

From: Dan Anderson [<mailto:hellmo@frontier.com>]
Sent: Saturday, August 10, 2013 10:41 AM
To: GFP Wild Info
Cc: danderson.er@gmail.com; Michael A. Anderson
Subject: mountin lion season

Hello. I am writing to comment on the proposed mountain lion seasons. I feel that the quotas are far too high. According to cougar biologist John Laundre, in his book *Phantoms of the Prairie*, there are estimated to be about 130 cougars in the Black Hills. The proposed quota of 75 total lions, or 50 females, is not sustainable for the population. In addition, allowing the season to be open the entire year in the rest of the state is a blatant attempt to exterminate cougars outside of the Black Hills.

As you probably know, cougars from the Black Hills are migrating east across the prairie. They will not stay there as the habitat is not suitable. However, they will eventually re-populate appropriate habitat in the Northwoods of Minnesota and Wisconsin if they are allowed to disperse across eastern South Dakota. There is a lot of excitement about this in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Is it fair to cut off the upper Midwest from its only source of wild cougars by allowing unlimited hunting in Eastern South Dakota? There have already been numerous documented cases of Black Hills cougars in these states.

Please understand that I am not an anti-hunting nut. I am an avid hunter that owns three hunting dogs. But I would like to see cougars return to areas that they have been exterminated from. It appears that the irrational fear of mountain lions by livestock producers is driving the ridiculously high quotas.

Thanks for your time and attention.

Dan Anderson, 330 Howe Drive, Vienna, SD 57571

From: dakotacare.com, sjamison
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 11:25 AM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Mountain Lion Proposal,

Dear Sir,

I'm responding to the proposal to reduce the mountain lion season quota. I am skeptical, as many South Dakotans are, of the lion populations estimates used to establish the season rules. I have a strong interest in deer and elk population in the Black Hills; and I am seriously concerned and offended that an unwelcome explosion in a predator population has begun to dictate the numbers of deer and elk licenses available to South Dakotans. My opinion is that until the deer and elk populations increase back to their prior levels; and the license numbers do the same; mountain lion quotas should increase so that anyone interested in helping reduce the predator population has ample opportunity to do so. I would err on the side of overhunting the predators, letting the deer and elk herds increase; until such time as it is apparent that lion sightings and populations have definitely decreased.

If I lived in the Black Hills, I would be much more vocal about the safety issues with large predators living on the outskirts of communities. I think it is irresponsible for GFP to ignore the distinct possibility of a lion attack on a child in a city like Custer or Rapid City.

Thanks.

Scott Jamison, Box Elder
605-270-1869

From: Chuck Clayton [<mailto:clayton@hur.midco.net>]
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 10:24 PM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Mountain Lions

Why don't we just let hunters kill every lion in the Hills?

This thinly veiled attempt to keep everyone happy is probably not going to work.

We allow "people" to build houses in every corner that is not public in the hills, reducing the available Winter habitat for ungulates and cats alike, but somehow think the cats are the problem?

I have been hunting in the Hills for at least 35 years. I remember "over the counter tags", and open meadows in many places. Now, if it is private it has been sold off for housing, especially in the foot hills leading to the Black Hills, the traditional Wintering grounds for deer and elk are now houses.

Some people blame the cats for the degradation of the deer and elk, when all they have to do is look in the mirror. To many cats are not good ----- but neither are to many people!

For some reason the agonist about depredation is targeted at the cats in the Hills, but the true problem is us.

Greed drives the sale of the land. If you can get \$10,000 an acre for land you paid \$165 for a few years back ----- the owners are going to do that every time.

How crazy is this? A private landowner is forced to sell his land for development to raise funds for the county government because he can no longer afford the taxes?

If you have enough ag land you might not be subject to this rule, but it seems destructive to most of us.

I wish someone would address the real problem. And as Pogo said, it is us.

The 5 acre ranchets are the new norm----- with no room for cats or deer or elk ----- or anything else.

Chuck Clayton
President, Prairie Pothole Consulting (PPC)
798 11th SW
Huron, SD, 57350
605-354-0955
clayton@hur.midco.net

From: Jeremy Wells [<mailto:sdbullfighter@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2013 12:11 AM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Lion season

The use of hounds obviously worked in Custer state park and works in Wyoming so I am proposing that we use hounds in the black hills. Whether it be in hunting intervals like csp or just end the foot season in February and let hounds have the remainder of the season. Its time we start hunting them the right way and stop with the ridiculous excuses!!!!

Jeremy Wells
Po Box 45
Rapid city sd 57709

Ascher, Debra

Subject: FW: mountain lion quota

Subject: FW: mountain lion quota

From: Jerod Lutter [mailto:bareback_jack79@hotmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, September 08, 2013 9:26 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: mountain lion quota

In regards to the upcoming proposal on the upcoming mountain lion seasons quota. I believe that the quota should stay at the 100 cats or 75 female quota. The mountain lion population is definitely not hurting which is made evident by the decrease in numbers of deer and elk in the black hills and surrounding areas. I have been told by many residents and land owners from the black hills, of them finding many deer carcasses that were definitely cat kills. I and other members of the Western South Dakota Fur Harvesters Association believe in the importance of proper predator control to preserve other hunting such as bobcat, deer, elk, and antelope. Make note that we do not want to destroy or eliminate mountain lions or any other species for that matter, but to harvest the correct number of each species to give them a healthy environment to live in. With mountain lion sightings reaching the plains surrounding the black hills it is apparent to my organization and myself that action needs to be taken to get the population of mountain lions in check. If we do not keep harvesting to proper number of mountain lions, they will most definitely start to prey even more on agricultural livestock as well, which means the loss of tens of thousands of dollars to local farmers and ranchers.

