



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

Wildlife Division
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
October 17, 2018

Dear Interested Person:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is requesting public review and comment on the following items. Supporting information on this item can be found on our website under “Opportunity for Public Comment” at fwp.mt.gov/hunting/ or directly by using the link below.

Mountain Lion Management Strategy

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is committed to maintaining sustainable lion populations in all suitable habitats of our state. Over the last 25 years, FWP has made significant investments in field research that helps inform our lion management. With this and research done in other states and provinces, we propose to use the latest science and state-of-the-art methods and tools to monitor Montana’s lion populations. Keeping in mind our goal to maintain sustainable populations, FWP has completed a draft *Montana Mountain Lion Management Strategy* as an important component of lion management.

Because we know lion populations function in big landscapes, our approach includes defining four *Lion Ecoregions* in Montana, large landscapes of similar habitat within which populations perform similarly. FWP will periodically develop estimates of mountain lion numbers within the northwest, west-central and southwest ecoregions using a genetically based field sampling method known as *Spatial Capture-Recapture*, or SCR. This is a relatively new but well-proven method for estimating populations. Using these population estimates plus our understanding of lion ecology and lion harvest data, managers will employ a sophisticated statistical model known as an *Integrated Population Model*, or IPM, that integrates all the information to predict the effects of lion harvest on populations. Over time, this monitoring program will reduce uncertainty about the effects of lion harvest and improve FWP’s ability to meet management objectives.

The draft strategy does not lay out any population objectives or harvest recommendations, but only speaks to guidelines as to how FWP will manage and monitor lions.

TO MAKE A COMMENT

For further clarification or additional materials, you may call the Wildlife Division office at 406-444-2612 or email at fwpwld@mt.gov. Comments will be accepted: online by using any of the link below; in writing sent to the address above; and by email to fwpwld@mt.gov.

COMMENT PERIOD DEADLINE & FINAL ADOPTION MEETING

All proposed items will be accepting public comments until **Friday, January 11, 2019 at 5 p.m.** with final adoption at the **February 2019** Commission Meeting.

✓ **Mountain Lion Management Strategy**

<http://fwp.mt.gov/hunting/publicComments/2018/mtnLionMgmtStrategy.html>