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27 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

28 Section 1. Section **23-16-10** is enacted to read:

29 **23-16-10. Big game protection -- Director authority.**

30 (1) It is the policy of the state that big game animals are of great importance to the

31 citizens of the state, the citizen's quality of life, and the long term sustainability of the herds for

32 future generations.

33 (2) As used in this section:

34 (a) "Big game" includes ~~Ĥ→~~ [mule] ~~←Ĥ~~ deer, elk, big horn sheep, moose, mountain goats,

35 pronghorn, and bison.

36 (b) "Director" means the director of the Division of Wildlife Resources.

37 (c) "Management unit" means a prescribed area of contiguous land designated by the

38 Division of Wildlife Resources for the purpose of managing a species of big game animal.

39 (d) "Predator" means a cougar, bear, ~~Ĥ→~~ and ~~←Ĥ~~ coyote ~~Ĥ→~~ [~~and bobcat~~] ~~←Ĥ~~ .

40 (3) (a) Unless the condition described in Subsection (3)(b) is ~~Ĥ→~~ [proven] determined ~~←Ĥ~~

40a , the director shall

41 take immediate action to reduce the number of predators within a management unit when the

42 big game population is under the established herd size objective for that management unit.

43 (b) Subsection (3)(a) does not apply if the Division of Wildlife Resources ~~Ĥ→~~ [proves]

43a determines ~~←Ĥ~~ that

44 predators are not ~~Ĥ→~~ significantly ~~←Ĥ~~ contributing to the big game population being under the

44a herd size objective

45 for the management unit.

46 (4) Immediate action under Subsection (3) includes any of the following management

47 tools:

48 (a) increasing take permits or tags for cougar ~~Ĥ→~~ [~~;~~] and ~~←Ĥ~~ bear ~~Ĥ→~~ [~~and bobcat~~] ~~←Ĥ~~

48a until the herd size

49 objective is met;

50 (b) allowing big game hunters to harvest predators with the appropriate permit during a

51 big game hunting season, including issuing over-the-counter predator permits;

52 (c) professional trapping and predator control by the United States Department of

53 Agriculture Wildlife Services, private contracts, and the general public, including aerial control

54 measures; and

55 (d) other management tools as determined by the director.

56 (5) The director shall annually give a status report on predator control measures