



United States Department of the Interior

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Joshua Tree National Park
74485 National Park Drive
Twentynine Palms, California 92277-3597

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

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March 3, 2015

Executive Director Sonke Mastrup
Fish and Game Commission
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1320
Sacramento, California 95814.

Bobcats (*Lynx rufus*) are important predators in ecosystems found within Joshua Tree National Park (JOTR). They are found throughout the US and are the most widely distributed wild cat in North America. Occasionally seen and enjoyed by visitors to JOTR, they are readily identified by their short, "bobbed" tail and small, almost housecat-like, size.

Bobcats are known to have large home ranges in desert ecosystems. From research in JOTR, the average home range of the bobcat was found to be 26.3 km² or 10.3 mi² (Zezulak 1993*). Due to this relatively large home range, it can be safely assumed that many bobcats that are found in the park also wander outside of JOTR boundaries and vice versa. For this reason, JOTR supports actions that promote the natural population levels of bobcats and intact habitats with limited influences by humans.

The park's complex ecosystem benefits from the protection of all wildlife species in the areas immediately adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park. Impacts to wildlife in areas adjacent to the park – specifically the taking of one particular plant or animal species with unknown effects to the role it plays in maintaining balance with other species – can have unintended consequences on the biotic community as a whole. The park is working collaboratively with the Bureau of Land Management as well as other public and private land managers to ensure the success of wildlife habitat corridors and migration routes throughout the California desert. Genetic diversity maintained through open and permeable migration corridors achieves large scale landscape conservation goals and ensures the long-term viability of a diverse and healthy wildlife community.

The park's resource management staff is always available to work with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, local land managers, hunters, and wildlife enthusiasts to

better appreciate and support the park's diverse wildlife community. Please feel free to contact our wildlife staff or myself at 760-367-5502 or at david_smith@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Smith", written in a cursive style.

David Smith
Park Superintendent

*Zezulak, D.S. 1998 Spatial, Temporal, and Population Characteristics of Two Bobcat, Lynx rufus (Carnivora: Felidae), Populations in California (Doctoral dissertation). University of California – Davis.