

108TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1472

To require the adoption and enforcement of regulations to prohibit the intentional feeding of bears on Federal public lands in order to end the hunting practice known as “bear baiting” and reduce the number of dangerous interactions between people and bears.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 27, 2003

Mr. GALLEGLY (for himself and Mr. MORAN of Virginia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

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## A BILL

To require the adoption and enforcement of regulations to prohibit the intentional feeding of bears on Federal public lands in order to end the hunting practice known as “bear baiting” and reduce the number of dangerous interactions between people and bears.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Don’t Feed the Bears  
5 Act of 2003”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON FEEDING BEARS ON FEDERAL**  
2 **PUBLIC LANDS.**

3 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

4 (1) Federal land management agencies, includ-  
5 ing the Forest Service, National Park Service,  
6 United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau  
7 of Land Management, publish and distribute mate-  
8 rials to the public discouraging any feeding of black  
9 bears.

10 (2) Even though Federal land managers are in  
11 agreement that private citizens should not provide  
12 food to bears, several Federal land management  
13 agencies do not prohibit licensed hunters from set-  
14 ting out food as bait for bears on Federal lands in  
15 States where baiting is permitted by State law.

16 (3) A typical bait station consists of hundreds  
17 of pounds of human-scented foods, often including  
18 parts of animal carcasses, pastries, fruits, and  
19 grease, that are simply piled on the forest floor or  
20 dumped in large drums.

21 (4) The foods used in a bait station are no dif-  
22 ferent than the human-scented foods that a bear  
23 might find in a garbage can, dump, or campground,  
24 and after the bear hunting season ends, bait stations  
25 are often not removed.

1           (5) The presence of bait stations on Federal  
2 lands allows bears to increase their food intake and  
3 results in higher birth rates, increasing bear popu-  
4 lations.

5           (6) Wildlife scientists agree that black bears are  
6 naturally wary of people, but that feeding bears  
7 human-scented foods can cause bears to lose their  
8 wariness and become emboldened in approaching  
9 people and property in search of food.

10          (7) Human-fed bears cause millions of dollars  
11 in property damage every year.

12          (8) Bears habituated to human food can pose  
13 a safety threat, occasionally resulting in attacks on  
14 human beings.

15          (9) Bears that come into conflict with people  
16 are often labeled as nuisance animals, and are often  
17 killed as a means of protecting people and property.

18          (10) When the National Park Service adopted  
19 policies to ban bear feeding and to end the practice  
20 of keeping garbage in open-air dumps, units of the  
21 National Park System experienced a dramatic de-  
22 cline in bear-human encounters.

23          (11) A majority of the States that allow bear  
24 hunting ban baiting, and black bears can be hunted  
25 successfully by means other than baiting.

1           (12) It is inconsistent for Federal land manage-  
2           ment agencies to demand that visitors to the Federal  
3           lands not feed bears, but to allow this practice by  
4           bear baiters.

5           (13) The United States already prohibits bait-  
6           ing of migratory birds.

7           (b) ENFORCEMENT OF EXISTING NPS REGULA-  
8           TION.—The Secretary of the Interior shall enforce the reg-  
9           ulatory prohibition, contained in section 2.2(a)(2) of title  
10          36, Code of Federal Regulations, against the feeding of  
11          wildlife on National Park System lands to prohibit individ-  
12          uals from intentionally feeding bears for the purpose of  
13          enticing bears to a particular area to be hunted, a practice  
14          known as “bear baiting”.

15          (c) ENFORCEMENT OF EXISTING FWS REGULA-  
16          TION.—The Secretary of the Interior shall enforce the reg-  
17          ulatory prohibition, contained in section 32.2(h) of title  
18          50, Code of Federal Regulations, against bear baiting and  
19          the baiting of other wildlife on wildlife refuge areas.

20          (d) ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS FOR OTHER PUBLIC  
21          LANDS.—

22                (1) REGULATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary of  
23                the Interior, with respect to lands administered by  
24                the Bureau of Land Management, and the Secretary  
25                of Agriculture, with respect to National Forest Sys-

1       tem lands, shall each adopt and enforce a regulation  
2       to prohibit individuals from intentionally feeding  
3       bears, including feeding for the purpose of enticing  
4       bears to a particular area to be hunted, a practice  
5       known as “bear baiting”.

6               (2) DEADLINE FOR ADOPTION.—The regula-  
7       tions required by this subsection shall be issued in  
8       final form not later than one year after the date of  
9       the enactment of this Act.

10       (e) EXCEPTION IN EXTRAORDINARY CASES.—The  
11       regulations referred to in subsections (b) and (c), and the  
12       regulations required by subsection (d), shall provide an ex-  
13       ception in extraordinary cases when the Secretary con-  
14       cerned determines that bear feeding is required for the  
15       welfare of the bear, preservation of public safety, or au-  
16       thorized wildlife research.

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