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Are Mountain Lions More Important Than The Safety Of People, Children And Pets?

By William E. Simpson

In the late 1980's it was determined by a relatively small group of financially and politically biased scientists and their lobbyists that the population of Mountain Lions (aka: Cougar, Puma) in California was dangerously low. So they launched a massive media campaign to convince Californians that there was a genuine problem, giving rise to the 1990 California State legislation that provided a 'protected' status for mountain lions. However, there was no overwhelming body of scientific evidence supporting such a claim. And if there had been such credible evidence supported by a collective of unbiased and objective wildlife biologists, forming a majority opinion, mountain lions would have surely reached the benchmark for obtaining 'endangered species' status, and would be listed as such today. That was not the case.



Since the passage of California S.B. 132 in 1990 which designated mountain lions as a 'specially protected mammal', deer populations have sequentially fallen-off to a point where they are in very serious decline, possibly leading to moratorium on deer hunting!

The Department of Fish and Wildlife estimates there are now 445,000 deer in California, down from 2 million in the 1960s and 850,000 in the 1990s.

The reality is that mountain lions are extremely hard to observe and study in the wild, and there are very good reasons to believe that the mountain lion populations are much larger than what is being reported by California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife. Lions are as elusive as ghosts and are equipped with some senses that exceed those of any other apex predator. For instance, their night vision is extraordinary, which is why they usually seek their prey during conditions of low light when they have the tactical advantage over other animals (and humans) who cannot see well in the dark. Mountain lions are, pound for pound, one of the strongest animals

alive. They are recorded as making lateral leaps as far as **45-feet**, and vertical leaps up to **15-feet**. Mountain lions can easily carry the equivalent of their body weight for short distances, which means that a large lion of 160 pounds can carry prey weighing 160 pounds or more to another location. Many times, they will kill and feast on the spot, then covering the remains until they return to feed again, so as to prevent other predators from robbing the lion of its kill. Some people have the false impression that a large and powerful dog presents a threat to a mountain lion; which is the result of misinformation being spread by pro-mountain lion lobbyists, who like to show photos of how 'cute' and 'cuddly' they appear... that is as far from the truth as the planet Pluto is from Earth!

Here is a video, captured at night (when lions like to attack) of a lion who attacks and kills an adult Doberman Pincher guard-dog, that was inside a walled compound!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9JtZ9hOq6Q>

Now having seen the video, ask yourself this simple question; if such a powerful guard-dog is so easily overwhelmed, how do suppose your child would fare? Or even an adult human? How about a pet that you love like a family member? The truth is that human children and adults have been attacked, injured and eaten by mountain lions.

The case of a little girl (Laura Small) who was attacked and seriously injured while she was collecting tadpoles at the County Park is just one of many, many examples. And had it not been for the heroic efforts by a passing hiker, the mountain lion would have certainly eaten 5-yr. old Laura Small. Subsequent to the mountain lion attack on Laura Small, Orange County California was hit with a \$100-million dollar lawsuit. After a long and very costly legal defense, the County lost the lawsuit and ultimately settled out of court for \$1.5-million dollars... as a result of this outcome:

Orange County Board of Supervisors Chairman Harriett M. Wieder said she fears the settlement establishes a legal precedent that leaves the county “more vulnerable for additional lawsuits.”

Actually, Supervisor Wieder’s statement was short-sighted; the results of the Small lawsuit, and others like it, have

created a body of legal precedents. Such that other Counties in the State and elsewhere will face even more difficult challenges in all such future litigations.

And these litigations have the ability to bankrupt smaller counties.

The State of California’s arguably negligent and reckless management of mountain lions has created an ominous level of potential financial liability for the Counties in the State... Any ‘hands-off’ policy that mandates management action only after People and/or their pets are injured or killed is unacceptable given that statistical predictive methods, based upon actual events, indicate that; lions in close proximity to people leads to increased risks of adverse interactions. And even if these interactions were ‘rare’ as some pro-lion activists claim, they are nonetheless extremely costly when they do occur. The bottom-line is that Counties are saddled with all the liability for the State’s mismanagement of the lions, and are now facing the massive costs for past and future litigations, while the State looks the other way, and continues with the same management practices.

