

**MOUNTAIN LION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES  
FOR  
LION DAU L-22  
GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS  
40, 60, 61, & 62**

Prepared for:  
Colorado Division of Wildlife  
West Region

By:  
Van K Graham  
Terrestrial Wildlife Biologist  
Grand Junction, Colorado

**DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT AREA AND HABITAT**

This lion unit is located within the Uncompaghre Plateau area of west central Colorado and includes portions of Mesa, Montrose, Delta, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties. This DAU has the 2nd highest harvest in the state, ranks 4th in damage claims and 6th in complaints.

**TOTAL LION HARVEST OBJECTIVE:** From 1988 to 1998, this DAU has averaged a harvest of 31 lions per year, with a range of 10-43. During the last three years the harvest has averaged 38 lions. During the last 10 years, the proportion of females in the harvest averaged 40%, and ranged from 30-53%. Sport harvest accounted for 97% of the harvest in the last 10 years, while non-sport harvest has ranged from 0-3 lions per year.

The total harvest objective for this DAU should be a maximum of 38 as a 3-year average, with a sport harvest objective of 37 lions 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 in 2000 is 51.

**TOTAL LION DAMAGE OBJECTIVE:** From 1988 to 1998, this DAU averaged \$4,527 in claims. The majority of losses were domestic sheep. Claims have also been filed for cattle and pigs, but these were substantially less than those filed for sheep. In 1992-93 one claim for damage to captive wildlife totaled \$3,625 and in 1993-94 a claim in the amount of \$8,500 was paid for damage to exotic domestic animals.

The population should be managed to keep DAU wide damage payments below \$8,000 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. 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. Established CDOW lion damage procedures should be followed to

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address individual mountain lion damage situations.

**NUISANCE LION COMPLAINTS:** This DAU has had six nuisance lion complaints filed since 1997. Prior to 1997, CDOW did not keep records of lion nuisance complaint 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 the threshold level is reached; remedial actions can be used to ameliorate problems. Remedial actions should follow Mountain Lion Actions Plans as adopted by CDOW (June 9, 1992).

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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