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WILDLIFE GROUPS LAUNCH “KNOW YOUR NEVADA NEIGHBORS” CAMPAIGN THIS WEEK

Coalition of groups aims to educate Nevadans about trophy hunting and trapping practices that endanger ecosystems and increase the risk of encounters between wild animals and people

RENO, NV: This week a coalition of Nevada organizations supporting scientifically sound and humane wildlife practices launched a public education and outreach campaign, “*Know Your Nevada Neighbors.*” The campaign is an effort to make all Nevadans more aware of the fact that trophy hunting and trapping animals for fur are still common practices in our state – practices that are not only inhumane but that have negative impacts on our state’s ecosystems.

The coalition is launching the “*Know Your Nevada Neighbors*” campaign this week to coincide with both The Wildlife Society – Western Section annual meeting at the Peppermill Resort Casino and the February meeting of the Nevada Wildlife Commission. The Wildlife Society, the largest professional organization in the world for wildlife managers, has a series of experts addressing the topic, “Predators: History and Human Interactions” 8:30 to 10:15 am Friday at the Peppermill, second floor. At the Nevada Wildlife Commission’s meeting Friday and Saturday in Carson City, commissioners will consider the draft predator plan for fiscal year 2018 and will set hunting seasons for mountain lions and bears in Nevada.

By understanding our wildlife neighbors, like mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes and bears, we can advocate for common-sense policies that respect these animals without infringing on the rights and activities of hunters. Trophy hunting and trapping inflict significant damage on wildlife populations. Hunting these animals is not only barbaric, dangerous and unsustainable, but it fails to consider the latest science that shows that conflicts with people, pets and livestock often increase because of these practices.

“We hope that people will consider that not only are wild animals being needlessly killed for trophies and pelts but that these policies have other consequences such as leaving kittens, pups and cubs orphaned to die when their mothers are hunted,” said Lynn Cullens of the Mountain Lion Foundation.

“By educating Nevadans we hope to encourage action – whatever your perspective, sign a petition, call your lawmakers or write a letter to your local newspaper. We need to make sure wildlife is conserved for the benefit of all Nevadans, and for our public lands and ecosystems,” said Trish Swain of the League of Humane Voters – Nevada.

Consider the facts:

- With a population of less than 1,400 mountain lions, Nevada allows them to be hunted year-round in numbers exceeding sustainable limits broadly accepted by scientists and other state wildlife agencies. In Nevada, 245 mountain lions may be hunted for trophies this year.
- Nevada still allows killing contests where hundreds of coyotes are hunted for prizes and fun. At least 10,000 coyotes are killed in Nevada each year. There is no hunting season or limit on coyotes, leaving hundreds of pups orphaned to die of starvation or exposure. These mass killings disrupt natural ecosystems and cause unnecessary conflicts between coyotes and people.
- Scientists at the Nevada Department of Wildlife estimate between 300 and 400 black bears may survive in the mountains of western Nevada. In a single decade, humans have killed the equivalent of the state’s entire bear population.
- Thousands of Nevada bobcats are killed each year in cruel steel leg-hold traps and snares so that trappers can sell their furs to be made into coats in Russia and China. Commercial trappers profit from taking a public resource with little regulation.

To learn more about the “Know Your Nevada Neighbors” campaign, please visit our website at www.KnowYourNeighbors.net, or follow us on social media: Facebook, knowyourneighbors.net; Twitter, @knowneighbors; and Instagram [know_your_neighbors](https://www.instagram.com/know_your_neighbors).

The “Know Your Nevada Neighbors” program is an effort led by The Mountain Lion Foundation, a national non-profit dedicated to the conservation of mountain lions in the United States for more than three decades. Other coalition partners include the Nevada Wildlife Alliance, League of Humane Voters – Nevada, TrailSafe, BEAR League, NoBearHuntNV and Project Coyote. As a coalition, we believe predators are a necessary component to healthy and balanced wildlife and ecosystems and that public policies should be based not on the desires of hunters but on sound science that supports sustainable populations of these wild animals. “Know Your Nevada Neighbors” is funded in part by a grant from the Bently Foundation, which strives to promote organizations around the world in the areas of the environment, the arts and animal welfare.

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