



Will the Hills Become Silent

The Plight of Saving Hunting No Matter if Using Hounds or Pursuing Elk

As one season closes the immediate preparation for upcoming seasons begin whether it is cleaning equipment, scouting new territory, acquiring new access, hanging game cameras, tuning ones bow, sighting in that new rifle, cleaning and dying traps, planting food plots, tending to a new litter of pups and starting the training of one that you decide to keep or getting into shape and lining up your vacation to coincide for the much anticipated hunt that you have been lucky enough to draw a tag for.

No matter what you look forward to or prepare for maybe one thing a lot of sportsmen and women forget, that might be one of the most important things to remember is to take some time and assist in defending and fighting for the very things that we do all of the planning and preparation for, getting into the field so we can challenge ourselves in pursuing whatever draws us into the wilderness.

While it seems that we should be able to continue to chase our dreams, and enjoy our traditions and heritages, taking for granted, whether it is a right or a privilege that we are part of the conservation ecosystem management or process only fuels the fire for the opposition, the anti-hunter, the animal rights extremists. Chasing our dreams and thinking that all of this will last forever is somewhat naive if not ignorant to think that, if we just don't pay attention, that we don't look ourselves in the mirror and if we just ignore it, it will go away. Somebody else will do it for us. Some other group will cover our ass. It will never happen here! That will never pass. There is no way they can get that accomplished. Thinking and acting like this will only expedite the process and make the extremists successful by taking the low hanging fruit, then cutting off the branch, chopping down the tree and then going into the forest.

If one has seen what has happened in California, Washington, Oregon, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and a dozen other states one has to realize that the locusts on the corn field will never stop until there are no crops left to eat.

Who would have thought that Texas would have been under the gun as it is this year. Who will cry remember the Alamo this go round. It might not be Santa Ana

in Texas this time but the Animal Right Extremists are planting their flag there as well.

In Colorado, the Centennial State, the State with the largest Elk population in the World, the former home of the best Mule Deer Hunting on the planet is now in the cross-hairs once again in attempt to completely dismantle how Wildlife will be managed with an impending Ballot Initiative to Ban the Harvest of Mountain Lions and Bobcats with Ballot Box Biology.

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Proposed Initiative 91 will not only alter the management and harvest of these species but if allowed to pass. The precedent that could be set for Colorado and other States could be so mind blowing that the repercussions of such actions could literally change the way that Wildlife is pursued and managed throughout North America.

This change would not be regulatory. It would be statutory and it would define "Trophy Hunting" in a manner that could easily be utilized in any other State for any other species or method of take. This is not just about Mountain Lions and Bobcats. It is about the extremists throwing whatever they can at the wall to see what sticks. On the surface, to the normal Sportsman

or even non-hunter this might seem like a benign issue, but if one reads the measure and looks at the language and the legal interpretation, if one pays attention to the intent and the definitions, you can see that this not only will cripple Science Based Wildlife Management but will also degrade and erode the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

Just by defining "Trophy Hunting" as intentionally killing, wounding, stalking, pursuing and entrapping a Mountain Lion or Bobcat one should be able to make the distinction that this is not "Trophy Hunting". It is hunting. Simply hunting. By utilizing and sensationalizing a catch phrase like "Trophy Hunting" the extremists have opened up an opportunity to muddy the waters on every aspect of hunting, angling, conservation and science based wildlife management.

What is "Trophy Hunting"? Is it a 12 year old's first 2 point Buck? Maybe it is a Cottontail that your 1 year old Beagle helped to acquire. It is a Ewe Bighorn Sheep that you spent 7 days in the back country eating freeze dried food to get within 15 yards for a shot with your long bow? Is it the last Lion of the season that took you and your pack on an 8 mile trip through some of the roughest country known to man only to decide once you reached the tree that you would not complete the harvest?

According to the new definition "Trophy Hunting" would be any and all of these efforts to the anti's it doesn't matter the reason. It does not matter how many. It does not matter if you do

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it for food or if you do it for the challenge or if you want to utilize the by-product of the hide, horns or antlers, it's the fact that we do it. Their number is zero. No matter what argument they have about all forms of management that includes harvest, their number is zero. They think that if you take a picture and put it on your wall that is a Trophy. They think that if you mount it for what we would call a 3 dimensional memory it's a Trophy. When you listen to what they say and what they write and what they blog about and what they have podcasts on and what they testify about, their eventual number is zero.

While Colorado is not alone in these attacks it has become the epic center because of the current Gubernatorial administration along with an unfavorable legislature, animal rights leaning Wildlife Commission and an uneducated general public not unlike the States on the West Coast. The challenge in Colorado has been to hold things at bay while building a movement that has already been supported nationally, that see's the significance of this issue and what it could do if allowed to pass.

This will not only effect houndsmen and women but all sportsmen and not just in the boundaries of the Centennial State.

This is the time to Support the Cause and support the progress that has been made and to make sure that we lock arms and defeat animal extremism in its tracks. Doing so will make sure "that the hills will never become silent." To support these efforts check out the ways that you can help and go to savethehuntcolorado.com and help us defeat these evils and protect all of our rights. 🐾

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