



Protect Arizona's Magnificent Mountain Lions Get Involved with the Arizona Hunt Guidelines

What are the Arizona Hunt Guidelines?

The Arizona Hunt Guidelines determine all aspects of mountain lion hunting including the length of the hunting season, harvest limits and how to estimate lion populations. Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) updates the Hunt Guidelines every five years, and they are currently preparing the 2023-2028 Hunt Guidelines.

How Will They Affect Our Mountain Lions?

- **Current hunting levels are too high, with approximately 320 lions killed per year.**
Hunting at this rate removes between 19 and 27 percent of the independent (non-kitten) lion population per year. AZGFD plans to continue allowing hunting at this rate.
- **The agency does not consider the impact of drought on the population.**
Drought is reducing the availability of forage for deer, javelina and other prey sources for mountain lions. This, in turn, will likely reduce the lion population over time.
- **The hunting season begins in August when kittens are still dependent on their mothers.**
Arizona lions have kittens in the late summer and fall, and kittens are highly dependent on their mothers for several months after birth. Killing females during the fall can orphan kittens.
- **Female mountain lions need additional protections.**
The agency should limit the hunting of female mountain lions to 20 percent of the annual harvest, as suggested by the best available science, and consider females to be adults at the age of two when many lions begin reaching reproductive maturity.

Why Should We Care?

Mountain lions are a critical species in Arizona. Their cached kills provide food for hundreds of other species, and they keep deer and elk herds healthy by preying primarily on diseased and old individuals. Lions also keep deer and elk from excessively browsing open areas along streams and roads, thereby protecting our waterways and reducing deer-vehicle collisions. If we continue to hunt lions excessively, especially adult females, the population will likely decline over time, hurting not only mountain lions but also countless other species, and people too.

How Can I Get Involved?

Make Your Voice Heard!

This is the time to call on the AZGFD to reduce the excessive killing of mountain lions in Arizona for the next five years. You can make your voice heard by:



1. Written Comments

Submit written comments to AZHuntGuidelines@azgfd.gov calling on the agency to:

- Reduce hunting to stay below 14 percent of the independent (non-kitten) lion population per year, the natural growth rate of the species.
- Improve population estimates by including the effects of drought on deer and other prey;
- Delay the hunting season to begin in December to avoid killing mothers who still have dependent kittens;
- Consider female lions adults once they are two years old and reduce the hunting of adult females to 20 percent of the total harvest.

Personalize your comments by sharing where you are from and why you care about mountain lions. For additional guidance, email lchristian@mountainlion.org.

2. Verbal Comments

AZGFD has a board of five, government-appointed Commissioners who meet every month to discuss and vote on hunting regulations and other agency policies. At the December 10, 2021 Commission Meeting, AZGFD will be presenting the Draft 2023-2028 Hunt Guidelines to the Commission. You can make your voice heard by calling in to give a verbal comment about mountain lion hunting, highlighting the above-mentioned issues.

To view the Commission meeting remotely, go to azgfd.gov/commissioncam or listen in by calling 404-397-1516, Access code: 280 046 234##. To give a verbal comment, call 602-962-8790 and follow the prompts to say your name, where you are calling from, and the agenda item you wish to speak on. The agenda will be available two weeks before the meeting: azgfd.com/agency/commission/meetingagenda/

3. Encourage others to provide written and verbal comments.

- Write a letter to the editor or press release for your local paper;
- Post about the Hunt Guidelines on social media;
- Distribute this handout;
- Talk with your friends and family about the Hunt Guidelines.

For more information on how to get involved with protecting Arizona's mountain lions, go to mountainlion.org/us/arizona/#!action or email Logan Christian, Region 2 Conservation Advocate for Mountain Lion Foundation, at lchristian@mountainlion.org.

Thank you for your time and involvement.

Collectively, making our voices heard, we can protect Arizona's mountain lions!