

Dear Board of Supervisors,

Every year for nearly nine decades, Wildlife Services has killed thousands of wild animals with traps, guns, and other cruel methods, largely at the behest of private ranchers and other agricultural interests. This flies in the face of the Public Trust Doctrine which maintains that wildlife is held in the public trust and that we all have a say in how our wildlife is treated.

Non-target species—including imperiled wildlife and domestic dogs and cats—fall victim to Wildlife Services' lethal approach. One Mendocino federal trapper admitted to killing more than 400 dogs. Many non-target kills are not reported. A previous Draft Environmental Impact Report clearly demonstrates the serious impacts of Wildlife Services' program. Mountain lion populations are particularly vulnerable.

Mendocino County residents and residents of the State of California do not want their taxpayer dollars spent on an expensive and ineffective program that cruelly and needlessly kills wild animals. Mountain lions, bears, coyotes, bobcats, and other species targeted by Wildlife Services are ecologically vital species. The site-specific and cumulative impacts of their removal on ecosystem health can be profound.

The best available scientific research shows that killing wildlife to reduce predation on livestock or damage to crops is rarely necessary and sometime counterproductive. Ethics tell us that this needless killing of ecologically important wildlife is wrong.

Sincerely,
Rita Franco