

Date of Hearing: April 29, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE

Diane Papan, Chair

AB 1038 (Hadwick) – As Amended April 21, 2025

SUBJECT: Bears: hunting: use of dogs

SUMMARY: Authorizes a person to pursue bear with dogs, but not injure or kill the bear, during seasons to be established by the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) and allows the Commission to establish a hunting season where a hunter may allow dogs to pursue bear. Specifically, **this bill**:

- 1) Defines “bear” and “pursue” as defined in Fish and Game Code (FGC) § 3960 (see Existing Law # 1).
- 2) Establishes an exemption from FGC § 3960 to enable a person to allow dogs to pursue bear during seasons established by the Commission and prevents a person from injuring or killing the bear during that season.
 - a) Clarifies that the pursuit is not authorized in a game refuge or ecological reserve if hunting is prohibited within that refuge or reserve.
- 3) Establishes an exemption from FGC § 3960 to enable the Commission to establish a bear hunting season during which a person may allow dogs to pursue a bear pursuant to Chapter 9 of FGC (see Existing Law # 1), in any area determined by the Commission.
 - a) Requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to finalize the update of its 1998 Bear Management Plan before opening a hunting season.
- 4) Makes numerous findings and declarations.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Makes it unlawful to permit or allow any dog to pursue any big game mammal during the closed season on that mammal, to pursue any fully protected, rare, or endangered mammal at any time, to pursue any bear or bobcat at any time, or to pursue any mammal in a game refuge or ecological reserve if hunting within that refuge or ecological reserve is unlawful (FGC § 3960).
 - a) Defines “pursue” to mean pursue, run, or chase.
 - b) Authorizes CDFW to capture or dispatch any dog not under reasonable control of its owner or handler when that uncontrolled dog is in violation of this restriction, as specified, and protects CDFW from liability due to those actions. Requires DFW to notify the owner within 72 hours, if a dog is captured or dispatched.
 - c) Exempts the use of dogs to pursue bears or bobcats by federal, state, or local law enforcement officers, or their agents or employees, when carrying out official duties as required by law.

- 2) Prohibits more than three dogs to be used to pursue bear or bobcat pursuant to a depredation permit issued by CDFW and establishes criteria for the use of dogs in the pursuit (FGC § 3960.2).
- 3) Allows the use of dogs to pursue bear for scientific research purposes (FGC § 3960.4).
- 4) Allows the pursuit of bear and bobcat by guardian dogs in the protection of livestock or crops as long as the dog is within reasonable proximity of the livestock or crops (FGC § 3960.6).
- 5) Allows the Commission to establish a hound tag program, which would require certain dog identification processes to be established and followed (FGC § 3032).
- 6) Requires the Commission to annually determine whether to continue, repeal, or amend regulations establishing hunting seasons for black bear when adopting regulations and requires that determination to include a review of factors which impact the health and viability of the black bear population (FGC § 302).
- 7) Enables the Commission to establish a special season for hunting black bear for the purpose of curtailing property damage (FGC § 303).
- 8) Sets the requirements for hunting bear in the state such as mechanism of take, requirements for hunting licenses and tags, procedures for completing a tag and reporting the killed bear, and limitations on the use of parts of the bear (FGC §§ 4750 *et seq.*).
- 9) Requires an owner to maintain physical control of a dog while engaged in hunting (FGC § 3008).
- 10) Prohibits any person to, for amusement or gain, cause a dog to fight, injure, or worry a bear [Penal Code § 597(b)].
- 11) Prohibits the use of dogs to hunt certain animals, including bear, and regulates dog training. Allows the use of dogs to aid in certain activities including in the hunt of certain animals such as coyote, weasel, skunk, opossum, moles, and rodents [14 California Code of Regulation (CCR) § 265, § 472].
- 12) Determines that CDFW has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (FGC § 1802).
- 13) Declares it is a policy of the state to encourage the preservation, conservation, and maintenance of wildlife resources under the jurisdiction and influence of the state (FGC § 1801). This policy should meet the following objectives:
 - a) To maintain sufficient populations of all species of wildlife and the habitat necessary to achieve the objectives stated in subdivisions (b), (c), and (d).
 - b) To provide for the beneficial use and enjoyment of wildlife by all citizens of the state.
 - c) To perpetuate all species of wildlife for their intrinsic and ecological values, as well as for their direct benefits to all persons.