Thank You
Jerod Lutter,

Belle Fourche WSDFHA

Ascher, Debra

Subject: FW: Mountain Lion Proposal

From: just deuts [mailto:jdeutsch42@live.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2013 7:58 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Mountain Lion Proposal

I was one of the lucky ones to draw a Custer State Park hound tag last year. After hunting with dogs I believe this is the best method to harvest mountain lions. I was able to pass up a small kitten with spots, that had I been in the field foot hunting I probably wouldn't have had enough time to study, and would have shot. I also heard of the other houndsmen passing up kittens and females that were lactating. I believe that the problem lions coming into towns and eating out of the dumpsters or eating pets could be avoided if hounds were used. Hounds would insure that no kittens would be orphaned. Hounds would also help insure that the harvest quota is met. The people with hound permits would likely try to go after the Toms, which would mean there would be still sufficient females for breeding. I know not everyone has access to hounds, so I think a season should be allowed, that is foot hunting only for the first half of the season or so. If the quota is not reached by then hounds should be allowed. I think you could even run a trial this year, and have a few tags outside of Custer State Park every other week. If you look to our neighbors in Wyoming, they don't have nearly the so called "problem cats" we have, and they use dogs. I think some more studying of the use of hounds is at least needed. Thanks for you time and the opportunity to hunt these beautiful creatures!

Justin Deutsch

P.O. Box 14

Langford, SD 57454

(605) 268-1255

From: David Love [mailto:dilove@gwtc.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2013 12:50 PM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Lion season

Dear Sirs,

In a word, the quotas for this year's lion season are too high and I am totally in opposition to them.

You are, apparently, moving in the direction of near total extinction based on the desires and demands of ignorant, selfish and foolish people. From the start, you have accepted the false premise of "over population", ignoring the scientific fact that lions are obligate dispersers and highly territorial and are, basically, self-regulating. Too many lions? According to who?

Betty Olson?

With the aid of irresponsible journalists, you have swallowed the concept of public safety as a reason for killing lions. This despite the paucity of fatal attacks on humans in 200 years. Further, all evidence indicates that aggressive hunting removes mature lions and tilts the population to sub-adults and increases the chances of human/lion conflicts.

Your so-called management has relied on spurious population numbers which, magically grow every year despite the harvest. With an animal as secretive as lions, population estimates will, always be a guess and good management would error on the side of caution in setting quotas.

It is painfully evident that the only voices heard vis a vis the lions, is that of the hunters (10% of the population-probably less since not all hunters go after lions) and ranchers (stuck firmly in 18th century-man-against nature mind set and hostile to any predator or animal that isn't a cow). This ignores the majority of the people in South Dakota who are also "owners" of the wildlife and, since most of the Black Hills is National Forest (Federal) it can also be argued that the entire country has a stake in our wildlife.

Nowhere is your irresponsible management of lions more evident than in the reliance on population estimates and management proposals generated within the state by people whose agenda is questionable. There are numerous studies by qualified experts in wildlife management and lions in particular that are ignored and that contradict your politically motivated policies.

This is shameful and irresponsible and shows either ignorance or corruption on your part.

So, you can add this letter to your pile of "Against" the quotas. I can only hope that someday we will have people in your positions who will do what is right and responsible before the lions are once again exterminated from the Black Hills.

Sincerely,

**David R. Love
12166 Silver Star Drive
Custer, S.D. 57730**

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeremy Ansell [mailto:jsa_fuzzy@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, September 30, 2013 6:33 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Mountain loin agenda

I like the idea of being able to hunt year round in the black hills. I like to hunt mountain lion but, due to my job I am limited the days I can hunt. This idea is a very good idea. If this gets passed I will most definitely get my license again. Thank you.

Jeremy S. Ansell, Hermosa SD
SFC, USA

From: kguth10478@aol.com [mailto:kguth10478@aol.com]

Sent: Monday, September 30, 2013 6:57 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: 2014 Mountain Lion Season

Fewer mountain lions equal more Mountain Goats, Bighorn Sheep, Elk & Deer. The lion harvest affects many more sportsmen then the few who are fortunate enough to take a lion.

Kent R. Guthrie Rapid City S. D.

-----Original Message-----

From: Monte Vande Kop [<mailto:mvandekop@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, September 30, 2013 8:05 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Mountain Lion Season

I think there should be a higher number of lions harvested during the season. I also think hunters should be allowed to use dogs to track these animals. The lion population is tremendously larger than the Black Hills of South Dakota can house. Since I was young I have hunted the Hills with my father and look forward to doing this with my son, but it is my belief that the mountain lion population is depriving me of the opportunity to enjoy this. The lions living there are reproducing faster than imaginable. These cats are being forced into unnatural habitat (plains of the state) and cause disturbances that are not natural to the state, or residents.

Monte Vande Kop
815 Candlewood Ln
Brookings, SD 57006
605-697-6824

Sent from my iPhone

From: Al Berreth [<mailto:ajberreth@earthlink.net>]
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2013 8:45 PM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Mountain Lion Season Comment

Dear GFP Commission:

Please keep the mountain lion season quota at 100 or higher for the coming season.

Sincerely,

Albert J Berreth
2500 SD Hwy 1804
Pierre, SD

From: Randall Pratt [<mailto:rpratt@mit.midco.net>]
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2013 10:13 PM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Mountain Lion Harvest Limit

As I look at your data I sense that a harvest limit of 75 total and 50 females is above what can be supported by the area. In 2012, 73 lions were taken by 3482 hunters. The following year saw nearly 25% more hunters producing a harvest down by 16% with the female harvest down nearly 25%. Both numbers were well below the allowed limits and below the now proposed limits. This indicates to me the population was hurt when 73 cats were harvested in 2012. Examination of the 2009 – 2011 data would give me the impression that 30 females and 50 total would be more in order for maintaining a population. I could support a little larger number to control the population with respect to other game but in the event hunting conditions are perfect and the limit easily met I suspect harvest levels as proposed would reduce the population dramatically given 3 consecutive harvests above a sustainable level.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment. Having some information on the balance with other game species and management goals included with the proposal would possibly change my assessment.

Randall L. Pratt
Mitchell, SD 57301

-----Original Message-----

From: Tom Miklos [<mailto:tommiklos@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 6:13 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Mountain Lions

I feel that there should be a separate hound quota for the black hills season. Hounds are great way to hunt lions and the only way that a selective harvest can be done. I think that 30 lions would be a great number for hound hunters to start with.

