cat Alliance
- The Fund for Animals Wildlife Center
- The Paw Project
- WildCare
- WildEarth Guardians