- d) To provide for aesthetic, educational, and nonappropriative uses of the various wildlife species.
 - e) To maintain diversified recreational uses of wildlife, including the sport of hunting, as proper uses of certain designated species of wildlife, subject to regulations consistent with the maintenance of healthy, viable wildlife resources, the public safety, and a quality outdoor experience.
 - f) To provide for economic contributions to the citizens of the state, through the recognition that wildlife is a renewable resource of the land by which economic return can accrue to the citizens of the state, individually and collectively, through regulated management. Such management shall be consistent with the maintenance of healthy and thriving wildlife resources and the public ownership status of the wildlife resources.
 - g) To alleviate economic losses or public health or safety problems caused by wildlife to the people of the state either individually or collectively. Such resolution shall be in a manner designed to bring the problem within tolerable limits consistent with economic and public health considerations and the objectives stated in (a), (b) and (c).
- 14) Delegates the power to regulate the taking or possession of birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, and reptiles to the Commission. This authority includes promulgating regulations for the specifics of a season, bag and position limit, territory for taking, manner of taking, and species characteristics for taking (FGC §§ 200 *et seq.*)
- 15) Classifies black bear, among other species, as a game animal (FGC § 3950).
- 16) Describes the method and by whom a bear may be taken, including requirements for a hunter have a bear tag, requirements for filling out the bear tag, and prohibitions on the use of any metal-jawed traps (FGC §§ 4750 *et seq.*)
- 17) Permits a landowner or tenant of property that is being damaged or destroyed or in danger of being damaged or destroyed by certain animals, including bear, to apply to CDFW for a permit to kill the animal, subject to certain limitations (FGC § 4181 and 14 CCR § 401).
- 18) Details the regulations regarding bear hunting (14 CCR §§ 365, 366, and 367.5).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This bill is keyed fiscal.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose of this bill.** According to the author, “Wildlife scientists have recently discovered that the black bear population is more than double previous estimates. Bears are now far beyond the carrying capacity of their traditional habitats, encroaching, and forcing mountain lions, into suburban and urban areas. Property damage, agricultural losses, and human-bear conflict have skyrocketed. Bears are breaking into tents, cars, and even secured homes, leading to the first mauling ever recorded. Bears are no longer afraid of humans. [This bill] will help our bears re-learn their natural fear of humans by using a humane, nonlethal, and science-backed approach that protects bears and people. Chasing bears away with dogs will reduce human-bear conflicts in suburban and urban areas, increase public safety, and prevent dangerous encounters and deaths. Wildlife managers need this proactive and responsible measure to keep our communities safe and our bears wild.”

- 2) **Background.** Hunting bears with dogs (e.g., hounding) predates the formation of CDFW in the 1870s and had been legal in California since game laws were formally established shortly thereafter. In 2012, the Legislature passed, and the Governor signed, legislation prohibiting the hounding of bear in California.

Black bear. Currently, the only species of bear in California is the black bear (*Ursus americanus*) after the extinction of the native California grizzly bear. Black bear are native to North America and are more numerous than every other species of bear combined. Black bears are widespread and common throughout most forested habitats of California; they are one of the most commonly occurring large mammal species in California forests. Black bear densities, however, are not evenly distributed throughout the species' range in California. Roughly half of the statewide black bear population resides in the North Coast and Cascade regions. The highest reported recent black bear densities from California are on the west side of the Hoopa Valley Reservation and in the Lake Tahoe basin.

CDFW recently released its final Black Bear Conservation and Management Plan for California (Black Bear Conservation Plan) on April 14, 2025. The Black Bear Conservation Plan debuts a new integrated population model (IPM) for estimating the black bear population. Previously, the black bear population estimate was primarily based on the data from hunting. IPM still includes hunting data, but now includes local population density studies, camera traps, and other modeling techniques to develop a more science-based approach. Using IPM with currently available data, CDFW estimates a total statewide black bear population of 59,851. It is expected that the accuracy and precision of the IPM will improve further as CDFW begins to regularly collect a broader data set, which will provide more robust regional population assessments. *The IPM also provides strong preliminary evidence that black bear populations have been stable in California over the past decade.* There is, however, discussion as to the accuracy of this number. Some argue that many of the studies used by CDFW are decades old and that camera traps do not distinguish well between individuals, which may result in counting an individual numerous times.

