

PRESS RELEASE

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NoBearHuntNV.org

A nationally renowned bear biologist, Dr. Stephen Stringham, has challenged the Nevada Department of Wildlife's quota recommendation for the 2012 bear hunt, claiming "the State has not met its burden of proof that this population is robust enough to withstand repeated sport hunting without its viability being seriously jeopardized."

Dr. Stringham's findings corroborate those expressed earlier by Dr. Rick Hopkins, who will be speaking on behalf of NoBearHuntNV.org at the upcoming quota setting meeting of the Nevada Wildlife Commissioners on May 11-12 in Reno, NV. Dr. Hopkins will speak both at the Bear Committee meeting on May 10, as well as to the Commission on May 11.

Hired by NoBearHuntNV.org as an on-going independent peer review of the State's data and analysis, Dr. Stringham's just released report on the 2012 quota setting alleges:

1. Nevada's bear population is more likely growing at the rate of 3 percent per year vs. 16 percent, as claimed by state biologist Carl Lackey.
2. The Jolly Seber model used by NDOW to calculate Nevada's bear population growth rate rests upon assumptions that do not fit Nevada's bear population. The result is "garbage in, garbage out."
3. At even a 3 percent growth rate, hunting Nevada's wild land bears "markedly increases risk of over harvest."
4. NDOW's plans to guard against over hunting Nevada's bears, by reviewing various data in three year cycles, are seriously flawed. "So few bears could be harvested...that trends indicative of over harvest might not reach statistical significance for a decade or more, by which time the population could be seriously impacted."
5. NDOW has failed to provide data and modeling that are spatially and demographically explicit in order to insure sustainable populations in the various wild land habitats of Nevada.

"Until better methods are employed, the risks of sport harvest appear to outweigh any benefits-benefits confined to one special interest group, trophy hunters," Dr. Stringham concludes.

"These independent expert opinions all underpin NoBearHuntNV's position that NDOW and the Commission should not be conducting a hunt or setting any quotas until they can produce peer-reviewed and published data and data analysis," states Kathryn Bricker, Executive Director of NoBearHuntNV.org. "While we appreciate the Commission removing the Tahoe Basin from the hunt, there have been no new studies to examine and address any effects on the bear population or bear distribution of hunting only outside the Lake Tahoe Basin. The lack of credible science upon which this bear hunt is based should be of concern to all Nevadans."