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I would like to submit the following for consideration of publication in the Community News section or the Public Comments Editorial section.

If, upon reading the Community News submission, you see a better way of presenting it under the public comments section, please publish this story the best that it can be. It is so important.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Community News Section

An obscure and long forgotten Fish & Game Code has suddenly become a recent source of controversy. California Assemblyman Maze has introduced AB222 to amend this code, introducing it to the legislature as an "Urgent Need to Pass". Why? Because statewide, three and a half million acres of habitat has been lost and over 90% of the population has been eliminated from Southern California.

While this might seem like some sort of Endangered Species, they are already federally protected, and in California, this Fish & Game Code gives them state protection as well.

Despite all this, today they are on the verge of disappearing completely from the Golden States landscape and gold is the biggest reason why. Once loved and adored, California's historic mascot has been exterminated in the wake of the powerful hunting lobby's insatiable need for more.

A 1996 study on the Economics of Hunting stated that if the hunting industry were to be ranked as a corporation on the Fortune 500 list, it would come in at number thirty-five, with a nationwide economic impact totaling almost five hundred billion dollars. The crown jewel of this "industry" fetches as much as two hundred thousand dollars for a single hunting tag.

The high demand for a bighorn sheep's head has led to the aggressive removals of wild burros over the years in order to increase bighorn habitat and lessen resource competition. Now the statewide population target for burros is 345 or less while bighorn sheep outnumber them by over ten to one.

Just recently, the most historic burro herd in California, the Clark Mountain burros, have been "zeroed out" because National Park Service refuses to let them drink from the only spring in the region, now designated exclusively for bighorn sheep.

Unable to access water, the Bureau of Land Management removed most of the Clark burros and now they sit in pens waiting processing for sale or adoption. Once done, this living piece of history will vanish forever.

For over two hundred years they have survived some of the harshest desert conditions in a remote region of Southern California and they are recognized as the most genetically unique burros in America. Now they face extinction solely because of apathy and greed.

While Assemblymen Maze's bill seeks to halt the expatriation of the remaining handful of wild burros left in California, the Clark Mountain burros' survival looks doubtful indeed.

Will Californian's let this most historic and unique piece of living history disappear in silence or will they cry out and demand they be returned to that patch of desert once called home. Their lives and future depend on your answer.

Editorial Section

Over three and a half million acres lost statewide and ninety percent of the population has disappeared from Southern California. Though they are a "federally protected species", California's historic mascot has been exterminated in the wake of the powerful hunting lobby's insatiable need for more.

Bighorn sheep tags fetch up to two hundred thousand dollars each, which might explain why the National Park Service caused the zeroing out of the Clark Mountain burros, the oldest, most unique burro herd in America, by demanding the only spring in the region to be reserved exclusively for bighorn sheep.

Unable to access water, the Bureau of Land Management removed most of the Clark burros and now they sit in pens waiting processing for sale or adoption. Once done, this living piece of history will become extinct.

Will Californian's let this most unique piece of living history disappear in silence or will they cry out and demand that they be returned to the patch of desert once called home. Their lives and future depend on your answer.