Black bears are large, heavily built carnivores. Adult females typically weigh between 45 and 90 kg (99 to 198 lbs.), and adult males typically weigh between 70 and 160 kg (154 to 352 lbs.), and bears in excess of 300 kg (661 lbs.) have been found in places where anthropogenic food sources are abundant. Bear color is generally uniform and varies from cinnamon, tan, brown, to black.

Black bears are omnivores. They are highly opportunistic and will eat nearly anything edible. Black bear habitats vary widely with season and location, mostly due to food availability. In general, following emergence from winter dens in spring, black bears forage on green grasses and forbs, insects, and carrion. Black bears shift to eating berries when they become available, and focus on crops such as acorns in the fall. While the diet of black bears is mostly composed of vegetation, they may prey upon newborn ungulates in the spring and scavenge the kills of mountain lions year-round.



The opportunistic foraging behavior of black bears often brings them into conflict with people, as black bears will damage property such as homes and storage sheds while seeking out human food and garbage, damage agricultural crops, and occasionally kill livestock, primarily chickens according to CDFW.

Black bear management. Previously, CDFW had monitored black bear in accordance with the 1998 Black Bear Management Plan, but now will be following the new Black Bear Conservation Plan. The established Black Bear Conservation and Management Goals are to:

- 1) Conserve and manage black bear populations that are ecologically functional, disease-resilient, and genetically-diverse statewide and regionally, and conserve and enhance their habitats.
- 2) Provide opportunities for black bear hunting, viewing, and public education; minimize human-bear conflict; consider animal welfare in black bear conservation and management; and be inclusive of all Californians in black bear conservation and management decisions.

Black bear hunting. Regulated hunting has been a central component of wildlife conservation in California and throughout North America for over a century. Since 1948, California black bears have been classified as game animals with an established hunting season. Over time, regulations have generally become increasingly restrictive, both to ensure black bear harvests are sustainable and to reflect changing public attitudes. For example, recreational trapping was prohibited in 1961, the bag limit was reduced to one in 1968, harvest of cubs or females with cubs was prohibited in 1972, a quota limiting the number of black bears harvested annually was initiated in 1990, and the use of dogs to hunt black bears was prohibited beginning in 2013.

Annual harvest quotas, currently set at 1,700, are based on maintaining a healthy population for species preservation and recreation. The Black Bear Conservation Plan indicates that “unless management objectives call for population reduction, harvest should be conservative to prevent overexploitation.” Since the use of dogs was prohibited in black bear hunting, hunters have not reached the 1,700 limit, but also the use of dogs did not guarantee reaching the 1,700 threshold. *Note, the 1,700 is not established as a population management quota; instead, it is the number of bear that can be taken via recreational hunting without negatively impacting the population.*

Cultural, societal, and demographic changes have resulted in declining participation in hunting and fishing in California since the 1970s. Over the last ten years (2014–23), an average of 29,245 black bear tags were sold annually, which generated \$13.3 million in revenue. Hunters do play a role in the conservation of black bear in the state, as they provide CDFW with tooth samples from harvested animals. Age estimates from these samples constitute a key source of scientific data that is critical to efficient estimation and monitoring of black bear populations throughout California.

