

**MOUNTAIN LION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES  
FOR  
LION DAU L-4  
GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS  
7, 8, 9, 19, 191, & 20**

Prepared for:  
Colorado Division of Wildlife  
Northeast Region

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**DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT AREA AND HABITAT**

DAU L-4 is located in the north-central part of Colorado. It includes the three major drainages of the Cache La Poudre, Big Thompson, and Laramie Rivers. Habitat varies from ponderosa pine-shrub foothills at approximately 5,000 feet in elevation to high mountain peaks at nearly 13,000 feet. Much of the area is good mountain lion habitat.

**HARVEST OBJECTIVE:** The sport harvest quota is 42 mountain lions per year. Season dates are from January 1st until March 31st and from the 1st day after the close of the regular deer and elk seasons until December 31st. New harvest quotas begin on January 1 each year. Sport hunting quotas are usually met in GMUs 20 and 191, but seldom in the other GMUs. Female harvest often equals or exceeds male harvest. The average harvest by sex over the last 10 years has been nearly equal with a total of 101 females and 111 males harvested during this period.

- Continue with the current quota; 42 within the DAU.

Deer populations, which provide the primary prey base, may continue to decrease in this DAU due to Chronic Wasting Disease.

- This fact, as well as decreasing habitat, would lend one to believe the lion population is at best stable in this DAU.

**GAME DAMAGE OBJECTIVE:** Game damage should not exceed \$2,000 per year based on a three-year average. Damage has averaged approximately \$1,600 per year for the past 10 years. Target specific animals causing damage. Utilize hunters whenever possible to harvest problem lions. Continue to inform the public on ways to prevent or minimize damage to domestic animals.

**HUMAN / LION CONFLICTS OBJECTIVE:** Two human fatalities from lion attacks have occurred in Colorado since 1980. The second of these was in 1997 in Rocky Mountain National Park. This incident occurred just

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outside the L-4 boundary. Seven lion-human conflicts without injury were reported in 1998. This is 16% of all conflicts reported statewide. Continue to provide public information on human safety. This should be done through programs as well as printed literature. Conduct workshops for public agencies, law enforcement personnel, and concerned user groups.

**SUMMARY:** Management harvest objectives should stay at the current quotas. This allows for essentially unlimited hunting within the DAU. Game damage is minimal and seldom exceeds \$1,600. Damage usually occurs to individual domestic animals such as llamas, sheep, dogs, and horses. We will continue to assist the public in various ways to keep human / lion conflicts to a minimum.

With mule deer populations at a low level, public concern over predation of deer by mountain lion has escalated. Colorado Division of Wildlife is currently conducting a deer mortality study in L-4. Results from two years of data show deer mortality by mountain lions to be approximately 15 %.

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