

**MOUNTAIN LION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES  
FOR  
LION DAU L-1  
GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS  
1, 2, & 201**

Prepared for:  
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West Region

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**DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT AREA AND HABITAT**

DAU L-1 is located in the far northwestern portion of the state. It is bounded on the north and west by the state line, on the west the Little Snake River, and on the south by the Yampa River. The DAU matches the area of the Cold Springs deer and elk DAUs. The topography and vegetation varies from sagebrush steppes in the eastern portion of Unit 2 to mountainous, subalpine areas in the west near the state lines. Steep, sandstone canyons dominate the central part of the DAU. The entire DAU is year round occupied lion range.

No formal estimate of the lion population has been made. It is believed, determined by indicators such as sightings, tracks, and harvest rate that the population numbers have increased over the last 10 years.

**TOTAL LION HARVEST OBJECTIVE:** The harvest has varied from 1 to 9 the last 10 years with average of 5. The current harvest quota is 12 lions, which has been raised only slightly since 1994 when the quota was 10. The quota is seldom reached in large part because of the difficulty of hunting the rugged terrain in the DAU. A breakdown by individual units is given below.

Unit 1 & 2 - These units include the sage and pinyon-juniper breaks of Sand Wash and Vermillion Creek areas and the higher elevation areas of Douglas and Wild Mountains. These are managed with a combined quota of 6.

Unit 201 - This unit consists of Cold Springs Mountain and the open sage areas to the east. The current quota is 6.

In that the quota has been raised in recent years and is seldom reached, there is no compelling reason to change in the near future. Considering the refuge effect of the more rugged sections of the DAU, there is little concern that this population could be compromised by over harvest at this level of hunting effort or quota. Current quotas are more than meeting sportsman demand and should be held constant at 12 for the DAU.

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**TOTAL LION DAMAGE OBJECTIVE:** Levels of game damage are very low in recent years. Necessary damage harvest is usually 0 with 1 taken in some years. Cattle grazing is spread across the DAU at fairly low levels. Sheep grazing is concentrated in the higher elevation areas of 2 and 201 in the summer and in the east portion of Unit 2 in the winter. Most damage by lions in the DAU is to sheep. Increased quotas of recent years have made no change in the level of damage. Damage levels should be held below \$5,000 annually with the most effective control being the harvest of individual animals involved in damage.

**NUISANCE LION COMPLAINTS:** There are no reports of lion-human conflicts in the last few years. Tolerance of aggressive or acclimated lions in this area is low; therefore lions that show these tendencies are quickly taken out of the population. The goal for nuisance complaints should very low, less than 2 annually with action taken with the individual lions as problems occur.

**LION PREDATION ON OTHER WILDLIFE:** In July, 1999, the Colorado Wildlife Commission approved a Mammalian Predator Policy which calls for predator control actions when it is determined that the predator species is inhibiting the ability of the Division to attain management objectives for other wildlife populations. Currently, studies related to deer fawn summer mortality and both fawn and adult winter mortality indicate that mountain lions are not a major factor in deer population regulation. Elk populations are currently well above objectives in these DAUs with elk survival rates extremely high. Antelope populations are also at or above objective.

Sport hunting is the primary method of lion population control and will continue to be used to harvest lion at a level that will allow maximum hunter opportunity and maintain a healthy, viable lion population. Individual animals that cause excessive damage to livestock, damage to personal property, or pose a threat to human health and welfare will be removed as necessary. No control action, other than sport harvest, is anticipated to benefit deer, elk, or antelope.