

Polly

Financial Impact of Regulations on Owners of "Dangerous Wild Animals" in Ohio

There are 2 schools of thought here:

- A low, low number represents minor business, so why spend millions of dollars over regulating something that is only in the thousands?
- To get some idea of the exotic animal industry in Ohio, take the 5 or 6 AZA zoos' budgets; that alone will represent over 5 billion dollars in the state of Ohio.

One OAAO member (William Coburn of Wild Acres Ranch & Kalahari Resort) reports his animal business as \$1.2 million/year. Some of this is meat sales (black bear, lion, wild boar, etc., inspected and packaged at ODA plants.

Additional to the Kalahari resort: Millions of people book rooms/suites, etc., to see the zoo. This "peripheral income" is untractable, but the various visitor bureaus would likely have some idea. This number would also be in the billions, which puts us at \$8 billion to the state.

There are at least 5 major exhibitors in addition to Mr. Coburn:

- Rolling Ridge Ranch
- The Farm at Walnut Creek
- Stump Hill Farms
- Jungle Island Zoo
- Mt. Hope Auction

In addition, there are approximately 5 dealer shows, including the Cleveland Reptile show where well over \$100K are traded/bought/sold during one weekend alone.

Exhibit shows in Ohio: Columbus and Cleveland have big winter shows where exhibitors take bears, cougars, etc., for exhibit. The shows represent millions of dollars.

The "cottage industry": These people usually have (or had) a regular job, and use the raising/selling for additional income and enjoyment. (Note, every person raising cattle is a cattle farmer, but not all are making a profit.) County fairs, reptile show attendees, auction attendees, etc., are all a part of the cottage industry; they receive many of the same tax benefits as agricultural producers. The Amish community, particularly in Holmes County, are a large part of this cottage industry.

Based on the above estimates, ex-Governor Strickland's claim that exotic animals in Ohio are a \$12 billion industry may not be far off the mark.

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Prepared from information supplied by William Coburn of Wild Acres Ranch & Kalahari Resort, for ODNR Stakeholder Meeting of July 22, 2011.