If I had a say, I would propose the following; if the State wants to continue to manage mountain lions in the manner that they have, and are, and aside from the deer-decline implications, I would propose that all counties in the State which have lion-human proximity and territorial encroachment issues, demand that the State immediately indemnify those counties with regard to any and all litigation related to lion attacks.

And should the State refuse, which I feel would be unreasonable, I believe that these counties would, pursuant to their fiduciary duties, and other law, have firm standing and legal ground to implement a low-impact mountain lion management and control program addressing only the lions that are encroaching

upon citizens and thereby creating a greatly increased risk for lion-human interaction, resulting in excess liability risks for the County, which must be mitigated before citizens are harmed or suffer any economic and/or emotional trauma.

Counties in California which have excessive lion populations are now facing the ‘Perfect Storm’ for devastating litigations when the next mountain lion attacks occur... It is well-know that lions are now establishing their territories in and near areas where there are children and pets playing...

Jim Hamm in 2007 after mountain lion attack in Arcata



Photo credit: MARK McKENNA / Times Standard
<http://www.mmphotographic.com/>



Anne Hjelle lion victim Orange County

The following is an excerpt from this publication:
http://www.aws.vcn.com/mountain_lion_fact_sheet.html

Public safety: An increase in lions often leads to attacks on humans. We have a photo in our photo files of the stomach contents of a lion that killed a small boy. One can see clearly parts of clothing the lion consumed as it fed on the youngster.

Lion attacks on humans increase when:

1. Prey animals are few in number.
2. Lions become accustomed to man. Mountain lions are solitary animals. They generally hunt at night and, for the most part, are not seen by humans. However, recently lions have been sighted in and near Western towns. This indicates an increase in lions and/or a limited prey base forcing the cats to come closer to man in search for food. And this carries the potential for attacks on humans.

This problem has such significance that the state of Colorado held a symposium in 1991 specifically addressing the rise in mountain lion attacks on humans. The Wildlife Society Bulletin featured an article documenting lion attacks on humans by Professor Paul Beier of the Department of Forestry and Resource Management at the University of California at Berkeley. Beier's conclusion stated that mountain lion attacks on humans have "increased markedly" in the last two decades. (Beier, Paul; "Cougar Attacks on Humans in the United States and Canada"; WILDLIFE SOCIETY BULLETIN, 19:403-412, 1991.)

Here are a few documented mountain lion attacks on humans:

1. Spring, 1986 - Orange County, California - Laura Small, age 5, was attacked by a mountain lion in the Ronald W. Caspars Wilderness Park. The female lion attacked her head and dragged her off. Laura suffered paralysis of her right side and was confined to a wheelchair for a period of time. She

has had 11 operations. Now Laura has a steel plate in her skull. Her right leg is weak, her right arm is partially paralyzed and she is blind in her left eye.

A lawsuit of \$100 million and \$750,000 in personal damage was filed against Orange County. Small was awarded \$2 million dollars. Orange County appealed the ruling.

2. August 1986 - Justin Mellon, age 6, was hiking in Ronald W. Caspars Wilderness Park. He was attacked and mauled by a female lion. Mellon suffered bites to the head, leg and stomach. His injuries were not as severe as that of Laura Small. Note: Due to the lawsuit over the Laura Small attack, the Board of Supervisors for Orange County decided not to allow minors into Caspars Wilderness Park at all. (Information compiled from Ronald W. Caspars Wilderness Park, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services, Sacramento, California and various news reports.)

3. 1989 - Evaro, Montana - Jake Gardipe, age 5, was killed by two or three mountain lions (possibly a female with two kittens) while riding his tricycle in his front yard. The boy was dragged from the yard and the body was found nearby several hours later. The boy's home was 100 yards from U.S. Highway 93 just outside of Evaro. (Associated Press, September 13, 1989)

4. 1989 - Apache Junction, Arizona - Joshua Walsh, age 5, was mauled by a mountain lion near Canyon Lake, some 30 miles northeast of Phoenix. Without warning, and near a parking lot and boat dock filled with people, the mountain lion attacked Joshua, bit him on the head and began to shake him with its jaws and drag him away. Tim Walsh, Joshua's father, leaped down a 20-foot embankment, grabbed a rock, threw it and hit the lion on the head, scaring it. The lion dropped the boy. Joshua was air-lifted to Phoenix Children's Hospital where it took 100 stitches to close