Tom Miklos, Custer SD

Sent from my iPhone

From: roscos@rushmore.com [<mailto:roscos@rushmore.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 8:52 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Mountain lion season 2014

Hello, My name is Ross Rohde, I live in Rapid City, SD. I am writing this to let you know my feelings towards the upcoming mountain lion season. I would rather come to the meeting to express my feelings but the scheduling of the meetings makes it tough for most working people to attend.

I would like to thank Game Fish & Parks for finally allowing the use of dogs in the park. I think this is the best way to hunt mountain lions. Last season I was lucky enough to get to hunt in the park with dogs. I would also like to thank Custer state park for allowing us the opportunity to do this.

I think the current proposal for 2014 is a good proposal but would like to see a few more changes. I would really like to see the private land owners have the opportunity to be able to use dogs. I here of a lot of complaints of mountain lions being seen out of the Black Hills and most of these guys would like to be able to have the ability to have dogs come in to track them.

Also I would like to see the use of dogs at the end of the season if the quota has not been filled. I think we all know the mountain lion is a very smart and discreet animal. As time goes on this animal is going to get smarter and smarter towards fake game calls. Eventually I think that you will have to use hounds in order to meet a quota that will keep them at a sustainable level.

I think the problem with taking such a high number of females is you are orphaning a lot of cats that haven't learned how to hunt yet. These cats then become problem cats that have to be removed later on. With the aid of dogs I think you could decrease the possibility of this happening. Thanks for listening and I hope you will take some of this into consideration.

Ross Rohde, Rapid City SD
President
South Dakota Houndsmen Assc.

Sent from Windows Mail

From: DANN CECIL CLU [<mailto:dcecil@sammonsrep.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 10:20 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Mountain Lion Season

My wife and I have a home in Eagle Ridge just outside of Spearfish. Our area is frequented by mountain lions on a regular basis. The ladies that used to enjoy an early morning walk no longer go out. We have had two neighbors lose precious dogs in the past year and most of the pet cats have disappeared. When we have to let our 11 year old peekapoo out, we turn on all the outdoor lights and go out with her. I have a 327 magnum handgun just in case a cougar does appear. We have a hard time trying to understand why the mountain lion is more important to the GFP department than our deer, elk, and big horned sheep populations. The answer seems evident as a small, very vocal minority want to protect the lions. Does our GFP not understand that the large majority of South Dakotans want few or no lions. What happens when the deer numbers continue to drop and most our pets are gone? At some point in time a human life will be taken by a lion, and you need to understand that all the mountain lions in the Hills are not worth that one human life!

Dann Cecil
6388 Harbor Way
Wentworth, S.D. 57075
605-270-5103

Ascher, Debra

From: Schlueter, Chuck
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 9:43 AM
To: Ascher, Debra
Cc: Switzer, Chad
Subject: FW: For the Commissioners--Dr. Rob Wielgus re implications of reduction of Black Hills mtn lion population
Attachments: Hound hunting in Washington and the Wielgus studies - Bob McCoy 9-20-2013.eml; PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT OF PRESENTATION TO THE COMMISSIONERS early Aug 2013.doc
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

From: Helen McGinnis [<mailto:HelenMcGinnis@frontiernet.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 8:55 AM
To: GFP Wild Info
Cc: Nancy Hilding; Christopher Spatz
Subject: For the Commissioners--Dr. Rob Wielgus re implications of reduction of Black Hills mtn lion population

Dear Sirs,
Below is information I have received from Dr. Robert Wielgus regarding the applicability of his research to the Black Hills lion population. I also attach further information I received from Bob McCoy, a cougar activist in Washington state, on hound and boot hunting in Washington State, and a partial transcript of the meeting you had with the DGFP biologists on August 3 or 4, 2013.

Dr. Wielgus presented a 22-minute summary of his research that was recorded on YouTube in 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feXRKDZqey0&feature=c4-overview&list=UUlxyS89IrvV3dEIKdrPXdGQ>

Here is a link to Wielgus' publications. http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Robert_Wielgus/publications/ He sent us two of his most recent journal articles along with the September 23rd response below. Please let me know if you'd like me to send them to you:

Effects of male trophy hunting on female carnivore population growth and persistence;
and
Research to regulation: cougar social behavior as a guide for management.

Helen McGinnis
Treasurer
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

----- Original Message -----

From: [Wielgus, Robert B](#)
To: [Bob McCoy](#)
Cc: [Helen McGinnis](#)
Sent: Monday, September 23, 2013 12:20 PM
Subject: RE: Hound hunting in Washington and the Wielgus studies

Hello Bob & Helen,

My research incorporated both boot-hunting and hound hunting (cougars were removed using hounds in specific public safety hunts during the studies). Regardless, it does not matter if a cat is killed using hounds or not. A dead cat (& a vacant territory) is a dead cat (& vacant territory) regardless of method. We showed that hunting mortality rates in excess of 14%/year caused a whole bunch of problems. End of story.

This argument is a red-herring.

Cheers Rob

Dr. Robert Wielgus
Associate Professor & Director
Large Carnivore Conservation Lab
School of Environment
Washington State University
Pullman, WA 99164-6410

PH: (509) 335-2796

Web: <http://nrs.wsu.edu/research/Carnivore/>

From: Bob McCoy [<mailto:bob-mccoy@comcast.net>]
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2013 3:56 PM
To: Wielgus, Robert B
Cc: Helen McGinnis
Subject: Fwd: Hound hunting in Washington and the Wielgus studies

Can this be true, that your research is not applicable because of hound hunting? Wasn't a lot of research based in areas where hounding was not allowed, and there was no pilot program?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feXRKDZqey0&feature=c4-overview&list=UUlxyS89IrvV3dEIKdrPXdGQ> is the meeting video; the attached .doc file has an unofficial transcript, and the part referencing your work starts right at the 1:00:00 point in the video.

