

Protect Oregon Cougars



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES



Oregon Voters Do Not Support Hound Hunting of Cougars

Oregon voters have stated twice that they oppose the use of hounds to hunt cougars for sport and trophies because it is cruel, abusive, and violates the ethics of fair chase. Oregonians passed Measure 18 in 1994 by a substantial majority, making illegal the hunting of cougars with packs of radio-collared dogs (“hounding”). An even greater majority voted in 1996 to reject a measure to repeal Measure 18.

Yet, every legislative session since 1997, a raft of bills are introduced to either weaken and/or repeal Measure 18, bit by bit chipping away at the very spirit and intent of the measure.

The latest attempts are no exception. **The proposed bills, HB 2107, HB 2589, SB 371 and SB 458 would subject Oregon’s cougar population to hounding for sport and trophies, posing an affront to the democratic process and the majority of Oregonians who want cougars protected from this cruel and unfair method.**

Oppose HB 2107, HB 2589, SB 371 and SB 458 to Prevent Trophy Hunting of Cougars with Hounds

Legislative Overview

SB 458 constitutes a particularly brazen and outrageous insult to Oregon voters, requiring the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt a program for trophy hunting cougars with the use of hounds. SB 458 is in direct violation of state law as passed by Oregon voters through Measure 18.

HB 2107, HB 2589 and SB 371 would allow counties to “opt out” of Measure 18, creating a chaotic and unmanageable patchwork approach to wildlife management. In addition to these enforcement problems, these bills set a terrible precedent by allowing counties to thwart the will of the majority in statewide ballot measure initiatives. If counties are permitted to opt out of Measure 18, they may be expected to seek a way out of other voter-approved statewide measures, rendering meaningless the state’s initiative process, a component of self-government that is cherished by Oregonians.

Legislators shouldn’t second-guess the voters.

Hounding Cougars is Cruel and Unnecessary

Hounding cougars is unequivocally cruel, harmful to wildlife and hounds, and unsporting. Once an outfitter, guide or houndsman locates a cougar track, he lets lose his pack of hounds, who wear radio transmitters so they can be easily followed. The cats retreat into a tree or rock ledge to escape the hounds, enabling the trophy hunter to shoot the cougar at close range.

Hounding is not considered “fair chase” hunting because it gives the hunter too much of an advantage over his prey. Many hunters do not approve of hounding.

Hounding poses significant risk of injury to the hounds in those instances where the cougar turns to fight. Young wildlife, including cougar kittens, may be attacked and killed by hounds during the course of the hunt. Hounds also disturb or kill non-target wildlife and trespass onto private lands during hunts.

Cougar complaints are at an all-time low, and cougar mortality is at a level twice that of the year before Measure 18 was passed. In fact, Oregon ranks fifth highest nationwide for trophy hunting mortality of cougars. Between 2005 and 2014, trophy hunters killed 2,602 cougars.

PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 2107, HB 2589, SB 373, and SB 458.

For more information, contact Scott Beckstead, Senior Oregon Director of The Humane Society of the United States