

## Trial Lawyers Shoot the Environment

Written by Steve Marr

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Trial lawyers have attacked many industries, including McDonalds for selling fatty foods and gun manufacturers for crimes committed by others with legally sold firearms.

Businesspeople have long felt the sting of unreasonable lawsuits and businesses can't seem to win, regardless of what action they take. Now, the environmentalists and the Forest Service are feeling that same sting

In Sabino Canyon, just outside Tucson, Arizona, three mountain lions have lost their fear of people, causing the entire park to be closed. The Forest Service is preparing to hunt the dangerous mountain lions, but because it is peak tourist season, the park, which receives 1 million visitors a year, is losing money by the hour!

Protesters, from Governor Napolitano on down, are protesting the hunt, but these protesters should look no further than the legal implications.

In 1996, a young girl was severely mauled by a bear in the same park. Multiple surgeries were required to repair the damage. A lawsuit was filed and settled for 2.5 million, holding the Forest Service responsible. In reality, we should not be surprised that bears live in the woods! More recently, a man struck an elk with his car and successfully sued and collected 3 million in damages, claiming the Forest Service should have done more than simply post warning signs. In Oro Valley, Arizona, a man sued after he allowed his dog to run free in the desert and was surprised when a coyote ate his pet. His claim? The county and city should have placed warning sign cautioning that the desert contains wild animals. Given the hypersensitivity of the courts, the Forest Service is faced with three choices:

1. Hunt the mountain lions and endure huge pressure from extreme environmentalists,
2. Close the park to 1 million visitors a year, or
3. Keep the park open and allow the lions to roam free, risking lives and inevitability of lawsuits.

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In reality, mountain lions are common throughout the west and eliminating two or three that have lost their fear of humans makes good sense. Closing the canyon, on the other hand, would eliminate scores of jobs and reduce Forest Service income.

This is another example while we need tort reform to curb these ridiculous lawsuits!

Steve Marr, Your christian Business Coach