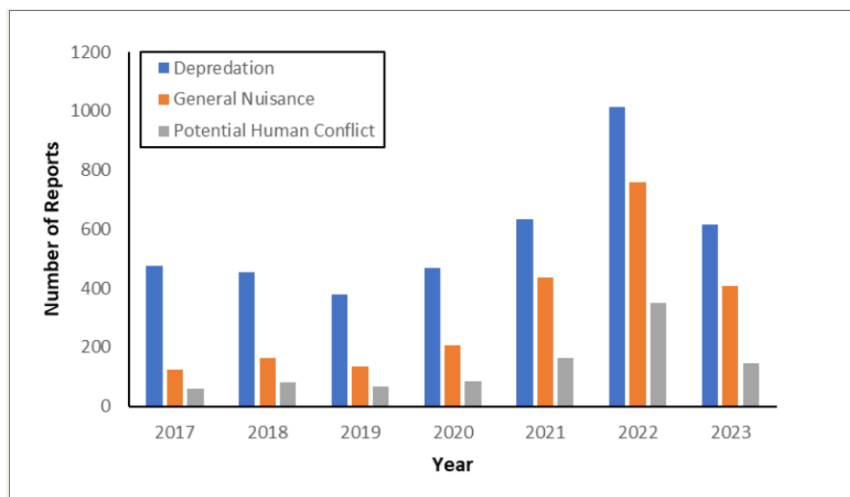
Hounding. The practice of hounding involves fitting hunting dogs with equipment such as radio collars that allow the hunter to monitor and locate the dogs’ movement remotely. Packs of dogs are released to find and chase bears. The chase can be short, or last for hours, with the goal of pushing the bear to climb a tree to escape the dogs. Research from 1985 noted the average chase length of 3.2 hours with some chases lasting as long as 12 hours and covering

an average of four miles. Once hunters note that the dogs have treed the bear, they catch up, assess the treed animal, and decide whether to leave it or kill it.

Hounding of bear and bobcat for hunting has been illegal in California since 2013, although there are exceptions for the use of hounds for scientific research and hazing for protection of livestock and crops (see Existing Law). Hounding fur-bearing mammals including raccoons, opossum, boars, and squirrels is still permitted. Dogs may also be used in the take of depredating mammals by federal and county animal damage control officers or by permittees authorized under a depredation permit issued by CDFW (14 CCR § 265).

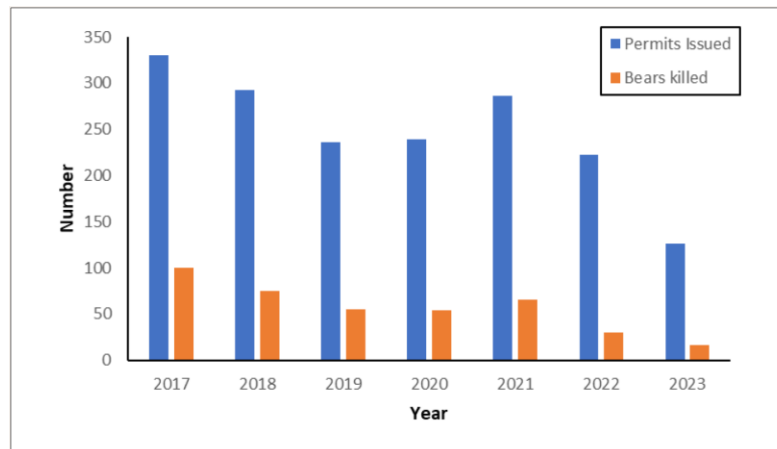
Human-bear conflict (HBC). With a population of almost 40 million people, conflicts between people and black bears are common, and management of these conflicts is a significant priority for CDFW. HBC appears to have been increasing for decades due to increasing spatial overlap between people and black bears (i.e., increased human development and recreation in black bear habitat, expansion of black bear distribution). The vast majority of HBC involves the intersection of black bears and attractants, such as food, garbage, and livestock.

CDFW began keeping standardized, statewide records of HBC following creation of a Wildlife Incident Reporting (WIR) system in 2017, to which both CDFW staff and the public can submit reports. HBC reports were stable during 2017–20, but increased sharply (160%) in 2021 and 2022, with hotspots in the Lake Tahoe Basin, Pine Mountain Club, and the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. In the Black Bear Conservation Plan, CDFW indicates that it is unclear whether this increase reflects an actual increase in HBC, or an increase in reporting as a reflection of increased awareness of the WIR system. During this time, CDFW staff were also required to input all incidents requiring a response by CDFW into the WIR system. Although not argued in the Black Bear Conservation Plan, this timing also correlates with the COVID pandemic and the movement of people to more rural areas where they may have encountered bear for the first time. Data provided to the Committee from the sponsors, indicates that the number of reports for 2024 are similar to those from 2023.



Plot showing the number of human-black bear conflict reports submitted to CDFW's WIR system each year from 2017-2023. Reports are classified by type (Depredation, Nuisance, and Potential Human Conflict). Reports can be submitted by CDFW staff and the general public, and CDFW staff respond to the reports (Conservation Plan, 2025).