Joshua's head wounds, including re-attachment of his right ear which was nearly severed in the attack. (Phoenix Gazette, May 1, 1989, page A-1)

5. 1991 - Nevada Test Site, north of Las Vegas, Nevada - Mary Saether, was attacked by a 120-pound female mountain lion. She suffered minor cuts and received 21 stitches on her head, right arm, and back. The cougar crept up on Saether and two male companions and attacked before they were aware of its presence. The two men beat the lion with their cameras forcing it to release Saether. A Wildlife Services Specialist arrived the next day. As he was doing a preliminary check, he heard noise in a tree and turned to find the lion charging. The man had only enough time to draw his handgun and shoot the lion at point blank range. The lion was found to be in good health. (U. S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services, Reno, Nevada and various news reports)

6. 1991 - Idaho Springs, Colorado - Scott Dale Lancaster, age 18, was killed by a lion while jogging near his high school. Lancaster was attacked by a 90 - 100 pound female cougar and dragged some 60 feet away. When asked how severely the boy was mauled by the lion, Undersheriff Dave Graham replied, "Bad!" It took authorities two days to find Lancaster's body. (Clear Creek Courant, January 16, 1991, page 1)

7. 1991 - Riverside, California - Searchers found evidence that Travis Zwiig, age 3, of La Quinta, California, was possibly attacked by a mountain lion. Shoe prints thought to be Zwiig's were found a half mile from where the toddler disappeared. The prints stopped at a rocky overhang where mountain lion prints were found. "Where the shoes stopped, there was a slide area and what they believed to be drag



marks,” said Sgt. Craig Kilday. (Associated Press, February 26, 1991 - Note: We found no record of the boy being found.)

8. 1992 - Gaviota State Park, near Santa Barbara, California – Darron Arroyo, age 9, was attacked by a mountain lion as he walked along a park trail. Darron was hiking with his two brothers when a lion rushed from the bushes and attacked, attempting to drag him off in the brush. Steven Arroyo, Darron’s father, was walking about a hundred yards behind the boys. He heard the screams and saw the lion dragging Darron. Steven rushed toward the cat, picked up a rock, threw it and struck the lion between the eyes. The lion dropped the boy and left the area. Darron sustained bites to the face and head and scratches to the chest. (Information compiled from Santa Barbara News Press, Gaviota State Park and California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, California.)

9. 1992 - Wenatchee, Washington - Jessica Vanney, age 5, suffered cuts and puncture wounds when a 60-pound mountain lion attacked her as she walked along a path through trees at a 100-site campground in Lake Wenatchee State Park. Her father, Michael Vanney, witnessed the attack. “Jessica was 4 or 5 feet in front of me. She walked between two trees and I saw some movement out of the corner of my eye. Then I saw the cougar run around a tree and jump on her. Its front paws just wrapped right around her head and shoulders.” Vanney grabbed his hunting knife and attacked the animal. This is the third known lion attack in the state. (Associated Press, June 18, 1992 - Note: What if this was a full grown lion weighing 150 pounds? What if Jessica was walking that path by herself?)

10. 1992 - Vancouver Island, British Columbia - An 8-year-old Kiyuquot Indian boy, Jeremy Williams, was fatally mauled by a mountain lion in the village

of Kiyuquot. The boy’s father and a dozen youngsters witnessed the attack. Jeremy was attacked as he sat on the grass in the elementary school playground. The cougar rushed and attacked the freckled, red-haired youngster as other children ran for help. Kevin Williams, Jeremy’s father and a teacher at the school, hurried to the scene and watched helplessly while children screamed in panic. The school’s janitor shot and killed the 60-pound lion. Richard Leo, a Kiyuquot Indian chief, said angry parents accused



the school board of ignoring the danger of wild animals. (Associated Press, 1992)

