

To: Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission
dnr_cpwcommission@state.co.us

From: David Ruane
37467 Lee Lake Ave.
Windsor, CO 80550

Re: A Citizen Petition for Rulemaking requesting that the Commission prohibit the commercial and recreational trapping of bobcats.

Dear Commission Members

I am an active hunter, true conservationist and all-round outdoorsman. I have hunted and fished my entire adult life and even tried trapping in college. I have been very successful hunting the species I pursue but haven't decided when and where I will use my 21 elk preference points or 12 moose preference points, as of yet. I have a degree in biology with an emphasis in wildlife ecology and can identify most species I encounter in the field - I even know genus/species for many of them!

As an ethical hunter with knowledge of predator-prey relationships and wildlife management studies, as well as field experience, I know the following:

- 1) Bobcat populations are a complete unknown in Colorado and any population estimates the CPW uses are just that – an estimate without the same integrity as elk, deer, or bighorn sheep.
- 2) Bobcat's don't require hunting and trapping to avoid "overpopulation". Their prey species' health and population are much bigger drivers.
- 3) Bobcat trapping is one of the least specific trapping methods with lots of potential for bycatch of non-target species, easily including lynx, in areas where they are found.

It is important for you to know that there are hunters that do not support trapping and indiscriminate killing of predators in the (often bogus) name of "conservation". I am one of those hunters and **want to go on the record as supporting this citizen petition** for the following reasons with the main takeaway in **bold**:

- 1) The only reason bobcats are being trapped and hunted is to profit from their pelts. As an ethical hunter, I find this atrocious. This would be like market hunting if I sold the meat from the elk I killed last year. I have no issue with a hunter harvesting an elk for their own family's consumption but cannot see any reasonable reason why it is allowable for a person to kill an animal, peel off it's pelt, throw the carcass (wanton waste apparently doesn't apply to trappers??!) and sell the pelt on the commercial market so that a small segment of society – mainly in Asia can feel good about their fashion sense? **Wildlife is in the public's trust and no individual should be profiting off that trust.** I might be able to justify "recreational trapping" if it was unlawful to sell the fur, and the meat needed to be used – like the rules that are in place for hunting. How anyone could consider trapping as recreational, fair chase, and ethical, however, is beyond my comprehension.
- 2) Hunting continues to be declining in numbers and even in public perception. Trapping even more so. Why must hunters be lumped in with trappers and further the bad perception we get because of the easily understandable questions on the humaneness of trapping – not just the stress and harm that traps cause a wild animal,

but the previously-mentioned commercial purposes that drive trapping. In a nutshell, **trapping needs to be discontinued because it is unethical, only a tiny fraction of society practices it, and yet it impacts the perception of hunting to the general population in a hugely negative way.**

3) Many species of wildlife have been extirpated because of trapping and many more will continue to be extirpated. Our neighbors to the north (Wyoming) do not have fishers or lynx because of trapping. Spotted skunks in Wyoming might be close to being extirpated because of trapping. There is plenty of evidence that shows trapping has caused the extirpation – look at the natural history of beavers and otters in this country! **The trapping and hunting of bobcats should be banned until the CPW can show good population studies exist and that the population can sustain trapping/hunting.** It is my understanding that this does not exist in a satisfactory/scientific way at this time.

In summary, **I am a hunter that supports this citizen petition and look forward to the CPW giving it the proper attention and consideration it deserves.** I am convinced that the majority of Colorado citizens would agree with it and even more so, if they knew what trapping involves and how it is not critical to the management of this species.

Sincerely,

David Ruane