Despite the increase in HBC in 2021 and 2022, the number of depredation permits issued by CDFW, and the number of bears taken by a depredation permit, declined from 2017 to 2022. Depredation permits are issued to landowners or tenants whose property is being damaged or destroyed, or is in danger of being damaged or destroyed, by specific animals, including black bears. CDFW prioritizes non-lethal conflict mitigation measures before issuing permits for lethal take when possible. Preventative methods such as electric mats and hazing are used before lethal measures.



Number of CDFW-issued black bear depredation permits issued and numbers of black bears killed each year from 2017-2023. CDFW's Black Bear Policy was implemented in February 2022 and prioritizes non-lethal conflict mitigation before issuing permits for lethal take (Conservation Plan, 2025).

Key predictors of HBC include the availability of both natural foods and anthropogenic foods, proximity of black bear habitat to humans, and black bear abundance and density. Hunting black bears at a rate high enough to reduce their growth rates and abundance across a large spatial scale can be effective for reducing HBC. In California, however, hunting levels over the past decade have been low (e.g., less than 3% annually of the statewide population), and there is substantial public opposition to increasing black bear harvest to a level that would be effective in controlling the population. Thus, encouraging the public to minimize black bear access to human foods has been the primary tool used to manage HBC recently, in conjunction with non-lethal methods designed to temporarily remove animals from conflict situations (e.g., hazing), and targeted lethal removal of individuals involved in conflicts by CDFW or through the issuance of depredation permits.

Hunting and hazing to reduce conflict. Generally, hunting is considered to be an effective, cost efficient, and socially acceptable method of population and disease control, especially for populations that lack their historical predator. Research regarding the effectiveness and necessity of hunting large carnivores is limited, complex, and an unresolved debate. Some argue that carnivores limit their own population densities below a level that would alter or deplete ecosystems, while others argue that hunting can prevent carnivores from colonizing areas where they are undesirable to people. There is limited data to suggest that generalized hunting of carnivores is effective at targeting nuisance predators.

If there is a concern about black bear overpopulation within a region and associated impacts on humans or other wildlife species, CDFW would use its IPM approach and adaptive management framework to assess how overabundance contributes to the given concern as it

pertains to its conservation and management goals for black bears. CDFW would then evaluate and appropriately implement management actions for addressing the concern. This would help CDFW assess whether reducing attractant-based HBC leads to either lower regional population size via reduced recruitment or lower local density via reduced immigration. CDFW will continue to evaluate the application of non-lethal strategies for managing the potential effects of black bear predation on ungulates and other species of management or conservation concern.

Dog conflict. This Committee's analysis of SB 1221 (2012) analyzed CDFW wildlife officer activity and incident reports, finding that 550 non-nuisance incidents involving bears, bobcats, and/or dogs were reported between 2006 and 2011. Of those, 192 or 35% involved dogs in some fashion. Examples of incident reports involving bears include poaching, abandoned bear carcasses with paws and gall bladder removed, mutilation of cubs, and other actions that would be deemed animal cruelty if committed on domestic animals; many of the incidents involving dogs were due to dogs that were out of control. Specific dog-related violations included trespassing; chasing and killing of wildlife, livestock, and domestic animals by free-roaming dogs; abandoned/out-of-control hunting dogs; and hounding out of season.

The practice of hunting bears with dogs violates various laws. Additionally, because the dogs are often out of sight of the hunter, there is the potential for violations of several other laws including: 1) trespassing on private property; 2) pursuit of a big game mammal during the closed season on such mammal; 3) pursuit of a fully protected, rare, or endangered mammal; and 4) pursuit of any mammal in a game refuge or ecological preserve if hunting within that refuge or preserve is unlawful.

It is also worth noting that dogs in nature are generally highly regulated in California. For example, dogs are only allowed in certain state parks, and all must be leashed with a maximum 6-foot leash and always under the physical control of the owner to protect wildlife, natural resources, and for the comfort and enjoyment of all park visitors. Research on both the active presence as well as the passive impact (e.g., scent, feces) of dogs reveals that dogs have a greater environmental impact than previously appreciated.

