

# Arizona Hunt Guidelines Action Call



## Presenters:

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# 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)

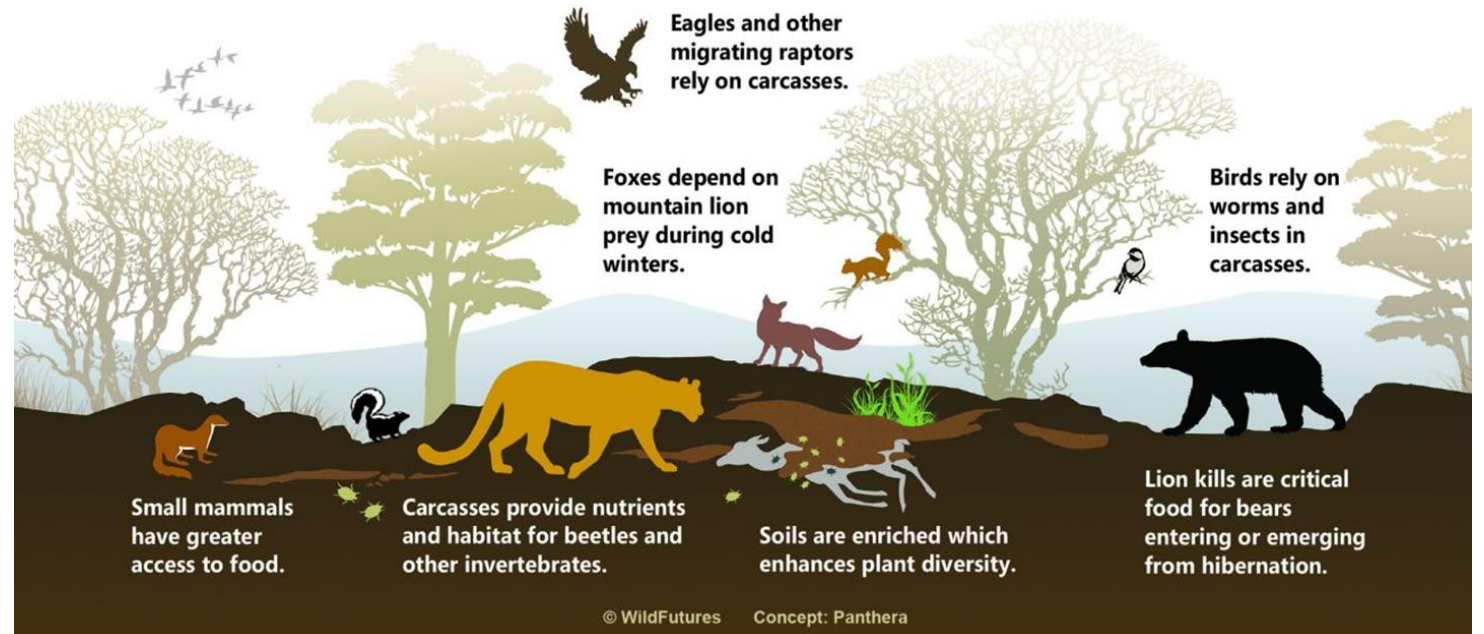






Our focus:  
Arizona's native  
carnivores

## Mountain Lions Increase an Ecosystem's Health and Biodiversity





# 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



Photo from: Anne-Marie Kalis

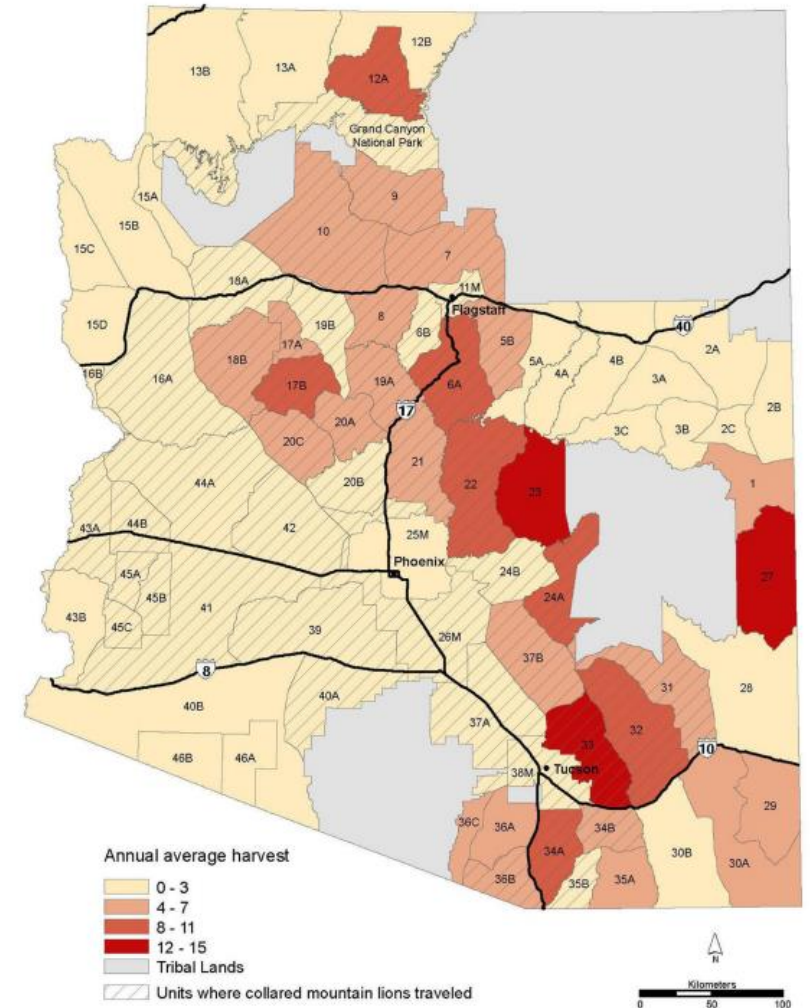
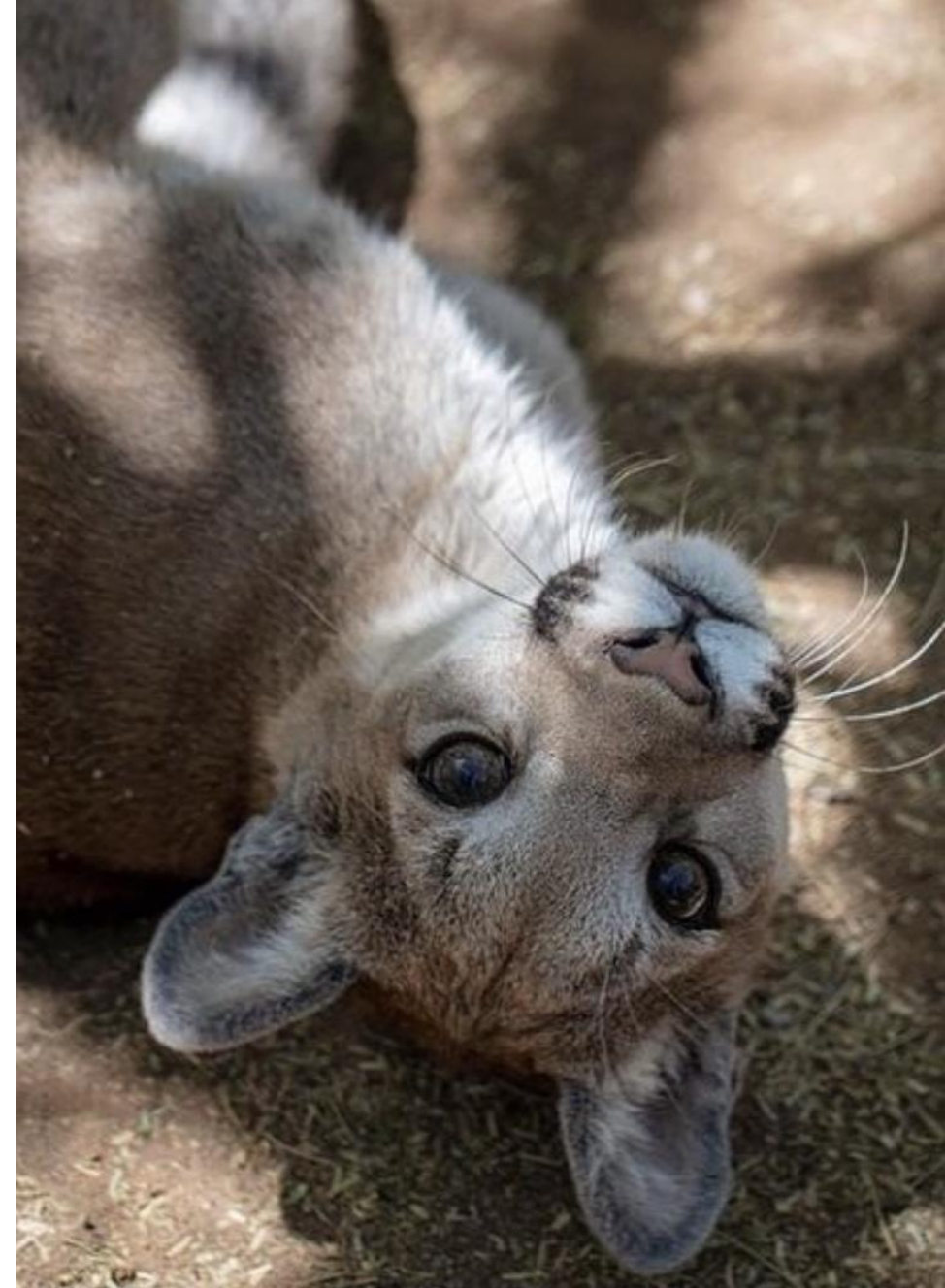


Figure 1. Annual average mountain lion hunter harvest by units in Arizona, USA, 2004–2018, and units where mountain lion telemetry data were collected, 2003–2017.



# 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



Poppy, an Arizona mountain lion kitten orphaned by hunters  
Photo from: Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center



# 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







## Bobcat recommendations for hunt guidelines

Prohibit all recreational  
trapping of bobcats on both  
public and private lands



# Call to action

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- Public comment period open now, January 1 – 30
- More information available at [www.azgfd.gov/guidelines](http://www.azgfd.gov/guidelines)
- Submit comments to [AZHuntGuidelines@azgfd.gov](mailto: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

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