

Association Members:

Predation has become a very significant issue for the wildlife on the ranch, and I am writing to both make you aware and ask for your help. Please consider the situations described below.

-- Coyotes:

The coyote population on the ranch has long since exceeded the bounds of reason, and everything from deer on down is suffering the consequences. Please consider putting some time and effort into eliminating as many coyotes as you possibly can, and making this an ongoing effort.

-- Bears:

The decline of the deer population is to some degree commensurate with the increase in the lion and bear populations. I'm not sure about the bear harvest this past season, but what I've heard doesn't sound good. If you have the means to do so, please apply for bear tags, and do your part to reduce their numbers if you can.

-- Lions:

Jared Cotten is a professional outfitter who pays Cathedral Peak Ranch for an annual lease so that he can take clients onto and/or through the ranch to hunt lions. While landowners certainly do have the right to hunt lions on ranch property, all are strongly encouraged to call Jared and not go with other outfitters who have not extended to us the courtesy of establishing a legitimate professional relationship. Calling Jared is the right thing to do, given that he pays us for the privilege. If you cut a lion track on the ranch and want to hunt, please call Jared at 970-640-9461 (cell) or 970-921-3029 (home).

-- Feral Cats:

Over the past several years house cats have been used to control rodent populations around the property of some landowners on the ranch. While some are loved domestic pets, others become feral and range widely, breeding with other cats as the opportunity presents itself. Also, not all of the cats that have been brought onto the ranch were spayed or neutered, which has had serious consequences for the ecosystem on the ranch. The crucial fact is that a breeding population of cats will multiply exponentially, and rapidly become a plague. It appears that we are approaching that point now; house cat tracks were everywhere in the snow these past couple of months.

Feral cats are smart, tough, fast, agile, and cunning--the nearly perfect small-animal predator. And cats kill much more than just rodents--the grouse, young turkeys, and rabbits are killed right along with the vermin, until the good critters are gone and only the cats remain. It is time to reduce their numbers as quickly and effectively as possible, right along with the coyotes. Please use any live traps you have or can get (up to the size of coon traps will work), bait with canned tuna, and dispatch any feral cats that you catch.

Note: The landowners who keep pet cats are largely on the southern and southwestern borders of the ranch, so trapping there should be done carefully or not at all. Obviously, if you do happen to catch a cat that is sweet and docile, just let him go--someone probably loves him. Also, if you're going to bring a cat onto the ranch please have it spayed/neutered before doing so!

Best regards,
Mark Minter, President
CPRLA Board of Directors