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PROCESS OVERSIGHT AND
PROGRAM EVALUATION

Assembly California Legislature



RICHARD BLOOM
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April 25, 2017

Lynn Cullens
Executive Director
Mountain Lion Foundation
P.O. Box 1896
Sacramento, California 95812

Dear Lynn,

Thank you again for the Mountain Lion Foundation's leadership as the sponsor of my Assembly Bill 8. Thanks to your effective advocacy, I write to you today with good news.

Please see attached letter from DFW director Chuck Bonham. Director Bonham and I spoke late last week, wherein he made me aware of their evolving legal perspective which suggests the agency has some flexibility under current law to develop options and alternatives to lethal take when responding to mountain lion depredation. As described in the attached letter that Director Bonham sent to me on April 24th, he anticipates that DFW can complete the review of options within the next 60-90 days.

Given the high bar required for amending FGC Sec 4803 (a four-fifths vote of the legislature) and a general desire not to alter citizen-enacted ballot measures unless absolutely necessary, I have decided to hold AB 8 for the time-being and see what this DFW review produces. We can always activate the legislation if we feel it is needed to secure the policy objectives we share, which include: (a) assessing the underlying causes of specific depredations, (b) providing suggestions to landowners for avoiding future conflicts, (c) allowing for the issuance of a non-lethal permit if requested by landowners, (d) requiring alternative deterrent actions short of lethal control, and (e) considering the value and genetic health of the mountain lion population in question prior to issuing a permit for lethal take.

I'm grateful to the Mountain Lion Foundation and the dozens of other organizations that have voiced support for AB 8 and our efforts to provide a wider variety of management tools and greater protection for pets, livestock, people and lions. I trust that you will continue to stay engaged with DFW as these options are developed and you have my

commitment to stay in regular touch with Director Bonham about this issue, which as you know, is of critical importance to my constituents and the mountain lions of the Santa Monica Mountains.

And let me also add my personal gratitude for all that Mountain Lion Foundation does to help mountain lions and other native species in California. Your professional and diplomatic approach to engaging directly with people and communities results in meaningful and durable outcomes. Your efforts make situations turn out better and I urge all Californians to support your work and to call on your expertise in peacefully resolving human-wildlife conflicts.

Thank you

RICHARD BLOOM

Assemblymember, District 50

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Bloom', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Attachment

cc: Jennifer Fearing, Fearless Advocacy



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Director's Office
1416 Ninth Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
www.wildlife.ca.gov

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



April 24, 2017

The Honorable Richard Bloom
California State Assembly, 50th District
State Capitol, Room # 2003
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Bloom:

RE: Human Wildlife Conflict

Thank you for your interest in human-wildlife conflict issues. As you know, in recent years, human-wildlife interactions have increased, requiring Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) staff to invest more time, research, and response in the field when interactions do occur. The Department's policies and programs are also evolving in anticipation that such interactions will continue to increase over time.

One example is more than half of California is mountain lion habitat. Mountain lions are solitary and elusive, and their nature is to avoid people. These animals, however, may prey on pets or livestock creating depredation concerns. In some situations, mountain lions present threats to public safety. In addition, the Department notes in its Keep Me Wild program, human and wildlife interaction is often more a people problem, perhaps, than a wildlife problem, as each year California's population continues to grow and expand into wildlife habitat.

After much thought and further review, the Department would like to take some additional time to more thoroughly develop and seek input on a suite of potential administrative options that could potentially address the varying range of human wildlife conflict needs and solutions throughout the state related to depredation concerns. The Department is uniquely situated to collaborate with a full range of constituents on human-wildlife conflict issues. We anticipate needing 60 to 90 days to complete a review of the needs and the possible administrative options.

Again, thank you for your continued interest and support of the Department. We will be in touch upon the conclusion of our review. In the meantime, should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Charlton H. Bonham
Director