Bob
425-392-3303

From: "Helen McGinnis" <HelenMcGinnis@frontiernet.net>
To: "Bob McCoy" <bob-mccoy@comcast.net>
Cc: "Nancy Hilding" <nhi1shat@rapidnet.com>
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2013 11:21:57 AM
Subject: Hound hunting in Washington and the Wielgus studies

Hi Bob,

Within a week, I plan to submit comments on cougar hunting policies in South Dakota to the Wildlife Management Institute, which was hired by the governor to investigate the big game management practices of the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. Without looking it up, I recall that the citizens of Washington passed a referendum banning hound hunting of cougars in Washington around 1996, and that the state agency got around that by making it much easier to get a cougar hunting license. I've also read posts where people say that hound hunting is allowed in some circumstances in Washington at present. Could you give me some details, or a source of the information?

In the red part of the attached transcript from a meeting of the SD wildlife commissioners on August 3 or 4, 2013, the SD wildlife biologist says that the research that Wielgus was involved in does not apply to the Black Hills because cougars are hunted with hounds in Washington. Is this correct?

Thanks,
Helen

PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT OF PRESENTATION OF MOUNTAIN LION
MANAGEMENT PLAN TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE SOUTH
DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
EARLY AUGUST, 2013

Transcribed from YouTube video at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feXRKDZgqey0&feature=c4-overview&list=UUIxyS89IrvV3dElKdrPXdGQ>

Starts at Minute 54—more or less. Transcript by Helen McGinnis, who has added titles to general items discussed.

***Rationale for Reducing the Lion Population to between 150 and 200
Individuals***

Q (54'): And then, probably my last question—we are shooting for maybe 150-160, 150-200, maybe 200 cats. So when people ask me, you know, the question sometimes I have a hard time answering: “Why isn’t that 75? Why is it 150 to 200? You got people who want more, of course, and less, but is that what our animal life up there...our elk population... will sustain? Is that 150 to 200 without decreasing them. Is that the justification?”

A (54:33): So based all on the research we’ve conducted...we’ve done a lot of research; we’ve collared a lot of animals, we’ve spent a lot of money on research, both directly on mountain lions and on these studies that deal with that—the elk calf study is an example. So we know a lot about this population, and based on that information, we feel that 150 to 200 is the correct population objective for a number of reasons. One: we’re confident that that will reduce the effects on the prey populations. We do believe that that’s a genetically healthy population of lions, so that we know that we can sustain a lion population. We’ve said we want to manage for mountain lions in the Black Hills in South Dakota, and so we feel it’s important to identify an objective that we’re confident will sustain a population.

Other factors that we identified—we feel that’s a good objective to allow a mountain lion hunting season. If we start to drop lower than that, it’s questionable as to we want to continue to harvest them or not. I think it’s important to offer this recreational opportunity.

There’s a number of other reasons, but having said all that, I would also submit to you that when we get there, we need to evaluate that, and we need to determine, “Is a 150 to 200 appropriate, and that will probably call for additional research and additional investigations, but we will evaluate that, and it is possible we may say, “No. Maybe we need to go to 100 or 150, or maybe it need to be higher, but right now, knowing what we know, we feel that’s it is the best target to go with. We’ll re-evaluate that.

(Comment from audience or another staff member that I couldn't hear.) Yeah, we did go out and we conducted a public opinion survey. That was done in 2008, so you could argue that it is a bit outdated, but at that time, we used that information when we rewrote the management plan, and what it told us was that—as I recall—over half of the people that responded said that they'd like to see around the same population of lions that we had or slightly decreased. So we took that into account as well, that “Okay, the public out there would like to see less lions,” is how we took that. We did of course go around the state and solicited opinion as to mountain lion management and where people felt we needed to be. The general consensus at that time was to decrease the mountain lion population. And again, we felt that was a good target that would address the public attitude as well.

Q(57:41): Maybe one other comment. So last year we didn't hit our quota. Speaking of public opinion: has the fever kind of lessened there?

A(57:41): I think any of the staff in here could speak to that. I'll tell you that from my point of view, being in Rapid City and a game manager out there, things have been really quiet. I've not had the reporters calling me. I have dealt a bit with some of the outside pro-lion groups. We've heard from the Mountain Lion Foundation out of California, the Cougar Fund, so we've still hearing from a few people, but it's been pretty quiet

Additional A from another speaker (58:19): And I think one of the things to help kind of address that is the elk research had in Unit 2, where the bulk of our elk herd is, and we were able to actually quantify what the survival rates were on our cow elk and our calf. So I think that really quieted a lot of that. We're seeing some pretty good survival rates.

Q(): (Another speaker) On our harvest, last year and the year before, there were quite a few subadults killed. Am I right? (Couldn't hear response.) And we had a couple of kittens thrown in there. What age does a mountain lion have to be to considered an adult?

A(): It varies. A female—basically, once they reproduce, we consider them an adult, which like I said, is usually 2 ½ years of age. And adults, 3 years is the cut off there.... Anything younger is a kitten.

Discussion of Applicability of Wielgus' Directed Research in Washington State to South Dakota

Q(59:35): I think we've all been asked to look at the studies and science being done in Washington. I wonder if you guys have had the chance to look at that and what you think of it, and whether you think it has any application here. I guess that would be my first question.

A(): Sure, and I think you are specifically referring to some of the projects that Dr. Wielgus is the name out of Washington. In particular, he did a synopsis where he took several different projects—in fact, I know most of these researchers—he took their

projects and looked at their collar data from their projects and brought them together to try and evaluate what happens when they overharvest a population. His conclusions were that as they overharvested the population and knocked out a lot of the older adults—particularly the adult males—they started to see an increase in problem lions, or lions that caused issues for the public. In our examples, the lions coming into town, killing livestock, killing pets.

You asked what I think about it. In some ways, I have similar concerns here in South Dakota. If we bring our average age of adult males down as an example, we have a younger age of adult males in the population. That could mean some things. That could mean that our home ranges shrink, and that we have more males running around spending more time...and not necessarily from the standpoint that they become problem lions, but they could, for example, impact breeding behavior, we could see more infanticide or more kittens killed, which would reduce our kitten survival rate, which certainly has impacts on our population and our estimates, so from that standpoint, I can agree with some of those things.

I caution that data. Some of it was based on low sample sizes, and I would also say that that's in Washington, where it's a lot different picture than it is here in South Dakota. They have mountain lions almost across the entire state and a lot of mountain lion habitat. I mean, in a way, it's kind of like comparing apples to oranges just to extrapolate that to South Dakota.

