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Assembly California Legislature



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March 30, 2011

California Fish and Game Commission
 1416 Ninth Street
 P.O. Box 944209
 Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Proposed Expansion of Bear Hunting in California

Dear Commissioners:

We, the undersigned members of the State Legislature, oppose the Department of Fish and Game's proposals to expand black bear hunting in the state.

More than 1,700 bears are killed each year in California where it remains legal to hunt bears weighing over fifty pounds and a year of age or older during the designated hunting season. The majority of bears killed are through the use of hound hunting.

Hound hunting involves using packs of dogs to chase bears to exhaustion so they can be shot while they are helpless to escape. Dogs' collars are fitted with radio transmitters so that the hunter doesn't have to go to the work of finding the prey, or really even of following the animals during the chase. Of the 30 states that allow bear hunting, 17 allow hunting them with hounds – and California is one of them.

In February, the California Department of Fish and Game unveiled proposed changes to bear hunting regulations that would increase the annual quota of black bears to be harvested by nearly 20% -- to 2,000 bears. This proposal came despite three years' worth of expansion proposals being shelved after substantive and voluminous opposition comments were submitted.

The Department has not conclusively demonstrated any need to increase the quota, nor is it relying on bear population estimates that withstand scrutiny. Bear populations should not be estimated or managed statewide, but rather in geographically appropriate management units.



At a time when our state government is making incredibly difficult and painful choices about which services we can afford to provide to taxpayers, this annual cycle of unjustified expansions that the Department knows will chew up constituent and Department staff time reacting are ill-advised.


We respectfully oppose the proposed regulatory changes and urge you to reject them.

Sincerely,

cc: Governor Jerry Brown
Resources Secretary John Laird
DFG Director John McCamman



Assembly Member Das Williams



Assembly Member Toni Atkins



Assembly Member Jim Beall



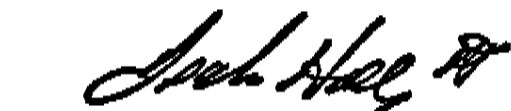
Assembly Member Bob Blumenfeld



Senator Ron Calderon



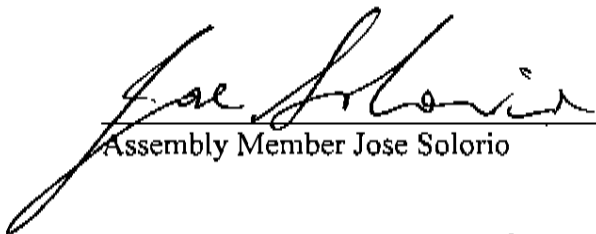
Assembly Member Mike Eng



Assembly Member Isadore Hall



Assembly Member Anthony Portantino



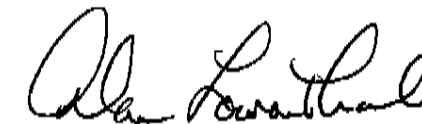
Assembly Member Jose Solorio



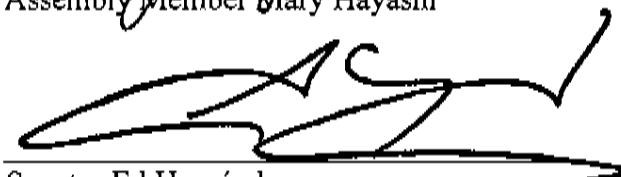
Assembly Member Tom Ammiano



Assembly Member Mary Hayashi



Senator Alan Lowenthal



Senator Ed Hernández



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Assembly Member Marty Block

Paul Fong

Assembly Member Paul Fong

Ted Lieu

Senator Ted Lieu

Mariko Yamada

Assembly Member Mariko Yamada

Fiona Ma

Assembly Member Fiona Ma

Fran Pavley

Senator Fran Pavley

Loni Hancock

Senator Loni Hancock

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