

As an Ohio citizen, I strongly oppose the proposed rule to reinstate a trapping season for bobcats.

Bobcat numbers plummeted over a century ago, and the species was eliminated from Ohio by the mid-1800s. It took decades for them to begin to repopulate the state. The bobcat was one of 71 species on Ohio's first endangered list in 1974, and trapping them has been prohibited ever since. While their numbers have gradually risen thanks to these protections, their recovery is far from complete.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) stated that it is proposing a bobcat trapping season in part to obtain more accurate population data. This is an irresponsible, reckless, and cruel wildlife management strategy. It makes no sense to kill members of a species to determine how imperiled it is, and a trapping season will inevitably inflict damage on the state's only native wild cat.

According to the ODNR, bobcats avoid household pets and urban areas. Livestock predation by bobcats is also rare, and there are effective, nonlethal methods of wildlife control that could be used should individual bobcats pose a problem. I urge you to abandon the proposal for the bobcat trapping season.