

Oct. 19, 2007

Letters to the Editor

Wasting taxpayers' money

The following letter was addressed to the county commissioners, sheriff, emergency services, public and this newspaper:

I am sure you are aware of the latest rumor of an orange tiger on the loose in Pahrump, reported by an anonymous caller to the sheriff Oct. 11.

To be honest, I was not surprised since people with agendas, mostly extreme animal rights (AR) fanatics usually report fake big cat sightings across the USA, dump dead exotic animals or actually release harmless baby big cats and reptiles to incite public fear and hysteria before exotic animal legislation.

Note this phantom tiger incident happened only two weeks before a controversial Pahrump animal zoning hearing -- very suspicious timing.

As always, as a responsible big cat owner, I am offering my help with transport and housing in case this turns out to be a real case.

Same thing happened before a proposed Nye county animal control ordinance hearing in Tonopah last September. A properly crated baby mountain lion was found at the door of a privately owned Las Vegas zoo only a few days before the Nye ordinance hearing and it was all over the news.

Although reported to be malnourished to increase the sympathy for the supposed 'plight of exotics in captivity,' the cougar pictures clearly showed the animal was in good health.

In September 2001, a baby cougar boarded a conveniently empty school bus in Las Vegas -- Baby cougar and empty bus to make sure no human got hurt.

This coincided with multiple meetings discussing the draft of a proposed Clark County exotic animal ordinance. This incident was used by the proponents as an excuse to heavily regulate these animals, even though Nevada Wildlife already regulates native species like cougars and bobcats.

Since none of these cougars had a permanent ID (microchip or tattoo) as required by already existing state law, whoever released them did it illegally with a specific purpose. The Clark County ordinance still was not voted on and remains a draft, mainly due to finances -- it would require hiring two more animal control officers.

These baby cats at large or hoax sightings usually happen around legislative sessions. Increases in suspicious dead and live exotic animal dumping or hoax sightings across the country appears directly related to the legislation on private ownership of exotic and wild animals.

By instantly blaming private owners and increasing fear of exotic animal attacks during the legislative session, these staged incidents influence the legislators into passing taxpayers' money-wasting bills at the height of media and public hysteria.

I am sure you all know, according to the FBI, animal/environmental rights activists are considered the number one domestic terrorist threat. Releasing captive exotic animals or making false reports is illegal and should be prosecuted, if you can catch the suspect.

Is there a way to trace the callers of these tiger sightings and find out how legit they were?

This is not any different from somebody calling in a fake bomb scare that creates unjustified hysteria and causes government resources to be wasted on pursuing a nonexistent threat.

Then AR groups, or even hypocritical fellow owners who want to ban others and exempt themselves from the laws they push, create a "list of exotic incidents," which is extremely padded with these unconfirmed sightings and even include foreign or wild animal attacks.

They send it to legislators, sheriffs, commissioners, news, etc., where animal ordinances are proposed or where they want it to be proposed.

This furthers the hysteria to make it look as if there is an imminent threat of the American population being devoured by exotic animals and make sure animals get banned or heavily regulated, with the final goal of all of us being vegetarians and eliminating all animal use and companionship, step by step, exotics first, farmers/hunters next -- then all pets.

Why didn't the caller identify him or herself? Any honest caller would want to help with the investigation and make themselves available for further questioning about the animal and location.

Can this be investigated to find out who started this tiger hysteria and is wasting sheriff's and animal control time and taxpayers' money on prank phone calls?

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