

13-1580

RECREATION, PARKS, HEALTH, AGING & RIVERS

MOTION

The City of Los Angeles is fortunate to have major mountain ranges and open spaces in or near its city limits such as the Santa Monica Mountains, Hollywood Hills, and Griffith Park. While utilized by millions of people annually and surrounded by densely populated urbanized land, these recreational areas continue to host populations of wild animals including rabbits, raccoons, coyotes, deer, bobcats, and cougars (also known as mountain lions) which are shy and avoid human contact.

Recent media reports in the Los Angeles Times and sightings by City residents have documented the presence of "P-22," a cougar which inhabits Griffith Park. Thought to be the only mountain lion residing near heavily urbanized areas of Southern California, P-22 is currently being tracked by the National Park Service and eats the smaller animals which are abundant in the area.

However, as part of a long-term study on cougars, the National Park Service has documented instances of cougars that have died from ingesting rat poison. Scientists have also documented a connection between the ingestion of rat poison and the development of mange, a type of skin parasite. The San Gabriel Valley Tribune reported that scientists with the United States Geological Survey observed bobcats under study in eastern Los Angeles County that contracted and later died of mange. According to the Tribune, 92 percent of other dead bobcats tested positive for rodenticide. Birds of prey, known as raptors, also die from ingestion of rodenticide while feeding on rodents.

The Department of Recreation and Parks utilizes rodent poison to control populations of rats in its parks. Given the continued presence of large wild animals in some City recreation areas, and consistent with the goals of the UCLA Grand Challenge to ensure 100% health in our surrounding ecosystem, it is imperative that the City review existing policies and procedures governing this task and potential effects on humans and wildlife.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Department of Recreation and Parks and any other relevant City Department to report to the City Council within 30 days on the policies and procedures that dictate the use of poisons to control the rodent population in the parks and hillside areas of Los Angeles, including the Santa Monica Mountains, Hollywood Hills, and Griffith Park.

PRESENTED BY: Paul Koretz
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BMR

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ORIGINAL

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