

WASHINGTON

1. What is your goal for management of mountain lion?

Our goal is to preserve, protect and perpetuate mountain lions in Washington. We are mandated to provide a variety of recreational opportunities associated with the public use of cougar, including hunting. The Agency response to mountain lion damage and human safety issues will address the public need, yet be consistent with maintaining the integrity of the mountain lion population.

2. What percent of your state/province is occupied mountain lion habitat? How many square miles does this represent?

Approximately 45 percent of Washington's land area is occupied mountain lion habitat. This represents approximately 28,000 square miles.

3. What is your estimated mountain lion population?

Washington currently estimates the mountain lion population at 2,400 to 3,200 animals.

4. What is the five-year trend in the population size?

The population has increased, yet the annual rate of the increase is unknown. The population estimate in 1986 was 1,000 to 1,500 mountain lions.

5. What is your mountain lion depredation policy?

We currently deal with mountain lion depredations under provisions in our Dangerous Wildlife Policy and Procedures. The policy is attached.

5a. How many depredation incidents occur annually?

During the last ten months of 1995 there were approximately 70 pet and livestock mountain lion depredations reported, and an additional 20 nonfatal attacks on livestock.

5b. How many lions are killed annually because of depredation?

Approximately 20 lions were killed in 1995 for depredating.

6. What is your mountain lion public safety policy?

See Dangerous Wildlife Policy and Procedures.

6a. How many public safety incidents related to lions occur annually?

6b. How many lions are killed annually for public safety reasons?

7. What management actions do you use to reduce public safety incidents?

Public education through Fish and Wildlife Officer and Wildlife Biologist contacts, capture and relocation, capture and rehabilitation, and capture and kill methods are all used at various times to reduce public safety incidents.

8. How many lions are killed annually by hunters?

Lion harvest is controlled by permit. Permits have been increased annually, and the kill has followed. In 1993, hunters took 121 mountain lions, in 1994 the kill rose to 177, and in 1995 (results not yet final), 243 lions have been killed by hunters.

9. What is your annual budget for management of mountain lions?

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife currently spends approximately \$125,00/year on mountain lion management. It should be noted that federal ADC/APHIS mountain lion control work in Washington is minimal, and has not been included in this estimate.

10. Please summarize current and recent mountain lion research activities.

The WDFW is currently completing a ten year mountain lion research investigation within the Cedar River and Green River watersheds. The study area, located on the west slope of the central Cascades is closed to lion hunting. The significance of mountain lion refuge on surrounding lion populations has been a focal point of the research. The timing, dispersal distance, survival, recruitment and mortality of juvenile and subadult lions has been documented. Resident male and female home ranges have also been determined.

11. Are there current legislative or initiative actions which would affect mountain lion management in your state/province?

Yes, the legislature is currently working on passing Senate Bill 6262. This legislation would authorize the Fish and Wildlife Commission to allow a hunter killing a cougar without the use of hounds to purchase a cougar tag after killing a cougar. Initiative 655 (currently in the signature collection process) would prohibit the use of bait to hunt black bear, and would prohibit the use of hounds to hunt black bear, mountain lion, and bobcat.

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