

### **Killing plans**

On Dec. 14, the Colorado Parks & Wildlife Commission voted to approve two mountain lion/black bear killing plans in an effort to “boost mule deer populations” for big game hunters.

The plan closest to our area will allow 50 percent of all mountain lions between Canon City and Leadville to be killed by neck and leg snares, body cages, hounds and firearms; and their kittens will be left to starve.

CPW approved this barbarity even though similar studies in neighboring states found, and their own biologists confirmed, that this strategy doesn't work in the long term and that the real culprits in mule deer decline are habitat fragmentation due to oil/gas/residential development on critical winter ranges, subsequent lack of food, hunting and poaching.

So, why did the commissioners approve these killing plans? Because 90

percent of their funding comes from hunting/fishing license fees.

It's time for the Colorado Legislature to provide adequate funding for CPW so it can make decisions that protect wildlife, not decimate them. It's time for birders and wildlife watchers to get on board with paying fees so we can have a strong voice in CPW decisions as well.

I suspect that we'd see very different decisions being made by CPW if there was funding from a variety of sources.

In the meantime, you can let CPW know how you feel about their decision by emailing [dnr\\_cpwcommission@state.co.us](mailto:dnr_cpwcommission@state.co.us)

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