Other states. 34 states allow bear hunting to some degree, with 18 states (including Colorado, Oregon, Minnesota, Washington, and Wyoming) prohibiting the use of dogs. Colorado, Oregon and Washington have seen a 15%, 9%, and 7% respective increase in the number of bear tags sold while maintaining or increasing the annual number of bears killed since the ban on the usage of dogs for hunting bear. One proposed rationale for this increase in bear tag sales is that more hunters are interested in a "fair chase" sport and will engage in the sport of hunting for bear when all hunters have an equal chance of killing a bear (i.e. when those who hunt with dogs do not have an increased advantage). An alternate rationale is that the state wildlife departments have had to incentivize the sale of bear tags, either through lower prices or game tag 'bundles' to prevent the drop in the sale of bear tags.

Role of the Commission. The Commission was established to address the management and wise use of California's fish and wildlife resources through their establishment of regulations relating to take seasons, bag limits, and methods of take based on the scientific expertise of CDFW, the best interest of the resource, while reflecting the wishes of the people. Thus, the Commission is the body that is designed to make regulations. There are still options within

the power of the Commission to regulate HBC and population management, such as increasing the number of available tags, take per hunter, season length, and restructuring the number of bears that may be taken in a region. The Black Bear Conservation Plan and its implementation will inform future regulations to establish or adjust hunting seasons for black bears.

- 3) **Policy considerations.** This Committee conducted an independent literature review of HBC to inform consideration of this bill and answer questions such as: *Does hunting successfully manage the black bear population? Can hunting decrease HBC? Would hazing or aversive conditioning (AC) reduce with hounds HBC? What is the best way to reduce HBC?*

Briefly, hunting does impact black bear populations and could alter HBC, but there is no guarantee that it would *decrease* black bear population or *decrease* HBC. Research has demonstrated that increasing harvest levels has not correlated with subsequent reductions in HBC. Data from Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, and Ontario all demonstrated an *increase* in nuisance complaints upon an increase in bear harvest. Research in other regions revealed no correlation between bears harvested and the number of HBC incidents the subsequent year. Only Minnesota experienced a decrease in HBC after an increase in harvest, but that decline was attributed to a change in waste management practices (i.e., the use of bear-resistant containers). This may be for any number of reasons including, the initial reason for the human-bear interaction, shifting public sentiment, other management actions, and the method of take. Generally, predator population numbers reflect the availability of resources and self-manage accordingly. A hunting season would not target nuisance black bears.

Hazing and AC can reduce HBC. AC is a process in which managers administer negative physical or psychological stimuli to promote a negative association with people, human infrastructure, and anthropogenic food sources, while hazing typically involves deterring a bear from an immediate conflict situation with the same methods, but without follow-up action promoting learned avoidance of people. An ideal AC method makes a strong connection between humans and an aversive stimulus, allows for multiple trials, and is cost-effective and safe. Generally, research indicates that AC can increase short-term wariness of bears, but does not consistently lead to a reduction in conflict.

One clear research finding is that successful hazing and AC are most effective when these approaches are applied at the moment that a bear is engaged in a conflict behavior. This bill would allow for a general pursuit season of black bear while they are in their natural habitat, where there would be no association between negative conflict behavior and a negative experience, which calls into question the likelihood that a pursuit season would reduce HBC. Indeed, some research suggests that bears may enter developed areas to avoid the pressures from unspecified hazing and hunting, which would then *increase* HBC.

Research is not conclusive if dogs are the best method for hazing and AC. Depending on the study, projectiles, or even drones were more effective than hounds, and those methods would not lead to any potential negative environmental impact. Some research even indicates that dogs may act as a bear attractant.

One area that has the most definitive research is that the best way to reduce HBC is through the reduction of anthropogenic attractants in developed areas such as food sources and denning opportunities. It is unlikely that any amount of hunting or hazing will reduce HBC if there is still a reason for bears to enter into developed areas. Bears that get pursued by

hounds will likely return, and removing or killing nuisance bears will only temporarily reduce HBC as new bears will discover the available food. As humans continue to expand their range into black bear habitat, it will be critical to develop strong and consistent measures to avoid encouraging black bears to stay for dinner. This issue will likely be exacerbated as climate change will increase the unpredictability of natural forage and as wildfires push bears, and other species, out of burn-scarred habitat.

