

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: June 19, 2019

Agenda Item: 2019 Lion Quotas

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 minutes

Background: Lion management units (LMUs), often made up of more than one hunting district, listed in the table below have proposed changes from the 2018 mountain lion quotas in Region 5. All other quotas/subquotas not listed are proposed to be unchanged from 2018 levels.

As stated in the 2019 *Montana Mountain Lion Monitoring & Management Strategy*, “FWP will conserve mountain lions as a functional and valued part of Montana’s wildlife ecosystems” and “FWP will responsibly manage mountain lions as a public trust resource and consistent with state law.” In their respective areas, the proposals address issues and concerns such as harvest opportunity; lion populations; predation, primarily on mule deer and bighorn sheep; livestock depredations; and human-lion encounters in subdivisions and campgrounds. More detailed information was offered in the justification for each proposal in the April commission packet.

Proposed Montana 2019 Mountain Lion Quota Changes

LMU	Current Quota	Proposed Quota
HD 560	7 total with 3 female subquota	8 total with 4 female subquota
HDs 530/590	10 any legal lion	15 any legal lion

Public Involvement Process & Results: Area landowners, sportsmen and FWP wardens are supportive of these proposals. All proposals were vetted with the public in each area, and we have received no comments in opposition from landowners, sportsmen, outfitters, trappers or city officials. Public comment was taken through 5 p.m., May 21. We received 31 comments, which varied from full support to opposition of any lion hunting. All comments are included in the commission packet.

Alternatives and Analysis: Proposals may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment or no change from 2018 as per staff justifications, public comment and commission discussion.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: FWP recommends approval of proposed quota adjustments with no changes in other LMUs. Rationale includes maintaining sustainable and connected mountain lion populations and management accommodating human tolerance, safety, prey populations and hunter opportunity.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve the proposed 2019 lion quota/subquota changes as presented by FWP, and that all other aspects of the lion regulations and quotas previously approved by the commission are to remain unchanged.