11. 1994 - Auburn Lake Trails, California (near Sacramento) - a 40-year-old vocational rehabilitation counselor, Barbara Schoener, was attacked and killed by a mountain lion. Schoener was jogging in the popular Auburn Trails area when a cougar attacked her from behind. The force of attack caused Schoener off the trail. Schoener made two strides before falling 30 feet. Schoener then stood up and moved another 25 feet down the slope where the final attack occurred. Wounds on Schoener’s forearms and hands showed attempts to defend herself, but the 5-foot-8-inch, 120-pound woman was no match for the lion. The lion dragged Schoener 300 feet downhill and, after feeding on her, buried her with leaves and debris. Schoener received two fatal wounds - a crushed skull and bites to the head and neck. (Sacramento Bee Final, April 27, 1994, page B1 and B4)

These are but a few of the documented mountain lion attacks on humans, most of which were small children. All lions involved in these attacks that were located and destroyed, were found to be healthy. Some showed signs of hunger. So as we now clearly understand, there’s nothing cute or cuddly about mountain lions; they are savage and ruthless killers.

Who can gauge the emotional trauma and stress of losing a pet, or exponentially worse, a child, friend or loved-one?

Environmentalists who are academically and politically motivated? I don’t think so... they only see such monumental losses of loved-ones as part of ‘predator-prey cycle’ (how does anyone with a soul tell grieving parents that their son or daughter was part of a ‘predator-prey’ cycle)? How about mountain lion activists? Not likely, they’re drunk on their own kool-aid. And as the high-priests and priestesses of such tenets and obtuse notions about lions, they craft all the talking-points for the people down-stream from them... including Game Wardens, who are educated to some extent by these highly biased and insensitive academics and activists. Hard words? Maybe, maybe not; let’s judge the tree by its fruits; lunacy or logic?

Now comes the ‘California Mountain Lion Public Safety Bill’

The killing of two mountain lion kittens in Half Moon Bay, California, sparked legislation to change how the California Department of Fish & Wildlife handles mountain lion public safety situations. On September 6th, the landmark bill

was signed into law. Read through this page to learn more about SB 132 and relive our journey to pass the first nonlethal mountain lion public safety bill.

California Senate Bill 132 went in effect on January 1, 2014, when it was signed by Gov. Jerry Brown, now known as Fish and Game Code Section 4801.5. Brown is the same man who seems to also illogically endorse removing Dams that store billions of gallons of fresh water at a time when California is engaged in a drought of epic proportions, to which, Brown has applied severe water-use restrictions, and other half measures. So what does this latest law say? (an excerpt): Section 4801.5:

(a) Unless authorized in this chapter, nonlethal procedures shall be used when removing or taking any mountain lion that has not been designated as an imminent threat to public health or safety.

(b) For purposes of this chapter, “imminent threat to public health or safety” means a situation where a mountain lion exhibits one or more aggressive behaviors directed toward a person that is not reasonably believed to be due to the presence of responders.

So as we learn, the dozens of humans (including children) that have been attacked and/or killed by lions means absolutely nothing to the cold, heartless people, who want to subordinate the rights of humans to those of mountain lions... But just ‘two kittens’ of a species that is not in any way endangered, causes wrong-minded representative to pass legislation? Huh?

Do human lives even matter to these people anymore?



Inland Valley SWAT team members Cpl. Dills Tracy and Marc Gonzales look for an aggressive mountain lion behind homes in Fontana that killed 100 pound German Shepherd dog (Irfan Khan / Los Angeles Times) March 2014

America desperately needs people in public office (legislators, administrators, law enforcement, etc.) who care about the People and their safety and welfare first, everything else is second. We are supposed to be a county with a “government of the People, by the People and for the People”... Abe Lincoln

Having discussed this Section of the Fish and Game Code with both County Officials and with CA State Fish & Wildlife Game Wardens, the bottom line according to my understanding is that:

1. The lion must have attacked or killed livestock; or,
2. The lion must have attacked or killed a pet; or,
3. The lion must pose a significant threat to an individual through an attack or similar.

In response to these asserted ‘requirements’, I have said this:

“When a lion comes looking for a meal around someone’s home or ranch, a school, playground or park, the record of actual facts clearly shows that nothing good can come of it... and there is no logical or reasonable reply to this fact.”