(Q): That's how it seemed to strike me, as a layman reading and looking at the YouTube video they asked us to look at. Could you explain a little more what you think the differences are between here and there and why it's a little bit apples and oranges?

(A-another person): One of the key differences in comparing those studies with what we have here in South Dakota is that those areas where they were researching the lion populations—those are areas where harvest is done primarily by hound hunters, and that's a selective harvest, whereas in South Dakota, we pretty much have a non-selective harvest. It's pretty opportunistic, so folks don't have an opportunity to hunt until they get a big male in a tree, and so they pretty much, if they are lucky enough to find a lion when they are lion hunting, they're probably going to harvest that individual. So a big difference in what you pull out of that population between those two harvest methods. So you've got to be really careful; you can't really compare studies, looking at a study with that kind of harvest method versus ours.

(A-Another person): Maybe one last comment on that. As I mentioned, I do think that's something we should evaluate here. I think the ideas that he brings forward and some of the concerns are definitely something we need to evaluate, and I can't say without a doubt that won't happen here. I would just use some caution in extrapolating that to South Dakota.

(Q): This maybe is not a very smart question, but we stayed at a hundred instead of going to 75, do we just subtract 25 from your population estimates, or is there some

factors, some percentage, some ratio that ultimately would come into play in terms of what you then would estimate was then the population?

(A): It would not be a simple as subtracting the 100 because we've got reproduction, recruitment, and all that involved. We've got ratios and sex ratios, so it's a little more complicated, but we would consider that additional harvest additive, and it would be significantly different that what we projected out there for a future estimate.

Chair: And with that, are there any more questions? Otherwise, I need a motion to approve the proposal as written, or to change if somebody doesn't like it. **(Another person--Jerry):** I move that we accept the proposal. Seconded by Jim. All those in favor say Aye. All those opposed, same sign. Motion carried.

From: Richard Shelatz [<mailto:richard.shelatz@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 1:58 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Proposed Mt Lion Rules

To who it may concern,

I would like to see the harvest numbers for the mountain lions stay at last year level of 100 total or 75 females. SD GFP needs to do more research on the range of the mountain lion in Western South Dakota outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District. Also the rule should be changed to allow the use of hounds, traps, and baits to be used to aid with the harvest of mountain lion **STATE WIDE**.

Sincerely,

Richard Shelatz, Rapid City SD

P.S. It would be nice to see the MountainLlion changed from Big game to a Large Predator. The same should be done with the Wolves due to the growing numbers in the Black Hills and Western South Dakota.

From: Connie Ryan [<mailto:Connie-Ryan@leavitt.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 10:57 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Cc: 'Connie Ryan'

Subject: Mountain Lion Season

Dear Game, Fish & Parks,

While I understand that is necessary to have a mountain lion season, I believe the number of lions being allowed to be taken has been increased too much. I live in the Black Hills and believe we are encroaching on their territory. Every time I drive home I see more and more homes being built in the hills. I think some people are insensitive to this and believe we should just kill them all. I'm also concerned about the kittens that are left motherless and aren't found. They will starve to death or become a meal for some other animal.

There are also other issues involved with mountain lions - lions wandering into towns and other populated areas. I don't believe these animals should be killed. Please refer to the information below regarding guidelines CA has passed. It would be a good step forward for SD, too.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife released a "draft" version of its revised mountain lion guidelines. The new policy will direct Department personnel when responding to mountain lion public safety and depredation incidents.

The Department has included sections about rehabilitating mountain lions as well as partnering with outside organizations to help resolve potential public safety situations with nonlethal measures. However, CDFW will not be able to utilize these new options until Senate Bill 132 passes thus giving them the legal authority to do so.

In addition to the improved treatment of mountain lions that accidentally wander into town, the new policy provides a flow chart to help advise wardens in the field on appropriate actions to take, and it also requires reporting of all incidents into the Department's records database.

These much-needed guidelines are a good step forward for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. MLF will continue to work with Senator Hill to get SB 132 passed into state law.

Connie Ryan

13068 Siding Lane

Rapid City, SD 57702

348-6488

From: andrew berreth [<mailto:berrethaa@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 10:29 AM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Public Comment on 2014 Mountain Lion Season

Sir or Ma'am,

I do not think that there should be a quota at all for the 2014 mountain lion season.

The quota was not met last year, and the lion population seems to be handling it just fine. Why even have a quota if it doesn't get met and the population objective is not adversely affected?

Keep the season the same and require reporting. There is no need for hunters to be constantly looking over their shoulder to see if the quota is met if they don't have to.

My name is Andrew Berreth. My city of residence is South Jordan, UT, but I maintain my legal residency in Pierre, South Dakota as I am Active Duty Army.

Respectfully,

Andrew Berreth, South Jordan UT

From: Carlee Tisdall [<mailto:pinkcamolover2011@aol.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 9:57 AM

To: Wildinfo@state.sd.us.

Subject: Comment on mountain lion proposal from Carlee Tisdall

Why dogs should be used during Mountain Lion Season

Dogs should be used during mountain lion season in South Dakota because, a hunter could then see if the lion was a male or female, the size of the lion, and if the female lion was nursing kittens. Whereas the lions being hunted by ground hunters, the sex, size, and if a female lion is nursing kittens, cannot be noticed as easily.

While hunting Mountain Lions the sex of the lion is important. Every year the Game Fish and Parks Department sets a quota on how many lions can be hunted per season. The use of dogs would help keep the quota at good numbers. For instance the quota is 100 lions or 75 female lions. If so far 60 females have been hunted, the hunter would then be able to make a decision on to take the female lion making the number 61, or let this lion go, and try and find a male lion. When dogs are not being used the hunter is not able to see if the lion is male or female until it's too late.

The size of the lion is also important. The size of a lion determines the age of the lion. More often than not lions that are too small have been hunted. This problem could be solved by using dogs. Lions have very long tails which is deceiving because it makes the lion look big. A lion looks big when it is out in the open where there is nothing to compare it to. Nobody ever says "I saw a lion but it was small." A lion in the tree can be compared to the size of a tree branch, or a dog. Hunting the smaller lions doesn't keep the lion population growing. By letting the smaller lions go, hunters are taking precautions in making sure that there are enough lions for the following season.

