

**MOUNTAIN LION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES
FOR
LION DAU L-8
GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS
30, 31, 32, & 33**

Prepared for:
Colorado Division of Wildlife
West Region

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DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT AREA AND HABITAT

This lion unit is located in the Bookcliffs/Roan Plateau area of west central Colorado and includes portions of Mesa and Garfield Counties. This DAU has the 3rd highest harvest in the state, ranks 5th in damage claims and 20th in complaints.

TOTAL LION HARVEST OBJECTIVE: From 1988 to 1998, this DAU has averaged a harvest of 26 lions per year, with a range of 8-42. During the last three years the harvest has averaged 40 lion. During the last 10 years, the proportion of females in the harvest averaged 40%, and ranged from 28-54%. Sport harvest accounted for 98% of the harvest in the last 10 years, while non-sport harvest has ranged from 0-2 per year.

The objective total harvest for this DAU should be a maximum of 40 as a 3-year average, with a sport harvest objective of 39 lion as a 3-year average. The preferred management recommendation is to maintain license quotas at the present levels for at least 5 years and monitor harvest rates, damage claims, and nuisance problems. The quota for 2000 is 54.

TOTAL LION DAMAGE OBJECTIVE: From 1988 to 1998, this DAU averaged \$4,825 in claims; however, damage claims were filed in 7 of 10 years. The average claim amount for 7 years when damaged occurred is \$6,892. The majority of losses were to domestic sheep. Claims have also been filed for cattle and horses, but these have been substantially less than those filed for sheep.

The DAU's lion population should be managed to keep damage payments below \$10,000 per year based on a 3-year average. When this number is exceeded, appropriate action can be taken, such as 1) hiring an investigator to assess losses and 2) initiate control of offending animal(s) by Wildlife Services, and 3) consider an increase in annual lion harvest quotas. When appropriate, efforts should be made to target offending lions in areas where damage occurs. This can be accomplished by landowners in conjunction with Colorado State Department of Agriculture guidelines for damage control.

December 4, 2000

NUISANCE LION COMPLAINTS: This DAU has had no nuisance lion complaints filed since 1997. Prior to 1997 CDOW did not keep records of lion nuisance complaints in a formal manner.

Lion nuisance complaints should be kept to no more than 10 per year. Nuisance objectives are based on allowable levels, when threshold level is reached; remedial actions can be used to ameliorate problems. Remedial actions should follow mountain lion action plans as adopted by CDOW.

On September 10, 1999 the Colorado Wildlife Commission approved a mammalian predator management policy. The purpose of the policy is to provide the Division direction in managing predator populations and to provide guidance when control methods are being considered. The Division, when feasible, will rely on sport hunting as the primary method to take predators. When necessary, as part of this management plan, control programs to reduce predator populations will be applied and authorized according to guidelines outlined in the Division's Predator Management Policy.

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