

Irvine Republican **Congressman John Campbell** has locked paws with a Democrat to seek a House investigation into the federal government's wildlife damage control program.

**Campbell** and Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Oregon) are asking Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Vista), as chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, to conduct a hearing on the federal Wildlife Services program, which kills animals deemed to be threats to agriculture, the public and the environment.

The call comes in the wake of *Modesto Bee* coverage that shows the federal agency targets wildlife in ways that have accidentally killed thousands of non-offending animals, including family pets and federally protected golden eagles. Scientists fear the blanket killing of predators is having unintended ecological consequences and that lethal force on behalf of ranchers and other "cooperators" is generally carried out with little or no public notice.

**"We have an agency that appears to be wasting federal dollars and actually causing harm while doing it, but yet perhaps covering up what they are doing and why. That's something Congress should investigate," Campbell** reportedly tells the *Bee*.

He and DeFazio introduced a bill in March to ban Wildlife Services' use of the poisons sodium cyanide and Compound 1080 for predator control.

Wildlife Services has declined to comment, but Peter Orwick of the American Sheep Industry Association is willing to yak, accusing the congressmen of "rolling out the animal rights agenda" for "their unfounded attacks on the agency."

But DeFazio is quoted telling the Beeranchers "have every right to kill a predator which is preying on their livestock," and the federal government must "protect people against predators that have become a threat." What he and **Campbell** question is whether Wildlife Services is being effective and not wasting taxpayer money.

**Campbell** is also raising the transparency question.

**"Why won't they let anyone go with them to see what they are doing?"** he reportedly tells the *Bee*. **"Why is there such a shroud of secrecy? Whose interests are they serving? That is the sort of thing we need to find out."**