

# Winning the Battle for Deer

Quick, effective action by the California Deer Association, its members, and coordinated efforts by lobbyist Bill Gaines and Associates have stirred up enough opposition to cause Senator Scott Weiner, of San Francisco to pull his introduced Senate Bill 252 from consideration by his colleagues.



**Black bears are responsible for up to 70% of fawn deaths during the first 30 days of life.**

“We feel we have won this battle, but not the war. This issue will be back and we need to prepare for when that time comes”, stated Dan Whisenhunt, CEO of California Deer Association. “We appreciate all who called and inquired about how they could voice opposition as it is evident that they went right to work contacting legislators and making their opposition known. We especially thank those members who stepped up with donations to help fight this bad legislation. We need everyone to chip in.”

Proponents of the bill have cited erroneous information regarding California’s bear populations being “further endangered” by recreational hunting. They specifically cite “unprecedented habitat loss due to climate change and wildfires” as the reason for increased human-bear conflicts, while completely ignoring the fact that California’s black bear population is exploding due to recent legislation that banned the use of dogs in hunting bears.

The proponents of a ban on bear hunting are interested in legislating wildlife management, rather than allowing the California Department of Fish and Wildlife experts to do their job as intended and outlined in the State’s constitution. Multiple scientific reasons exist that point to the exact opposite of a ban on bear hunting.

What many misunderstand about the “iconic species” of bears is the danger they pose to deer. California studies have shown black bears to be responsible for up to 70% of deer fawn mortality in the first 30 days of the fawn’s life. Proponents of the bear ban do not tell of the gruesome, negative impact that an abundance of bears have on preyed-upon species like mule and blacktail deer which are equally iconic. Population numbers for bears in California tell a different story than what proponents want the public to believe. They use emotionally activating terms like “endangered” and “threatened” to further their underlying agenda which is to “ban all hunting”. Thus, the reason that CDA has emerged to lead the fight against a ban on bear hunting.

**So, here are some facts that help the well informed understand some of the other issues:**

Black bear populations have risen from approximately 25,000 to nearly 40,000 animals since 1992, despite regulated hunting, unprecedented wildfires and climate change(CA DF&W website)

A 2008 study of black bears suggests that it is “anthropogenic food sources” or human produced sources of food which attracts bears to the urban-wildland interface and is a cause for their range expansion. (Beckmann and Lackey 2008)

Studies show as populations of black bears grow, the result will be an increase in deer fawn predation. (Monteith 2011)

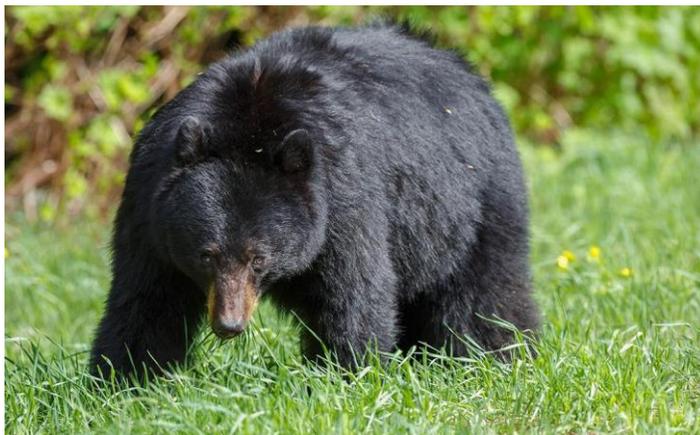
The 2020 Bear Harvest was 919 bears taken by the 30,394 tagholders. That’s only 3.2% success and only 54% of the desired harvest to adequately manage the bear population.

In 2011 the state recommended increasing the bear harvest quota to 2,000 but was met with fierce opposition by antihunting activists and was significantly reduced. Today that quota is 1700 bears.

All hunters and fisherman are required to consumptively utilize all edible portions of wildlife taken.

The law allows hunting and fishing as a method to effectively manage all wildlife and is intended to stop the taking of wildlife for trophy purposes.

State officials are unable to manage wildlife objectively by scientific approach under threat of litigation which is the primary tactic utilized by anti-hunting activists to impose their opinion on policy.



California Deer Association is more than just a hunting organization and the last twenty-five years of work speaks to that statement. We pride ourselves in working cooperatively to grow the size of our deer herds in California and have focused primarily on habitat work. But there are additional challenges that are impacting deer numbers statewide and predation is one of those challenges. Science shows that a population of predators will have impacts on prey species when left unmanaged. No longer can society think that wildlife species should be left to manage themselves with all of the pressures that humans have created on the landscape.

The North American model of conservation was developed and is widely accepted in the conservation community. This model of conservation outlines the underlying tenets of wildlife management and needs to be followed. Our state constitution provides for the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife to act as the agency to direct the management of our state's wildlife resources for all. Not legislators, not activist groups who lack the scientific expertise to do so.

We are making a ***Call to Action*** and asking everyone who is concerned about issues like this to act now. If deer numbers are important to you, we are asking you to step up and take a stand on behalf of wildlife, by helping us fight bad legislation like SB 252. This effort is not over...and we need your help TODAY! While the bill has been pulled by its author, we know that it will return another day. We want to be prepared and we cannot do it without YOU!

**Please take 3 minutes to act now—It's simple and California Deer need your help!!**

<https://caldeer.org/get-involved>

**JOIN or DONATE NOW**

