

Hello John:

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I'm concerned about the Board's renewing their \$170,000 contract with USDA Wildlife Services to; shoot, poison, and trap wildlife predators that might hurt ranching and agricultural production. I think it's a bad idea.

County impacts from the COVID crisis has made our financial situation much tighter than usual. Spending \$170,000 of county money for this unpopular, short-sighted, unnecessary program needs to be discontinued at this time of budget shortfalls.

Predators are a legitimate issue for ranchers, and these landowners already have the legal right to shoot wild animals encountered in the act of molesting or injuring their livestock, they can also get depredation permits from CDFW. Perhaps a portion of the county money saved from not renewing the USDA Wildlife Services contract could assist ranchers with alternative humane approaches to limit livestock depredation. Neighboring Sonoma and Marin counties have tried this approach with positive outcomes. Taking science based non-lethal approaches can get good results.

Wildlife belongs to the State of California, they are not landowner property. Wildlife has an intrinsic value that should be respected. Subsidizing irresponsible ranching techniques with county funding for; shooting, poisons, and traps, isn't the only way of protecting livestock from predators.

Isn't there some other county priority that would benefit from saving this \$170,000 for more vital expenditures in our county?

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Richard Ettelson