So what is the current status of the mountain lion population? Is it on the brink of extinction? Is that why humans and their animals are made to suffer the grisly and traumatic results of their attacks before there is any intervention or prophylaxis?

Have some legislators in California forgotten their sworn duty (‘Semper Pro Populus’), and that the safety of citizens is of paramount importance, and much more so than any wildlife conservation effort? And in the case of lions, given the robust populations, no conservation is needed in any event. This California Lion Code arguably subordinates the safety of families, children and pets, to the benefit of lions. It further, defers the government’s responsibility and liability for the safety of People and their pets to the mountain li-

ons that have established territories close to homes, ranches, schools and parks, where they hunt in close proximity to humans; where lions make the ultimate and often fatal decision to attack, or not.

Any such Code is at odds with the rights of the citizens under the law and the U.S. Constitution; where no entity or government can (by implementation of law, policy or otherwise) force citizens to suffer injury, death and economic loss without prior due process, not to mention the emotional cost paid and endured.

Given the egregious price already paid in the lives of humans, pets, livestock and emotional trauma related to these events, I decided to look into this very interesting and unusual issue, and I have discovered some very interesting facts and correlations!

Let's begin with what the California Department of Fish & Wildlife has to say about mountain lion populations:

(from their website: https://www.dfg.ca.gov/wildlife/lion/lion_fa.html):

Are mountains lions listed as a threatened or endangered species?

Mountain lions are not threatened nor endangered in California. In fact, the lion population is relatively high in California and their numbers appear to be stable. Mountain lions are legally classified as "specially protected species". This has nothing to do with their relative abundance and does not imply that they are rare.

How many mountain lions are in California?

Any statewide estimate of the mountain lion population is just a "guess-timate." Mountain lion studies over the last 30 years have estimated pop-

ulation densities for different habitat types around the state. These density estimates varied from zero to 10 lions per 100 square miles, and were simply expanded to the total amount of each habitat type available. This method provides a crude estimate of between 4,000 and 6,000 mountain lions statewide. So, the 'experts' at the CA F&W clearly say that the mountain lions in California are "NOT threatened or endangered"... Wow! That's an unexpected statement given all of the contrary hullabaloo by the lion activists! So moving-forward with this unimpeachable evidence of the lion's population status in California, I wanted to explore if this statement was somewhat understated in sympathy to the political pressure of the mountain lion advocates, who arguably have political influence over the Fish & Wildlife Dept., and are largely made-up of people who don't have to live among the lion's, where many others, like ranchers, do have to live in mountain lion country.

Another way to clearly understand the actual mountain lion populations is simple:

When a male lion leaves its mother after spending a couple years learning how to kill, it sets-out to find and stake-out its own territory. A simple lion will kill (on average) about 70-deer each year. This means that any given 'territory, must contain at least enough deer to satisfy the hunger of the lion. Female lions are tolerated within the existing territory of an established male lion. Older male lions, who have already established territories will aggressively defend, and if need be, kill any new male lion trying to establish a territory within an existing territory. Therefore, given the size and power of an established older male lion, the younger male

lions (2-4 years old) will continue searching for their own space, as opposed to facing a more experienced male lion. These younger male lions are no slouches, and are deadly killers, still weighing as much as 160 pounds. When they cannot find an unoccupied territory, which is what happens when there are too many lions in the natural habitats, combined with too few deer, lions will frequently set-up shop very close to humans on the borders of cities and near ranches and homes, where they also begin to modify their predation behavior to attack and kill anything they can, including pets, livestock and humans. This modification of predatory behavior is an adaptation out of necessity. The preferred prey of mountain lions is deer, and when lions establish territories too close to humans and their enterprises, there are more domestic animals, pets (and people) than there are deer, so the logical behavior of a lion that is adapting, is to try and eat anything it can attack and kill in its new environment, including pets and humans. But this also raises the question; If there are too few lions, which is not claimed by the CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, wouldn't there be plenty of available territory? Of course the answer to that question is also function of the numbers of naturally preferred prey (deer) available within the habitats. A habitat (territory) that has a robust deer population, could support more lions, and wouldn't need to be excessively large to sustain the lion's annual need for prey. However, when the deer are sparse, then a much larger territory is required in order to encompass an adequate deer population to support a lion that kills ~70 deer each year, along with other smaller animals.