- 4) **Arguments in support.** Numerous hunting and hounding groups write in support of this bill. These groups believe that [this bill] is not about hunting, but about “protecting our public, keeping California’s bears wild, and restoring balance to our ecosystems.” Their position is perhaps best summarized by the California State Sheriffs’ Association, who contend:

“In California, the population of black bears is two times higher than previously estimated, resulting in declining prey populations, heightened stress on mountain lions and other competing predator species, severe ecological disruption, property damage, a 160% increase in human-bear conflicts, and the first confirmed fatal black bear attack in the state’s history in 2023. Because of the lack of natural food sources, availability of human food sources, kleptoparasitism, and increasing coyote, mountain lion, and wolf populations, black bears are being forced, and forcing other apex predators, into ranges they have never occupied before, including suburban and urban areas.

By establishing a bear pursuit season using dogs, [this bill] will help black bears re-learn their natural fear of humans using a humane, non-lethal, and science-backed approach that protects bears and people. Hazing bears with dogs will reduce human-wildlife conflicts in suburban and urban areas, increase public safety, and prevent dangerous encounters and deaths.”

Finally, a coalition letter notes that houndsmen are resolute wildlife conservationists who are frequently enlisted by wildlife scientists to humanely capture bears for research or by law enforcement to address nuisance bears causing damage or posing threats to public safety. They argue that, “hound hunting is highly regulated, requiring dogs to be highly trained and focused on the pursuit of bears and not harassing people or other wildlife. GPS technology now allows houndsmen to track their dogs and safely stop them when approaching private property, roads, or when ending a pursuit.”

- 5) **Arguments in opposition.** Numerous environmental organizations write in opposition. They note that black bears have been under greater amounts of stress due to more frequent and extreme drought and wildfire, and that “bears may be in worse shape now more than ever.” These organizations highlight the numerous studies that make it clear that killing bears does not stop HBC, even as it radically reduces bear populations. Instead, they write that other efforts would be more effective at reducing HBC: “Human conflicts with bears are in response to anthropogenic (human behavior) causes, and natural food availability increasingly impacted by climate change. There is a long history of research supporting that natural food availability is a primary driver of bear interactions with humans – and that programs promoting coexistence between people and wildlife, including education, capacity building, wildlife connectivity/corridor enhancements, and management of unnatural food sources (including trash) are going to be the most successful at reducing conflicts.”

These groups also note the extensive work CDFW has done to minimize HBC. They note that CDFW protocol for responding to HBC is outlined in CDFW's 2022 bulletin "Black Bear Policy in California: Public Safety, Depredation, Conflict, and Animal Welfare" which states CDFW's objective to "avoid and minimize [HBC] by implementing measures to shift the behavior of bears back to their natural use of habitats and fear of humans, and to address concerns of public safety, public responsibility, animal welfare, and wildlife conservation." Opposition also elevates CDFW's investment and engagement in enhanced efforts to promote safety and coexistence [e.g., Tahoe Interagency Bear Task Force, Bear Aware/Bear Smart education, \$2.2 million in state funding to improve Tahoe area wildlife management, including subsidies for Tahoe Area residents (including Alpine County) for purchasing bear-proof trash receptacles for residents, new loaner "unwelcome mats" for residents of the North Central region, etc.].

These groups also take issue with the impacts of hounding on bears and claim it "will place an enormous burden on the state's licensed nonprofit wildlife rehabilitators, who already operate without state funding to rescue, rehabilitate, and release injured and orphaned bears," which they believe hounding will result in.

They also argue that this bill establishes a troubling precedent as it would release authority that the Legislature claimed and decided upon in 2012, to the Commission.

- 6) **Related legislation.** SB 818 (Alvarado-Gil) of the current legislative session would have allowed for a mountain lion pursuit season with dogs pilot program in El Dorado County; however, this version of AB 818 failed passage 2 to 4 in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee. SB 818 was subsequently amended to increase CDFW assistance in El Dorado County to reduce mountain lion-human conflict and passed the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee by a vote of 4 to 2.

