

MOUNTAIN LION FOUNDATION

*Saving America's Lion*TM

Board of Directors

Toby Cooper
Board Chair

Elizabeth Sullivan
Vice Chair

Patrick Gallagher
Secretary

Jonathan Naimon
Treasurer

Kathy Fletcher
Steve Harris
Rabbi Joseph Hurwitz
John Taft

Executive Director
Timothy Dunbar

Honorary Board

Robert Bateman
Michael Blake
Doris Day
Sir William Fries II
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon P. Getty
Marian Heiskell
Sandy Lerner
Barry Lopez
Peter Matthiessen
Rue McClanahan
Hon. William Newsom
Russell Peterson
Alan Rabinowitz
Robert Redford
Nathaniel P. Reed
Dr. George Schaller
Hon. Russell Train
Robert Wagner

May 11, 2010

Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks
Wildlife Bureau
PO Box 200701
Helena MT, 59020-0701

RE: Proposed 2010 Mountain Lion Quotas
Position: OPPOSED

Dear Sirs,

The Mountain Lion Foundation opposes the proposed increases to Montana's 2010 mountain lion hunting quotas.

Since its first regulated hunting season in 1972, Montana's mountain lion hunting quotas, and subsequently its hunting harvest, have been a pattern of ever-increasingly-higher annual totals. This trend continued unchecked until the late 1990s when even the State's resident lion hunters protested the unsustainably high lion harvest numbers which were then taking place.

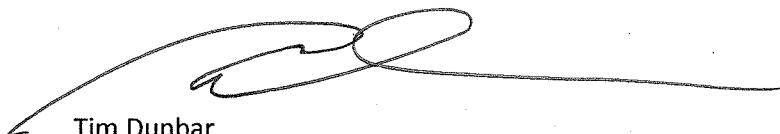
While the Commission drastically cut back its annual mountain lion quotas for awhile, it appears that the lessons learned are once again being ignored or forgotten. No species, especially one that is not genetically geared towards being preyed upon, can sustain the high levels of mortality which mountain lions have experienced in Montana.

Because of past hunting policies, mountain lions as a species are still severely stressed in Montana. This is quite evident from the fact that Montana's 2009 lion harvest was only 66 percent of that season's designated quota and 45 percent of Montana's all time harvest record set in 1998. The fact that even with the use of hounds the annual harvest rate has stayed fairly stable over the past seven years with an average of 328 lion mortalities (well below the annual quotas) signifies that the size and health of Montana's lion population is still being overestimated and consequently still being over-harvested.

With these facts clearly in mind, there is no scientific evidence to justify increasing the annual hunting harvest by an additional 81 lions. There is especially no justification to concentrate 82 percent of this increase into a single hunting region (Hunting Region 2).

For these reasons, the Mountain Lion Foundation strongly urges the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission to reject the proposed 2010 mountain lion hunting quotas, and impose a ten percent statewide reduction instead.

Sincerely,



Tim Dunbar
Executive Director