Female lions that are being hunted by ground hunters are not able to see if the lion has been nursing kittens or not. When nursing lions are hunted, her kittens might not be old enough to handle life on their own, so they end up dying when the mother is no longer bringing them a source of food. When dogs are being used the lion often climbs up a tree, which then hunters are able to check for this, and possibly save a few lion kittens.

The human safety factor is lions that are educated with the sound of barking dogs often don't come into neighborhoods with barking dogs. The lions learn to stay in their own environment. Lions that do end up in neighborhoods are then noticed as problem lions. Problem lions are then either shot, or Game Fish and Parks, remove the lion from the wild and, release the lion back into the wild.

Every year there are lions that have been hunted in wrong circumstances because of ground hunters not knowing the sex, size, and if a female lion is nursing kittens. When the lion is in the tree the hunters have more time to look at these qualities and decide if the lion is good enough to take. This is why hunting Mountain Lions with dogs would be beneficial.

Carlee Tisdall
4821 Hickory Ln
Rapid City, SD 57701
605-786-6111

From: Jim Scull [<mailto:jims@scullconst.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 9:54 AM
To: GFP Wild Info
Subject: Mountain lion comments

Members of the Commission,

I would encourage the commissioners to keep the harvest numbers high on the mountain lions. I have come to realize it is very difficult for the GFP biologists to estimate numbers in the Black Hills. Every indication is however they have very sustainable numbers at this point plus an excess of animals. I continue to see obvious signs of the lions in my region south of Hill City but I also now see increasing elk calf numbers. I do not see an increasing fawn numbers in the deer yet. I do know we have a very healthy population of coyotes at my ranch region near Hill City and know they certainly affect the deer population as well.

It is unfortunate that the deer numbers in the Black Hills have suffered so dramatically from predators. I have hunted the Black Hills for over 50 years and we are harvesting far fewer deer than I can ever remember. I suppose part of this is nature's cycles but I also know the lions are killing well over 10,000 per year, along with vehicles on the highways, which must kill thousand as well. The hunter is the minority taker of the game in this era and perhaps that is the way it is suppose to be, but unfortunate.

We need to find that healthy balance of lions in the hills and I personally don't feel we are there yet. I would urge you to continue to harvest abundant lions until the health of all game is balanced. Without the hunter harvest there will be no control except by nature when they have killed too many deer and elk and their own lion population is then affected. That of course would not be good management.

Thank You,
Jim Scull, Rapid City SD

From: Chris Matusiak [<mailto:chris-matusiak@leavitt.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 9:53 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Hunting Lion Season 2013-14

Importance: High

I would like to attend, but due to scheduling, am unable to. I would like to vote for NOT having a Lion season this year and any other in the future, and let the population make a comeback. We are decimating the population at the rate we are hunting them, and they are not making that much of an impact on the elk & deer populations. Hunters and vehicles do more damage to the wildlife in our area than the lions do. Please look at CA and the recent bill that was passed back there which protects the lions:

<http://www.mountainlion.org/us/ca/LAW/2013/sb132/calaw2013sb132.asp>

CA has more population than SD and they can take measures to ensure that there will be wildlife for future generations to enjoy. I think South Dakotans are a backward, red-neck society that would prefer to kill than protect. Case in point are the numerous wild animals that have wandered into Rapid City the past few decades: moose, elk, bear, cougars, wolves, coyotes, etc.; all shot and killed instead of tranquilized and relocated.

Please reconsider NOT having a season this year and endorse Governor Jerry Brown's bill as noted in the above website.

Thank you.

Chris Matusiak
10495 Norman Ave.
Black Hawk, SD 57718
605-391-6209
chris-matusiak@leavitt.com

From: Kainz Powelines Inc [<mailto:cjk@gwtc.net>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 9:55 PM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Lion season

To whom it may concern:

I wish you would consider giving the hound hunters more opportunities to help control the population. The park season is a start but it is also set up to be a difficult hunt.. It would be nice to have a few dog permits out of the park as well. Thank you

Chris Kainz
Custer, SD

From: Christopher Spatz [<mailto:spatzcat61@gmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2013 8:19 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: Cougar Rewilding Foundation comments regarding the SD 2014 mountain lion hunting season

Regarding quotas pertaining to South Dakota's 2014 Mountain Lion Hunting Season

Position: Opposed

Dear Commissioners,

In SDGF&P's August 2012 commissioner meeting video reviewing revised mountain lion estimates and the proposed increase of hunting quotas, one commissioner notes that an indication of population decline is the failure to meet quotas. In SDGF&P's 2013 Mountain Lion Management and Research Updates video, harvest graphs reveal that the female subquota has not been reached in *four consecutive seasons*. In 2013, the female subquota of 70 was missed by half. Imagine missing a female deer or elk subquota by 50%.

Including an increase in the subadult/kitten harvest for 2013 noted in the video, and the significant failure to meet by 39 the 100 mountain lion quota, by SDGF&P's stated indicators of population reduction, are these indicators not reflective of a declining mountain lion population?

The proposed quota reductions for 2014 are hardly compensatory. SDGF&P has finally considered Washington State University's peer-reviewed research on how over-harvest disrupts mountain lion social order, and that a 14% take matching the reproduction rate is the established harvest rate for sustainability (both for mountain lions and their prey), and for pet, livestock and human safety.

The Cougar Rewilding Foundation recommends that the commissioners reject the proposed mountain lion quota for 2014 and adopt for the Black Hills National Forest - a forest owned by every United States' taxpayer - a policy similar to Washington State's harvest threshold of 14%.

Sincerely,

Christopher Spatz, President

Cougar Rewilding Foundation

Christine and Richard VanNess
23180 Hwy 385
Rapid City, SD 57702

October 2, 2013
South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks
523 E. Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Submitted via email: Wildinfo@state.sd.us, Chuck.Schlueter@state.sd.us
RE: Comments regarding SDGFP proposed cougar hunting season for 2013-2014
To the South Dakota Game Fish and Parks Commission:

I have not yet seen the results of the report from the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) which is on the Agenda for 1 pm on Oct. 3rd just prior to the public comment meeting. This is unfortunate scheduling. I wish to submit my comments to the commission for consideration in creating a better mountain lion "harvest threshold" for this year.

