

Citizen Resolution # 130323



Chocolate Bear Bait Educational Outreach Volunteer Initiative

Issue: Chocolate bear baits have killed cubs, bears, and other wildlife. Beginning in mid-April and running through the fall bear hunting season, an unlimited number of bear bait sites are allowed with a ten-gallon limit per site, with no restrictions on the types of chocolate baits used. The higher the concentration of theobromine in chocolate, the more toxic it may be, yet if a species ingests enough chocolate with a lower theobromine content, it could be equally as toxic. There is little to no control over how much chocolate a species may ingest at a bait site. The Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association and the DNR messaged to refrain from the use of solid blocks of chocolate, yet a cub died from ingesting chocolate "shavings" mixed with nontoxic bait. Michigan and New Hampshire banned chocolate bear baits and some other states do not allow any processed bear bait. The Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association's and The Wisconsin Conservation Congress Bear Advisory and District Leadership Committee's position rejected a ban on chocolate bear bait. Placing unnecessary toxins in the wild doesn't align with conservationist's core values to protect and enhance wildlife. Ideally, conservationists would strive to make conditions for wildlife better, not worse. Wisconsin's Bear Management Plan stated that there is ample evidence to suggest that bears are susceptible to the toxic effects of chemicals found in chocolate and also noted that undetected mortality in wildlife may be occurring. While only the elimination of chocolate's presence would nullify occurrences of theobromine poisoning, Wisconsin's Bear Management Plan included a strategy to produce outreach materials to educate bear hunters about existing or potential health threats to wildlife.

Resolution: Do you support a collaborative initiative of volunteers to assist the DNR in achieving its goal to develop outreach materials to educate hunters on potential health threats to wildlife and related to chocolate bear baiting?

Additional Information provided by author:

<https://p.widencdn.net/wzas7l/bearplan> <https://mucc.org/bear-hunters-asking-dnr-ban-chocolate-bait/>
<https://www.cnn.com/2015/01/23/us/bears-overdose-on-chocolate-irpt/index.html>
<https://www.ncwildlife.org/Portals/0/About/documents/082814-process-food-products-resolution.pdf>

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