And as it turns out, many areas in the United States and in California, including Siskiyou County, have observed very serious declines in deer populations.

In Siskiyou County California, deer populations are characterized as 'dramatically declining' according to some wildlife biologists.

Here is an excerpt from

The Siskiyou Daily News: <http://www.siskiyoudaily.com/article/20141103/News/141109970>

'YREKA – Nov. 3, 2014 at 10:04 AM - A dramatic decline in the Siskiyou County deer populations over two decades has triggered concern and a proposed management plan in an attempt to find conclusive evidence as to why the declining numbers continue to persist, according to California Department of Fish and Wildlife project lead Robert Schaefer... As seen in the pilot phase, increasing trends in selenium deficiency and predator impacts are of interest to the black-tailed deer study, said Schaefer. "...

Interestingly, this 'dramatic decline' directly correlates over time with the same period of time since lions were granted a 'protected' status in 1990.

Let's do the math (maybe we're the only ones?): Let's use the CA Dept. of Fish & Game's statistic of 6,000 mountain lions living within the State. **Each lion will kill on average 70 deer each year.**

**So the math is:
6,000 X 70 = 420,000
deer killed by lions
annually in California!**

How can anyone miss this fact when they (CA F&G wildlife biologists, who can do the math) are 'supposedly' searching for an explanation for the steep decline in the deer populations? Could it be that an actionable-answer that remains elusive yields more taxpayer-funded studies and revenue for the wildlife biologists and academics? Meanwhile, after the lions completely wipe-out the deer population in Siskiyou County, they will start killing and eating anything else they can! So now, having learned the unvarnished facts, with a legitimate understanding of the mentality behind the obsession these environmentalists have for lions, we can begin to understand why these same people couldn't care less about the economic losses to farmers and ranchers that are inflicted by lion attacks when they adopt territories too close to homes, ranches, schools, parks and other rural and even urban public gathering places... Lions in California are now being seen more often than ever before and they are establishing territories in and around small and large towns!

Livestock losses are devastating to ranchers and farmers (you know, the people that

work hard to feed everyone else!). Cattle, sheep, and even horses that weigh a 1,000 pounds are attacked and killed. When animals aren't killed outright, and merely injured, the veterinarian bills can range into the thousands of dollars!

Here is one example of the horrific results of a mountain lion attack on a family's horse (graphic!):

<https://www.zombiehunters.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=32&t=74739>

..."I was reading some of the older posts about different animal attacks and thought I would share what I have seen. This horse belongs to my SO's cousin, who is our neighbor. It ran through a fence one night and was missing for almost a week. When they found it, it had been attacked by a mountain lion. We live in Surry county, NC, and they are not supposed to be here according to wildlife officials, but at least one is.



These are some of the pictures of the claimed all of the available territory horse at the vet after they found it. containing whatever prey (deer) may Amazingly, he has almost complete- ly recovered now.”...



Goats killed by cougar in their pen

1990 State mountain lion legislation is now outdated (the lion populations have rebounded in robust fashion)... and the more recent legislation of January 2014 (Section 4801.5) is an insult to the intelligence of thinking Californians as it regards the current lion populations, as well as being an affront to their Constitutional rights!

The indicators of that are spelled-out herein, and would certainly be detailed by any unbiased wildlife biologist, who would surely testify in a court of law that; when young male lions (and/or old male lions who can no longer defend their territory) start showing-up close to homes, ranches, and even inside the city limits of dozens of towns and cities (including Yreka) in California and elsewhere in America, and begin attacking humans and their pets, it's a clear indication that there are far too many adult male lions that have already

Last year, I interviewed a deputy Sheriff in northern California, who told me about a mountain lion that was spotted in a tree on the grounds of an elementary school, where the school was in session. When the deputy at the scene contacted the Game Warden, the deputy was instructed by the State Game Warden to wait until he arrived on scene, which was estimated to be about an hour. Here, yet again we see another example of the thought process behind how the State is dealing with lions when humans are at risk; where lions seem to have precedence over people; in this case children. Fortunately, the deputy called his boss (the Sheriff of the County), who upon hearing about the situation immediately instructed the deputy to kill the lion and eliminate the risk to the children; the right decision came easily to a man who's main concern is public safety. The safety of people comes before any form of wildlife conservation, with-

out exception. Human lives matter! The evidence is simply overwhelming: the mismanagement of mountain lions in California (lack thereof) at the behest of a relatively few ignorant and wrong-headed people, has led to the plummeting deer populations in the State; here are a few of the key points from an article at SF-Gate:

