

# D.C.-based Dark Money Groups, With No Professional Wildlife Staff, Make Up 50% of All Funding for 'No on 127' Campaign

*'Yes on 127' Campaign's Largest Donors are The Wild Animal Sanctuary, Non-Profit Animal Wellness Groups with Scientists on Staff, and more than 1,000 CO Donors*

GRAND LAKE, CO, UNITED STATES, October 28, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The leading opponents of Prop 127, according to campaign finance reports and daily reporting requirements, are dark money sources with no experience with wildlife conservation, wildlife management or any related animal sciences background.



Trophy hunting entails using dogs to trap mountain lions up a tree

Two D.C.-based outfits — Building America's Future, a conservative SuperPAC, and the Concord Fund, a group working to get more conservatives on the federal judiciary — have donated \$1.5 million to the "No on 127" campaign and their October donations constitute more than half of all of the money to the opposition since inception of its campaign. Dollars supplied for the two opposition committees funded by the dark money groups cumulatively add up to \$3 million so far against the measure.

In contrast, there are more than 1,000 Colorado donors for the "Yes on 127" committee, led by the Weld County-based The Wild Animal Sanctuary, founded by Pat Craig, at \$996,000. Other major donors are Animal Wellness Action (a non-profit with Colorado-based staff, thousands of supporters in Colorado, and professional, science-based staff), Wildlife Protection Solutions based in Golden, and Big Cat Rescue, led by Carole Baskin and who has selflessly devoted herself to the welfare of big cats.

"The entire campaign against Prop 127 is built on deception, with their spokespersons trying to attach some social benefit to the inherently selfish acts of trophy hunting and commercial fur trapping of native cats in Colorado," said Samantha Miller, campaign manager for Yes on Prop 127. "They claim that their cruelty somehow collectively adds up to 'scientific wildlife management conducted by Colorado Parks and Wildlife' but we now know that the primary



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*Samantha Miller, CATs Campaign*

source of funding for the campaign against 127 are out-of-state special interests and D.C. based dark money PACs.”

Trophy hunting and commercial trapping of mountain lions and bobcats were authorized by the state Legislature decades ago.

Human attacks on mountain lions and bobcats with packs of dogs and baited traps constitute legalized cruelty to wild animals.

“The animals are terrorized by packs of dogs and shot out of trees, or they are caught in traps and bludgeoned to

death or strangled,” added Julie Marshall, communications director for Animal Wellness Action, which is one of the non-profits strongly backing Prop 127.

The top donor to the “No on 127” organizations is a shadowy Washington, D.C.-based SuperPAC called Building America’s Future. It gave \$870,937 in recent days to the No on 127 campaign.

The second biggest donor is the Vienna, Va.-based Concord Fund, which also has not a single person focused on wildlife conservation, wildlife management, or animal welfare. It works to promote placement of conservative lawmakers on the federal judiciary. Whatever one may think of that goal, its mission and purpose has not one thing to do with wildlife conservation or protection.

The “No on 127” campaign has unleashed a series of demonstrably false claims during the campaign, including that mountain lions — which evolved with mule deer — have “decimated” their populations. Colorado Parks and Wildlife has specifically rejected that claim as false in several studies.

“Opponents of Prop 127 are trying to deceive the Colorado electorate,” says Col. Thomas Pool, DVM, MPH, the former commander of the U.S. Army Veterinary Command and a hunter and rancher. “Serious-minded research demonstrates that mountain lions are the best tool for controlling Chronic Wasting Disease in deer and elk. The march of the disease could end deer and hunting, and we need every lion we can get to act as a bulwark against further disease spread.”

“With no vaccine or cure for Chronic Wasting disease, wildlife managers are struggling to find solutions,” notes Dr. Jim Keen, DVM, Ph.D., a career USDA infectious disease researcher and veterinarian who is now the director of veterinary science for the Center for a Humane Economy. “Perhaps the best policy response at the moment in Colorado is to stop killing 500 or so mountain lions a year that conduct population cleansing at no cost to the state and that protect

the long-term health and viability of cervid populations.” Dr. Keen’s report on Chronic Wasting Disease in Colorado, “Big Cats on Nature’s Check on Disease,” can be [accessed here](#).

The other major donors — the organization has a very small number of Colorado-based small donors — to the “No on 127” campaign are all hunting-related groups, mainly promoting trophy hunting of big cats, bighorn sheep, and other wildlife and also commercial trapping of wildlife. Safari Club International, which promotes a “Cats of the World” hunting achievement award, has given donated more than \$350,000 through multiple chapters and the national organization; the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus Foundation dumped in \$237,000, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation threw in \$340,000, the Mule Deer Foundation and the Wild Sheep Foundation (promoting trophy hunting of bighorn sheep) came in at \$100,000 each, the Fur Takers of America (who concentrate on killing bobcats) tossed in \$35,000, and the NRA \$25,000.

“There’s not one professional wildlife management association to be found among the funders of the ‘No on 127’ campaign,” added Miller. “They are self-interested actors promoting their own narrow forms of rigged hunting and commercial trapping.”

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