



CITIZENS FOR
LOS ANGELES
WILDLIFE

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February 26, 2020

Charlton H. Bonham, Director
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244

Dear Director Bonham:

On behalf of our citizenry, Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW) would like to express our appreciation for your recent decision to restrict the issuance of depredation permits by expanding the three-strikes Mountain Lion Depredation policy to a much larger geographic area, requiring the convening of a Response Guidance Team, and requiring executive sign off before permits can be issued. Based on your recent actions (memorialized on February 13, 2020 and also shared in a response letter to Southern California legislators), we are thrilled to know that you agree that prior depredation protocol was insufficient, and we welcome this new and immediate procedural shift within CDFW.

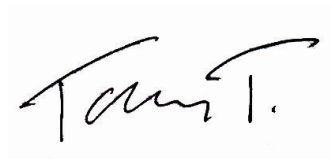
Much of Los Angeles was in mourning earlier this month when it was announced that P-56, one of only two remaining breeding males collared by the National Park Service in our vicinity, was killed legally and methodically after a ranch owner was issued a depredation permit. As you know, our local mountain lion population is struggling enough with incremental losses without facing overt acts of culling such as this. P-56 survived fires, poisoned food, fragmentation, cars, and other territorial males to only be shot legally for being deemed a threat to livestock. Upon review of the antecedents leading up to the depredation permit issuance, we believe that this death was fully avoidable, and further steps could have been taken to humanely protect the rancher's livestock from mountain lions.

Given the critical conditions our regional mountain lions face, we ask that you take every possible step to avoid lethal outcomes when depredation permits are filed for. We directly want you to consider that a permit to take a depredating cougar does not have to be a permit to kill that animal.

More specifically, any depredation permit issued in our areas of threatened sub-populations should be a permit that only assigns the right to take a mountain lion in a non-lethal manner (i.e. by hazing practices or humane capture). We ask that your three-tier stepwise policy end at step two in these critical regions and no longer takes the third step of issuing a lethal permit.

Again, CLAW would like to thank you for your swift response and leadership that has immediately revised Mountain Lion Depredation policy for California's unique and threatened sub-populations; however, we must go further. CDFW's executive leadership should halt the issuing of lethal permits altogether within California's critical regions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony T.", is centered below the word "Sincerely,". The signature is written in a cursive, fluid style.

Tony Tucci, Chair

CLAW is a public benefit non-profit 501(c)(3) environmental organization that works to protect and restore the environments of wildlife of Los Angeles and California from dwindling open spaces. Our mission is to promote, educate and protect the fundamental importance of wildlife, wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors everywhere.