Deer numbers:
The Department of Fish and Wildlife estimates there are now 445,000 deer in California, down from 2 million in the 1960s and 850,000 in the 1990s.
“Deer numbers statewide are down 80 percent... “

Predation: One study captured 96 healthy fawns and tracked them for seven years; of those killed by predators, 49 percent were killed by mountain lions, 27 percent by coyotes and 22 percent by bears. In other studies, bear predation of fawns has been much higher. Another study equipped 25 adult does with radio collars; in three years, 11 were killed by mountain lions, one by coyotes. Diminished habitat quality: In many national forests, diverse ecosystems were cut down and replanted with conifer monocultures. With few hardwoods and less material to browse in second-growth forests, food for wildlife has been reduced. With that, overall nutrition for deer can be poor, which can bring reduced survival rates and antler growth.” ... When you read (or hear) that some disease, a ‘louse’, mineral deficiency, or decrease in ‘habitat quality’ are the culprits in the decline of deer populations, in light of the mathematics of lion predation, it's becomes clear that those ‘alleged culprits’ are at very best only responsible for a small fraction of the deer lost, and

moreover, are simply the talking-points that the environmentalists employ to cover their failures for allowing the lions to decimate the deer populations in the first place.

There seems to be no limits to which the lion-lovers will try to blame the decline in deer populations on everything and anything, except the explosive growth of mountain lions.

In the case of the loss of quality deer habitat, most environmentalists can look in the mirror if they want to see the actual causality; their crummy forest management practices are responsible for almost 1-million acres of charred forests annually in the Pacific Northwest.

The Mathematics Of Predation:

Earlier in this essay, WE did the math using the published CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife numbers:

One (1) lion kills about 70 deer each year, and eats about 50 of those (the reason they kill more than they eat is that many times, lions are chased-off a kill by packs of coyotes or wolves, so the hungry lion has to kill again; plus female lions with cubs will kill deer without feeding to teach the cubs 'how to kill')... According to the CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, there are 6,000 mountain lions in California (maybe a lot more than that). **The math shows that lions kill approximately 420,000 deer in California each year!**

When you start with an estimated (CA F&W) population of 445,000 deer in California, subtracting the 420,000 deer killed by lions in the State annually, yields a difference of just **25,000 deer!** As we see, any failure in the birth and survival rate of new generations of deer would be catastrophic! **The deer population in California is currently on the brink of a total collapse.**

The over-predation of deer is so strikingly obvious, it strongly suggests that an 'agenda' is in play; otherwise, predator control measures would have already been put into action. Maybe the over-predation of deer is by design? And the decimation of the deer population is merely the next step in this plausible 'design' to include deer as a 'protected mammal'? And if so, how would this impact hunters?

The economic loss related to decimated deer herds is in the hundreds of millions of dollars when considered across the State of California.

Deer hunting in America accounts for many tens of billions of dollars in revenue!

This massive revenue stream is at serious risk across America and in California.

At some point, and very soon, people have to stand-up and just hold the line on the fact that animals do not have more rights than people in America under the U.S. Constitution.

Forcing citizens to endure economic loss as well as the emotional trauma related to lion attacks resulting in the injury or loss of farm/ranch animals, livestock, pets, and/or injury or death of a child, friend or loved-one (pursuant to the recent CA Code) before there is any action to protect the citizen and his/her property, is intolerable!

Anyone, or any organization that values encroaching lions more than the safety of people is suffering from some form of mental anomaly, and their opinions must be held in contempt by society. And contrary to what some misinformed legislators may think, no agency or state government can 'legitimately' pass and enforce any law or regulation that separates Americans from their Constitutional rights.

Conservation is critical to the management of the People's resources, including wildlife. But it must be carried-out with some common sense and with respect for human lives.

