

NRDC

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Save the Florida Panthers

To Whom It May Concern:

The Florida Panthers have been affected harshly by the bad decisions of some people. With your help, people can bring this wonderful species away from extinction from just putting time and effort to save this species. I hope you take a little time out of your day to read this and consider what can be done to save this population. It was first given a recovery plan in 1981 by the Fish and Wildlife Service because they were on the brink of extinction. They live in woodlands and swamps within the Southeast. Many harmful human activities led to the destruction of their habitat and the decrease of Florida panthers. Florida Panthers are subspecies of cougars and/or mountain lions. They have big strong bodies and a powerful jaw. Males can weigh 125 pounds and measure around 7 feet long. Females can weigh around 80 pounds and grow up to 6 feet long. They can be look-alikes to domestic cats. The Florida Panthers should be saved because if action isn't taken soon then they are going to become extinct because the right thing to do is for people to work together to save this population because most of the problems they face are man-made, because although some may say the Florida Panther should not be saved because many of the ones that remain have abnormalities like kinked tails and heart defects, but

they actually should be protected because if they become extinct then the raccoon population in the wild will begin to grow which will cause fish and turtles to start dying off.

The Florida Panthers should be saved because if action isn't taken soon then they are going to become extinct. There are only around 200 hundred left in the wild so they could possibly become extinct very soon. The statistics show that the, "newest population estimate of 120 to 230 panthers", and sadly that, "is not enough to even constitute one viable population." (Why We Must Protect the Florida Panther Par. 6). Ultimately, with the number of panthers left, there isn't even enough for a population. This is bad because it could make it difficult to breed which could make them become extinct very soon. In fact, "Last year, panther deaths tied for the worst year on record, and 34 panthers were killed by vehicle collisions alone. So it is essential to retain this big cat's endangered status and protect all remaining panther habitat to ensure the continued survival of this iconic species." (Why We Must Protect the Florida Panther Par 2). This shows that if people don't begin to do something then they are going to die off. This is because there are only around 200 hundred left in the wild and more and more keep dying each year. Ultimately, the point of taking action to protect this species and make sure that they do not die off very soon.

The right thing to do is for people to take action to save this population because most of the problems they face are man-made. Humans have put many problems on the Florida Panther such as destroying their habitat and killing this species with many highway collisions. To add on, "When European settlers arrived in the 1600s, the clear-cutting, building and other human activities that destroy, degrade and fragment habitat began, and the fear and misconceptions that led to panther persecution took root. Today, the panther is recognized as Florida's official state

animal, but it is also one of the most endangered mammals in the country” (Florida Panther | Defenders of Wildlife Par. 1). Because of this, the panthers are continuing to die off due to the mistakes of society. This means people need to come together and put preserve this species from extinction. Something very interesting is that

“Ten years ago, the Florida panther was in a desperate state. Habitat was shrinking, highway deaths were commonplace, and the population was down to about 30 individuals.” (The Panthers New Genes Par. 1). These statistics are important because they help show that most of the problems that Florida Panther’s face are because of the mistakes of humans. The humans starting to save this population is to reverse the problems that have been put upon this species.

Although some may say the Florida Panther should not be saved because many of the ones that remain have abnormalities like kinked tails and heart defects, but they actually should be helped because if they become extinct then the raccoon population in the wild will begin to grow which will cause fish and turtles to start dying off. If this population becomes extinct then it could severely affect many species and ecosystems. Sadly, “The panther’s isolation had also led to extensive inbreeding, and many of the remaining animals exhibited abnormalities such as kinked tails, heart defects or reproductive problems.” (Saving the Panther Par. 7). This reveals that because Florida Panther’s have faced so many problems throughout its lifespan that it now has many problems that are most likely very difficult to fix and are better off going extinct. If people don’t step up and help the Florida Panther then, “Big changes will happen if the Florida panther becomes extinct. If the Florida Panther dies out, then more species will become extinct. If the Florida panther becomes extinct then the raccoons will grow in number. When they grow in number, they will prey on more turtles and fish. When the raccoon numbers get to many,

slowly fish and turtles will die out as well. Then the shrimp will grow in number. The fish and turtles will die out, which will lead the raccoon to starvation. Then the shrimp will grow in number, eating all the plants. One animal that becomes extinct will cause big problems.” (The Florida Panther's Role in the Food Web Par. 1). This proves that, if this species becomes extinct then it could severely affect whole ecosystems and cause other species to become extinct as well. In conclusion, the goal of saving the Florida Panther is to stop the extinction of this species from harming other populations and ecosystems. 22 Florida Panthers should be saved from extinction. They will become extinct if people don't act soon, humans must reverse the problems they have caused this species if they become extinct it could severely affect ecosystems. The statistics shown prove that if action isn't taken soon they will become extinct. You can take action to save this species by even just doing campaigns to raise money to help them.

Sincerely,

Tyler Prasuhn

Works Cited

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