1. Manage the SD lion population either as a "stable" or "source" population. To manage as "stable" (assuming GFP cougar population estimate is correct) a 14% take, would be a "harvest threshold" of 22 adult and sub adult lions. If you wish it managed as a source, the recreational kill "harvest threshold" would need to be even lower - lower than 22 either sex.
2. Allow no recreational hunting of lions on the Prairie. Especially allow no recreational hunting in SD's Pine Ridge area north of Nebraska's Pine Ridge Unit.
3. Assure that any decision allowing hunting of lions in SD's jurisdiction within the checkerboard areas of tribal & non-tribal land is predicated with documented consultation with tribe(s).
4. Extend the boundary of habitat managed for mountain lions north and east of the Black Hills Fire Protection district to include the Cheyenne and Belle Fourche Rivers, with the endpoint at their confluence.
5. Divide the Black Hills (and the proposed northeastern extension) into smaller lion hunt units, which could have different harvest thresholds and seasons. Create a unit along the Wyoming Border where no hunting is allowed, to compensate for Wyoming's over-harvest
6. Increase the cost of lion hunting license to \$100 per each license.
7. Object to the justification of killing of lions in order to maximize the number of common and/or non-native herbivore prey animals hunters can shoot.

In conclusion, I ask the commission to listen to **ALL** the stakeholders here, not just the very vocal and **threatening** hunting constituents.

Thank you for your consideration,
Christine and Richard VanNess
Black Hills Residents & Horse owners

Helen McGinnis
PO Box 300
Harman, WV 26270
304-227-4166
helenmcginnis@frontiernet.net

South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Commission
523 E. Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501

wildinfo@state.sd.us
Chuck.Schlueter@state.sd.us

October 2, 2013

Re: Comments on the proposed mountain lion quota for 2014

Dear Sirs:

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on your mountain lion management plan for the 2014 hunting season. It may seem strange that someone who lives in northern West Virginia should be interested in mountain lions in South Dakota, but I have been interested in the possible existence of cougars in the East and/or their potential restoration for 40 years. I lived in Marin County, California right up against mountain lion habitat for many years. Like most Californians, I learned to accept and appreciate lions as part of the natural scene. I have been following the sage of the lion in South Dakota for at least 10 years.

My overall interest is in “rewilding,” the restoration of ecosystems with all their functioning parts, which have evolved over billions of years of evolution on the Planet Earth (or made by the Creator—your choice). Top predators such as cougars are vital part of those ecosystems.

Hunting is one “use” of lions, but not the most important. Acting as “shepherds” of ungulates is another use. So is the fact that many of not most of us humans regard lions as extremely beautiful, graceful animals.

My Wish List for South Dakota’s Mountain Lions:

- (1) That lions in good habitat in the Black Hills and the area around Belle Fourche just to the north be managed as a source population.
- (2) That lions in the Black Hills be hunted using the principles being established in Washington State. These are described in the attached article by Beausoleil et al. (2013) and a popular article derived from that research - <http://methowvalleynews.com/2013/07/31/managing-the-big-cats/>

- (3) Or better, that they not be subjected to recreational hunting at all. California has shown that protecting lions while selectively removing troublemakers is the best way to coexist with them.
- (4) That the lions on the "Prairie" be protected from recreational hunting. It should be legal to kill depredating lions and those presenting a clear threat to humans.
- (5) That public education on lions includes facts on the threat of lions to human safety and livestock and on their impact on numbers of ungulate game species. Education should be aimed at both children and adults.

However, being realistic, I'm aware that the staff of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) and the commissioners are focused on reducing the lion population to 150-200 individuals (including kittens), and then assessing the anticipated benefits of this reduction.

Here is the list of anticipated benefits of reducing the lion population from the 2010-2015 South Dakota management plan and my comments:

1. An estimated 50% reduction in the occurrence of problem lions and removals by the Department,

My comment: Decisions on which lions are problems and should be removed are subjective. The GFP's policy of zero tolerance within town and city limits is unfortunate because it reinforces public perception that lions are extremely dangerous. In the case of treed lions in small towns, simply pulling back and allowing the lion to leave on its own is preferable. A treed lion is a frightened lion, not one waiting to pounce on someone.

2. An estimated 40% reduction in the number of mountain lion mortalities caused by vehicle collisions.

The number of vehicle strikes may be a more or less constant percentage of the population. Unless the need for reduction is for traffic safety, reducing lion mortalities on highway would be best accomplished by reducing highway speeds and building safe underpasses for all wildlife.

3. An improvement in the overall health of the mountain lion population and reduction in the occurrence of disease,

In his dissertation, Brian Jansen determined that the incidence of disease in Black Hills lions is no greater than disease incidence in other populations of lions in the West. Reduced kidney fat is has been given as a reason for reducing the lion population. This criterion is used for assessing the condition of ungulates, not carnivores.

4. An estimated reduction in the mortality of 1,650 big game species by mountain lions in the Black Hills, and

It's going to be extremely difficult to quantify this number and determine lion predation and/or reduction in lions made the difference. Predation is generally less important in

determining ungulate numbers than weather, disease, habitat alteration and recreational hunting.

Much attention is focused on reducing the lion population of Custer State Park (CSP), said to be managed holistically. To me, holistic management means ecosystem management, not a game park. I understand the elk herd in CSP is low because the GFP acceded to the demands of a few ranchers who complained about damage to their fields. The GFP issued many more elk hunt permits, allowing overhunting of the CSP. If cougars were mainly responsible for reduced elk numbers in CSP, why are elk numerous in adjacent Wind Cave National Park, where neither cougars nor elk are hunted?

5. A continuation of a science-based hunting season to obtain genetic and other population data.

Genetic and other population data could be obtained without hunting, by collecting scats with the use of trained dogs and by darting.

