

Resolution #2021-2

RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE THE INDISCRIMINATE KILLING OF WILDLIFE IN THE FORM OF WILDLIFE KILLING CONTESTS

WHEREAS, the Izaak Walton League (hereinafter the League) holds the highest value and respect for Minnesota's long and revered tradition of hunting and fishing for food gathering, recreation, and wildlife management;

WHEREAS, wildlife killing contests are held all across Minnesota, in which participants compete for cash and prizes to kill the most, the heaviest, or even the smallest foxes, coyotes, and other native Minnesota species over a one- or two-day period;

WHEREAS, wildlife killing contests compete for cash or prizes and are not done for sustenance or other legitimate purpose;

WHEREAS, the incentives of prizes, the short time frames of the killing contests, and negative attitudes toward the species targeted in killing contests can lead to the abandonment of normal and proper consideration of sportsmanship, fair chase, and ethical hunting practices in pursuit of those species;

WHEREAS, the League recognizes the intrinsic value of wild carnivore species and their important ecological roles, and believes that there is no justification for widespread destruction of animals classified as predators;

WHEREAS, wildlife killing contests encourage the wanton waste of Minnesota's valued natural resources;

WHEREAS, wildlife management professionals, State wildlife management agencies, and wildlife scientists have found that contests that encourage the random and mass killing of animals for prizes do not serve a scientifically verifiable wildlife management purpose, and do not lead to an increase in game species populations;

WHEREAS, the indiscriminate killing of wild carnivore species, can cause premature removal of dominant individual predators which can further exacerbate depredation problems caused by subdominant individuals of that same species;

WHEREAS, Wildlife killing contests violate the following tenets of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation:

1. "Wildlife resources are conserved and held in trust for all citizens", not just those who want wildlife contests.
2. "Wildlife can only be killed for a legitimate purpose" and must not be wasted;
3. "Science is the proper tool for discharge of wildlife policy" rather than outdated views of predators;

WHEREAS, wildlife killing contests have the potential to threaten the future of hunting in general; and damage the reputation of Minnesota's sportsmen and sportswomen who recognize hunting wildlife as a privilege worthy of the highest ethical standards of pursuit; and

WHEREAS, the professional organization, The Wildlife Society, states that wildlife killing contests differ from "trophy deer" or "big buck" competitions because Minnesota deer are hunted only under strict regulations that dictate seasons, methods of take, and bag limits and are then submitted for judging; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League (MN IWLA) in Convention on May 1, 2021, opposes private-sponsored wildlife killing contests and respectfully requests that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and/or the Minnesota Legislature pass regulations or legislation that bans such contests; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that "trophy deer" and "big buck" competitions differ from wildlife killing contests in important ways and, therefore, are excluded from this request.

Submitted by Walter J. Breckenridge Chapter

Recommended Distribution:

- *Minnesota Department of Natural Resources*
- *Forward to National Ikes*