Arizona Hunt Guidelines
Action Call

Presenters:
Logan Christian, Mountain Lion Foundation
Haley Stewart, Humane Society of the United States
Gabe Wigtil, Humane Society of the United States
Sophia Ressler, Center for Biological Diversity
What are the Arizona Hunt Guidelines?

- Hunt Guidelines set overarching hunting regs for 5 years (2023-2028)
- Includes things like harvest limits, season length/timing, methods of pursuit, etc.
- Not to be confused w Hunt Recommendations, which is an annual process
- Hunt Guidelines timeline:
  - Draft presented at the Dec 10 Commission meeting
  - Public comment period from Jan 1-30 (now)
  - Answers to public comments posted online (Feb or March)
  - Commission votes to approve Hunt Guidelines (April)
Our focus: Arizona's native carnivores
Hunting of native carnivores

• Mountain lions, black bears and bobcats are hunted primarily as trophies, typically chased down with packs of dogs

• Hunting native carnivores is harmful to their communities and ours:
  • Orphans cubs and kittens, leaving inexperienced young to die or get into conflicts when searching for food
  • Death of adult resident male = increased conflicts with subadults.
Mountain lions in Arizona

- Population: 1166-1715 (mature-age lions); 2,000 to 2,700 total
- ~280 cats killed by trophy hunters each year
- Season regulations and limits:
  - Annual quota of ~350 or so, one lion per person
  - Harvest limit: 14% of estimated total population
  - Adult female harvest limit: 25% of total harvest (>3 yr. old)
  - Season: August 20th to May 31st; pursuit season could be allowed any time of year
Black Bears in Arizona

- Population: 2,500 to 3,500?
- ~283 bears killed by trophy hunters each year
- Season regulations and limits:
  - One bear per person
  - Adult female harvest limit: <10% of female population
  - Season: August to December; Spring
Bobcats in Arizona

• Population: 62,000 to 66,000
• ~1,500 to 2,000 killed each year by hunters and trappers
• Season regulations and limits:
  • No limits on number of bobcats someone can kill
  • Trapping, baiting, hounds, artificial light and electronic calls are all allowed
  • Season: August 1st to end of March
AZGFD's Proposed Changes for Mountain Lions

Proposed changes in Hunt Guidelines:

• 50% total female mortality limit
• Re-configuration of a few management zones
Mountain Lion Recommendations for Hunt Guidelines

- Protect female lions w/dependent kittens
  - Keep hunting closed until December 1st
  - Consider females adults at 2 years old instead of 3
  - Use 20% adult female harvest limit instead of 25%

- Limit hunting to 14% of the **independent** pop.
  - Use *independent* pop. rather than *total* pop. to set harvest limits (as most states do)
  - Incorporate habitat conditions into pop. model

- Other recommendations
  - End the pursuit-only season
  - Mandatory lion sex identification course
Black bear recommendations for hunt guidelines

- Keep human-caused mortality under 10%
- Ban use of hounds for recreational black bear hunting
- Ban spring bear hunting
Human-Caused Black Bear Mortality

• Science supports not exceeding 4-10% of population
• Need more reliable population estimates
• Populations self-regulates and human population management is not necessary
Hunting with Hounds

- Puts undue stress on the pursued animal
- Dangerous for both the animal being pursued and the dogs involved
- Gives an unfair advantage to the hunter
- Trespass on private lands
Spring Bear Hunting

• Strands bear cubs
• Targets bears just coming out of hibernation
• Goes against fair chase hunting principles
• No management objective or scientific support

Photo courtesy of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Bobcat recommendations for hunt guidelines

Prohibit all recreational trapping of bobcats on both public and private lands.
Call to action

- Public comment period open now, January 1 – 30
- More information available at www.azgfd.gov/guidelines
- Submit comments to AZHuntGuidelines@azgfd.gov
- Submit your comments now!
Effective comments

• Identify yourself as an Arizona resident, describe your connection to wildlife and how these guidelines will affect you.

• If you have other scientific information, share it.

• Write about the specific changes you want to see. If one item we've shared today resonates with you, it's okay to focus on that issue.

• Keep your comments specific to the proposal.

• Use your own words – your authentic voice is important.

• Be polite, respectful, and truthful.

• Encourage others to comment.

The comment process is not a vote
Contact information

Logan Christian, Mountain Lion Foundation – lchristian@mountainlion.org
Haley Stewart, Humane Society of the United States – hstewart@humanesociety.org
Gabe Wigtil, Humane Society of the United States – gwigtil@humanesociety.org
Sophia Ressler, Center for Biological Diversity - sressler@biologicaldiversity.org