

TO: Montana Fish and Wildlife Commissioners
FROM: Footloose Montana
VIA EMAIL: fwcomm@mt.gov
DATE: May 26, 2024

RE: Mountain Lion Quotas, Seasons

These quotas are excessive and should be reduced substantially. Many lion hunters have testified that there are few and in some districts no lions left. If you'll remember, Commissioner Tabor wanted to allow lion hunters to hunt in other districts as well as their own, and the hunters in those districts protested loudly because there are so few lions, they don't want others jumping their own opportunities. Tabor withdrew his amendment.

In most of Region 2 the proposed quota is 280 despite the fact that only 179 lions were killed in 2023. What's the point? This has nothing to do with wildlife management. This is a killing spree, with 7 months of hounds harassing wildlife thrown in. The department has made it abundantly clear that it has abandoned its responsibility to protect and sustain predator species for future generations with this purported reason for excessive quotas statewide: "To reduce pressure on lion abundance."

There is also no proof of mountain lions killing off large numbers of ungulates. "Today there are more elk in Northern Rockies states than at any time in the last 140 years, according to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and state game agencies."

<https://yellowstonian.org/grim-confessions-of-a-former-government-trapper/>

This free-for-all killing of mountain lions is a giveaway of our magnificent predators to outfitters, trophy hunters and out of state profiteers. It opens FWP to a lawsuit like the one right now in Utah: allowing excessive killing of mountain lions actually takes away hunting opportunities in the future.

The prolonged season of 7.5 months for lion hunting and lion hunting with hounds is another giveaway at the expense of our publicly owned wildlife. The majority of Montanans have had enough of harassment and cruelty. Like all predators, mountain lions face extreme challenges for survival today. The Commission's duty is to safeguard the species, not wipe it out. Predators contain CWD, which "[is projected to dramatically reduce elk and deer populations ...\[and\] represents a potential danger in spreading to humans who eat game meat.](#)"

Conservative quotas and seasons conserves our wildlife and our biodiversity. It's crazy to rubber stamp the overkill mentality. It hastens the inevitable shutdown of predator hunting altogether. This would be a good thing, if the price wasn't so high. Resist political

expediency. Protecting predators is not anti-hunting, it is protecting all wildlife and biodiversity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Connie Poten, board chair, for the Footloose Montana board
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