SB 252 (Wiener) of 2021 would have made it unlawful to hunt black bear, except under certain circumstances, including under a depredation permit. SB 252 was later amended into a bill about toxicological testing on dogs and cats. SB 252 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 1041 (Hueso) of 2020 would have prohibited the use of dogs for the purpose of hunting deer. SB 1041 was held in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee.

AB 2205 (Donnelly) of 2014 would have repealed some of the provisions of SB 1221 (2012) as they relate to bear, required CDFW to report to the Commission on the status of bear populations and management every three years, and allowed the use of one dog per hunter for the hunting of bears during open deer season and the use of more than one dog per hunter during the bear season, among other things. AB 2205 died in this committee.

AB 1230 (Donnelly) of 2013 would have repealed most of the provisions of SB 1221 (2012) and allowed the use of one dog per hunter for the hunting of bears during open deer season and the use of more than one dog per hunter during the bear season. AB 1230 was held in this Committee.

SB 1221 (Lieu), Chapter 595, Statutes of 2012, made it unlawful to allow a dog to pursue a bear or bobcat at any time, provided for some exemptions such as the use of dogs by federal,

state, or local law enforcement officers when carrying out official duties, and authorized the Commission to establish a hound tag program.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

California Deer Association (Co-Sponsor)
California Houndsmen for Conservation (Co-Sponsor)
American Bear Foundation
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, California Chapter
Black Brant Group, the
Blood Origins, INC.
Cal-Ore Wetlands and Waterfowl Council
California Bowman Hunters/State Archery Association
California Chapter - American Bear Foundation
California Chapter Wild Sheep Foundation
California Farm Bureau
California Hawking Club
California Rifle and Pistol Association, INC.
California Sporting Dog Association
California State Chapter - National Wild Turkey Federation
California State Sheriffs' Association
California Waterfowl Association
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
El Dorado County Sheriffs Office
Howl for Wildlife
Idaho Houndsmen Association
Mendo-lake Houndsmen
National Wild Turkey Federation - San Diego Chapter
Nor-Cal Guides and Sportsmen's Association
North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association - San Diego
North Central California Houndsmen
Notellum Outfitters
Oregon United Sporting Dog Association
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Safari Club International - California Chapters
Safari Club International – Golden Gate Chapter
Safari Club International – Sacramento Chapter
Safari Club – Mzuri
San Diego County Varmint Callers
San Diego County Wildlife Federation
San Francisco Bay Area Chapter - Safari Club International
Sierra County Sheriff
Suisun Resource Conservation District
Tulare Basin Wetlands Association
Tule River Houndsmen Association

Individuals (44)

Opposition

Active San Gabriel Valley
Alianza Coachella Valley
Animal Legal Defense Fund
Animal Welfare Institute
Applegate Siskiyou Alliance
Ban SUP (Single Use Plastic)
Bear League
Bird Ally X
CactusToCloud Institute
California Coastal Protection Network
California Council for Wildlife Rehabilitators
California Environmental Voters
California Indian Environmental Alliance
Cats & Canines, INC.
Center for Biological Diversity
Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife
Cleaneearth4kids.org
Defiance Canyon Raptor Rescue
Democrats for the Protection of Animals
Endangered Habitats League
Endangered Species Coalition
Environmental Protection Information Center
Fixnation
Friends of the Dunes
Friends of the Eel River
Friends of the Inyo
Humane Society of San Bernardino Valley
Humane Society of the Sierra Foothills
Humane Veterinary Medical Alliance
Humane Wildlife Control INC
Humane World for Animals
Inland Valley Humane Society & S.P.C.A.
Klamath Forest Alliance
Live Oak Associates, INC.
Los Padres Forestwatch
Mendocino Producers Guild
Mount Shasta Bioregional Ecology Center
Native Animal Rescue
Occidental Arts and Ecology Center
Paw Project
Performing Animal Welfare Society
Planning and Conservation League
Project Coyote
Public Interest Coalition
Resource Renewal Institute
San Diego Humane Society
Shasta Environmental Alliance

Sierra Club California
Sierra Nevada Alliance
Sierra State Parks Foundation
Social Compassion in Legislation
Sonoma Ecology Center
Team Bear
The Daily Animal World News Watch
The Nature of Wildworks
Trust for Public Land
Van Gelder Biological
Wildlife Emergency Services
Wildlife for All

Individuals (146)

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