

Bill to protect mountain lions on Brown's desk

By Aaron Kinney, Bay Area News Group

SACRAMENTO – A proposed law to prevent the needless killing of mountain lions by state wardens cleared the Legislature on Monday and now awaits the approval of Gov. Jerry Brown.

The legislation by state Sen. Jerry Hill, D-San Mateo, would give California Department Fish and Wildlife wardens broader authority to pursue non-lethal measures, such as trapping or tranquilizing, when dealing with lions that are spotted in residential areas. It was inspired by the fatal shooting Dec. 1 of two cubs as they huddled under the porch of a home in Half Moon Bay.

Fish and Wildlife Director Charlton Bonhom approved new guidelines for wardens in March that achieve similar ends. If signed by the governor, Hill's proposal would reinforce those changes, codifying the internal protocols as state law.

"I don't think there's anybody in this building," Hill said Monday, "that wants to kill mountain lions unless they're posing a threat to humans."

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