



Montana Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife
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House Bill 29 Lion Trapping
Bill Mitchell

Mr. Chairman, Committee Members, my name is Bill Mitchell. I represent the Montana Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife and we oppose this bill.

While we support trapping as an essential management tool, and the reduction of predator numbers when needed, we do not believe it is necessary for the management of lions. It has been proven in the past that lion numbers can be manipulated by simply increasing the quota numbers.

Lion quotas are set by sex, a specific number of males and females. Even when a lion is treed by a houndsman, it can be difficult to tell the difference without spending some time studying the lion. When trapping you can change the way you trap for a different species, but you cannot control the sex or age of the animal that you might catch. While you can release an animal from a trap if it is not your targeted animal it can be difficult. If that animal is treed, you simply take a picture and walk away.

Also there is nothing in this bill that addresses how the season will be run. In Regions 1 and 2, permits are on a drawing basis. How will the season be blended between trapping and hunting?

Simply allowing trapping and not increasing the quota numbers will not increase the lion harvest.