Relevance of the studies by Robert Wielgus and other biologists in Washington State: In the commission meeting in early August mentioned above, a staff biologist speculated that these studies are not relevant to the Black Hills because hounds are used in Washington State. I asked Dr. Wielgus about this. In an email sent on September 23, 2013, he said:

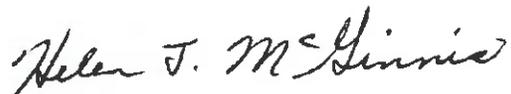
“My research incorporated both boot-hunting and hound hunting (cougars were removed using hounds in specific public safety hunts during the studies). Regardless, it does not matter if a cat is killed using hounds or not. A dead cat (& a vacant territory) is a dead cat (& vacant territory) regardless of method. We showed that hunting mortality rates in excess of 14%/year caused a whole bunch of problems.”

Regulation of Ungulate Populations and Large Carnivore Populations: The various comments by hunters and others in South Dakota include the perception that lion populations need to be regulated in the same way as ungulate populations. It's true that without regulation of their numbers and behavior, ungulates have the capacity to drastically alter the habitats they share with other species, reducing their carrying capacity. Large carnivores are territorial and self regulate. If food, shelter and other essentials are in short supply, surplus individuals are killed or expelled.

Public Education: The 2010-2015 lion management plan includes a list of ten actions to educate the public on lions. Educating children through Project WILD is one of the items. I found a plan for a lion habitat exercise for children on the GFP website. That's good, but people need to know more about matters of concern to them: Are cougars extremely dangerous to humans? What should one do to minimize the already extremely small chance of an attack? How significant is lion depredation? How significant is lion predation on ungulate game species?

It's important to provide correct information because so much misinformation prevails. Fear of mountain lion attacks is exacerbated by the media. In his book **SHOOTING IN THE WILD: An Insider's Account of Making Movies in the Animal Kingdom** (2010: pp. 145-159), Chris Palmer points out that violence sells ads on TV. With the proliferation of cable TV channels, competition for the viewing time of males age 18-35 is significant. These young viewers are attracted by violent, exaggerated depictions of potentially dangerous animals such as mountain lions. The state wildlife agencies are in a good position to counteract these notions.

Thanks again for the opportunity to express some of my opinions of mountain lion management.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen J. McGinnis".

Helen McGinnis

Attachment:

Beausoleil, R.A. et al. 2013. Research to regulation: cougar social behavior as a guide for management. *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, DOI: 10.1002/wsb 299.

-----Original Message-----

From: Donna Watson [<mailto:lildutch@midco.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2013 11:48 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Subject: cougar quota

I oppose mountain lion hunting in any form, and particularly oppose increasing the quota for the following reasons:

It appears to me and many other non-hunting residents that the Commission has been and is seeking to systematically eradicate mountain lions by setting high yearly quotas. Removing this keystone animal will directly affect the biodiversity of the Black Hills in a distinctly negative manner.

Killing cougars is trophy hunting -- a form of hunting that a large percentage of the less vocal portion of our population neither engages in nor approves.

Hunting adult cougars winds up killing kittens, since females are either pregnant or have dependent young 70% of their lives. Orphaned kittens generally starve or are so weakened they are easy prey to other animals. Cougars are the only species that hunt while having youngsters relying on them.

Studies show that it's loss of habitat that results in the reduction of big game species, rather than cougar kills.

I would like to see us join some of the more enlightened states in doing away with cougar hunting altogether.

Thank you,

Donna Watson
24 Adams Street
Deadwood, SD 57732

Nancy Hilding
President
Prairie Hills Audubon Society
P.O. Box 788
Black Hawk, SD 57718
Oct 2nd, 2013

South Dakota Game,
Fish and Parks Commission,
523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501,

Dear Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Prairie Hills Audubon Society believes there is other habitat in SD that could support breeding lions and we wish for the Black Hills to be managed as a source population, so as to disperse both male and female lions to surrounding lands. We will begin with these short comments and send a longer letter(s) later.

Please:

1. Manage the SD lion population either as a "stable" or "source" population. To manage as "stable" (assuming GFP's cougar population estimate is correct) a 14% take, would be a "harvest threshold" of 22 adult and sub adult lions. If you wish it managed as a source, the recreational kill harvest threshold" would need to be even lower - lower than 22 either sex.
2. Allow no recreational hunting of lions on the Prairie. Especially allow no recreational hunting in SD's Pine Ridge area north of Nebraska's Pine Ridge Unit.
3. Assure that any decision allowing hunting of lions in SD's jurisdiction within the checkerboard areas of tribal & non-tribal land is predicated with documented consultation with tribe(s).
4. Extend the boundary of habitat managed for mountain lions north and east of the Black Hills Fire Protection district to include the Cheyenne and Belle Fourche Rivers, with the endpoint at their confluence.
5. Divide the Black Hills (and the proposed northeastern extension) into smaller lion hunt units, which could have different harvest thresholds and seasons. Create a unit along the Wyoming Border where no hunting is allowed, to compensate for Wyoming's over-harvest
6. Revoke or reduce hound hunting in Custer State Park due to the "fair chase" issue and concern for animal welfare (both lions and dogs).
7. Increase the cost of lion hunting license to \$100 per each license.
8. Cease the killing of lions in order to maximize the number of common and/or non-native herbivore prey game animals hunters can shoot.
9. Replace the term "quota" with "harvest threshold".

Sincerely,



Nancy Hilding
President, Prairie Hills Audubon Society

-----Original Message-----

From: Laura Menefee [<mailto:menefee.laura@gmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2013 10:22 AM

To: GFP Wild Info

Cc: penny@cougarfund.org; Bob McCoy

Subject: Cougar Policy

South Dakota Wildlife Agency,

Apex predators are a vital component of a healthy ecosystem. Indiscriminate trophy hunting for "sport" is not scientifically valid, best practice management. Please allow the population to continue to disperse east, where they are needed to help keep ungulate populations strong and healthy.

Thank you,

One planet. One life.

Laura Menefee
Wolf/Predator Conservation
ExCom/ConsCom
Sierra Club, John Muir Chapter
National Wolfwatchers Coalition
Wisconsin Wolf Trackers