WHAT SB 132 ACCOMPLISHES

SB 132 provides the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) with the necessary tools to deal with wayward mountain lions that do not pose an immediate threat to humans.

SB 132 authorizes CDFW to develop valuable partnerships with veterinarians, scientists, zoos, and other individuals and organizations to help the department implement SB 132's non-lethal procedures.

SB 132 requires the California Fish and Game Commission to report to the legislature annually on any direct action, lethal or non-lethal that is taken against mountain lions.

WHY IS SB 132 NEEDED?

Why do we need to require nonlethal measures be used whenever there is no immediate threat to a person?

Mountain lions are of great value to California’s ecosystems.

Californians have repeatedly voted to protect and conserve mountain lions in the state.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is often called out to investigate reports of mountain lions. These situations range from simple sightings in the wild to the presence of lions in developed areas to encounters with people.

Many of these reports are not “incidents” and need not be addressed at all, but others merit investigation and possible action when lions are “too close for comfort”.

Of potential public safety incidents, many situations can be resolved without requiring the death of the lion.

Unfortunately, the current policies and practices of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife do not allow nonlethal options that both protect public safety AND save the life of the lion.
CDFW’s current rules are spelled out quite clearly in the department’s public safety guidelines:

"When evidence shows that a wild animal is an imminent threat to public safety, that wild animal shall be humanely euthanized (shot, killed, dispatched, destroyed, etc.)."

Unfortunately, the way the law and guidelines are currently written, on-the-ground responses treat any situation where a lion "might somehow" come into contact with a human -- no matter how unlikely -- as a situation of "imminent threat".

SB 132 not only allows the use of nonlethal measures, but also requires that nonlethal measures must be used whenever there is no immediate threat to a person.

**Why does the department need the authority to develop partnerships to carry out nonlethal measures?**

We understand the department’s limitations: they are financially strapped and do not have adequate resources to use best practices in every wildlife situation... IF THEY ARE REQUIRED TO ACT ON THEIR OWN.

The department has insufficient manpower, training, certification and equipment to handle many potential public safety situations with up to date nonlethal measures.

SB 132 gives the department the authority to work with qualified partners who are trained, certified and equipped to step up and assist the department where and when nonlethal measures are required to reduce a lion’s potential threat to public safety.

**Why do we need for the state to report annually on any direct action, lethal or nonlethal, that is taken against mountain lions?**

This is merely an expansion to CDFW’s current reporting requirements (on those lions that are killed every year through depredation permits).

SB 132 brings the reporting and transparency requirements up to the standards of most other states with mountain lion populations.

Reporting gives Californians the opportunity to know what is happening to their state’s most significant remaining wild predator, and to be sure that our state government is fulfilling its obligation to steward and conserve these animals as a public trust.