

**2012
Black Hills Mountain Lion Season:
Hunter Survey Results**

HD-3a-12.AMS

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Division of Wildlife
Serving People, Managing Wildlife

Longmire, C.L. 2012. Evaluation of the 2012 Mountain Lion Season: Hunter Survey Results.
Report ID# HD-3a-12.AMS. Pierre, SD: South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks.

This report summarizes results from the South Dakota GFP's hunter surveys for the 2012 Black Hills and 2012 Custer State Park mountain lion seasons. Survey responses were collected over the course of seven weeks from late March to early May on the 2012 mountain lion hunting seasons. A mix mode survey using both Internet and mail surveys was administered to all licensed mountain lion hunters; 75 percent of Black Hills hunters and 91 percent of Custer State Park hunters completed surveys.

KEY WORDS: mountain lion season; Black Hills; Custer State Park

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Published by:
SD GAME, FISH, & PARKS
PIERRE, SD

October 2012

For Additional Copies:
SD Game, Fish, and Parks
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523 E. Capitol Ave
Pierre, SD 57501

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Introduction

South Dakota has held a residents-only mountain lion season since 2005. The 2012 statewide season offered an unlimited number of licenses and included a limited access season within Custer State Park (CSP). Residents were allowed one mountain lion permit valid for taking a single lion during the season. The statewide season was set to run from January 1 to March 31, 2012 or until reaching a harvest limit of 70 total or 50 female mountain lions. After the regular season closed, landowners with a valid 2012 statewide mountain lion license who did not take a lion during the regular season could continue to hunt for the remainder of the calendar year on private land they owned or leased outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District. Additionally the use of dogs, bait, or traps for hunting lions was prohibited. Other restrictions included no taking of spotted lions or lions traveling together, and a mandatory check-in of harvested lions within 24 hours.

A limited number of free access permits to hunt mountain lions within CSP during specified hunting intervals were issued through a random drawing. Six hunting intervals each including two weekends with 15 access permits issued per interval were established. Once an individual harvested a mountain lion or their hunting interval had passed, their access permit expired. If the statewide season closed prior to March 31, 2012, mountain lion hunting with CSP also closed.

The 2012 statewide mountain lion season ran for 61 days and closed on March 01 after a total of 73 lions were harvested. This report summarizes results from the South Dakota Game, Fish, & Parks (GFP) 2012 Black Hills Lion Hunter Survey, including CSP. Survey responses were collected from March 29th to May 23rd and covered time spent hunting, methods used, lion observations while hunting, and satisfaction with the hunting season. Information pertaining to statewide reports of mountain lions from the public, mountain lion mortality, and mountain lion harvest locations can be found in the statewide annual mountain lion summary report for 2012,¹ and subsequently will not be covered in this report.

Methods

All licensed mountain lion hunters at the time of season closing (N = 3,482) were surveyed regarding their hunting experiences during the 2012 Black Hills mountain lion season. Hunters with a valid email address in the 2012 GFP license database (N = 2961) were sent an email invitation at the close of the season to complete the survey via the Internet (appendix A). The online survey non-respondents and hunters without an email address were mailed a four-page questionnaire on April 23rd. A postcard reminder was sent to all non-respondents a week after the initial mailing, followed by a second questionnaire mailing two weeks later. All survey data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 20 software package.

Results – Black Hills

Overall, a total of 2,619 useable surveys were returned. Adjusting for undeliverable addresses, the overall survey response rate was 76 percent. In total, 61 percent of responses received were via the online survey, and 39 percent of responses were received via mail surveys. Of the 2,961 email invitations sent to lion hunters asking them to participate in the

¹ The statewide annual mountain lion summary report for 2012 can be found on the Game, Fish, & Parks agency website following the end of the calendar year.

² Likert items use a dichotomous scaling method (where the mid-point is neutral) to measure either a

online survey, 54 percent (n = 1,585) completed the online survey. A total of 1,376 mail surveys were sent to the online survey non-respondents and 56 percent (n = 771) completed the non-response survey. Lion hunters who did not provide an email address (n = 521) were sent the survey by mail, and 50 percent (n = 263) completed the survey. Chi-square tests and ANOVAs were used to test for response differences across the online survey, non-response survey, and mail surveys. No statistically significant differences were found in participation rates, mean days hunted, satisfaction rates, hunting methods used, or harvest success.

Participation and Hunting Methods – A total of 1,994 hunters reported spending some time hunting for mountain lions during the Black Hills 2012 season (figure 1), for an average of 7.1 days (table 1). Lion hunters were asked to indicate all types of mountain lion hunting methods they used during the 2012 season. Calling was the most reported method of hunting mountain lions in the Black Hills (figure 2). Eighty-three percent of hunters reported using calling, followed by walking in the woods looking for lions or signs (68%), tracking in the snow (63%), and driving roads looking for lions or signs (57%). Most hunters used multiple hunting methods; 89 percent used two or more methods for an average of three methods per hunter (table 2). Of the 65 successful hunters who returned surveys, 91 percent (n = 59) used multiple methods of hunting mountain lions.

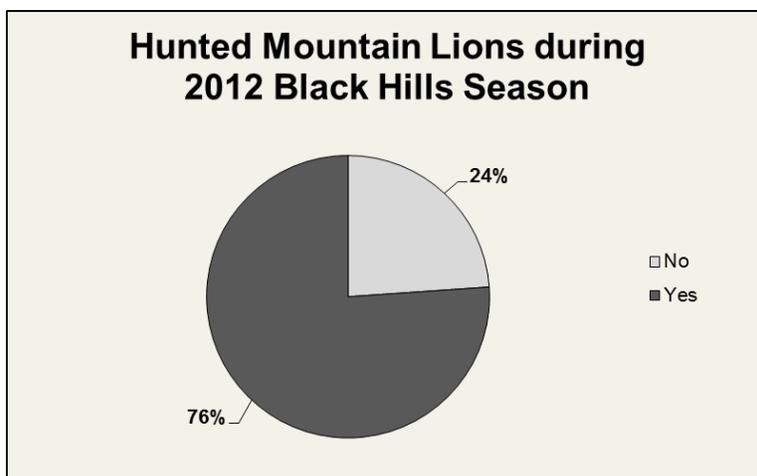


Figure 1: Participation in mountain lion hunting during 2012 season

Table 1: Number of days spent hunting mountain lions

2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion		
Number of Days	Hunters	Percent
1	125	6.6%
2	262	13.8%
3	301	15.8%
4	240	12.6%
5	209	11.0%
6	133	7.0%
7	78	4.1%
8	60	3.2%
9	22	1.2%
10	158	8.3%
11 to 20	219	11.5%
21 to 30	60	3.2%
30 or more	34	1.8%
Total	1901	100.0%

	Hunters	Mean # of Days ¹
All lion hunters	1901	7.1 (6.8 to 7.5)
Did not harvest a lion	1821	7.1 (6.7 to 7.4)
Harvested a lion	64	8.6 (6.4 to 10.7)

1. Mean (95% confidence interval)

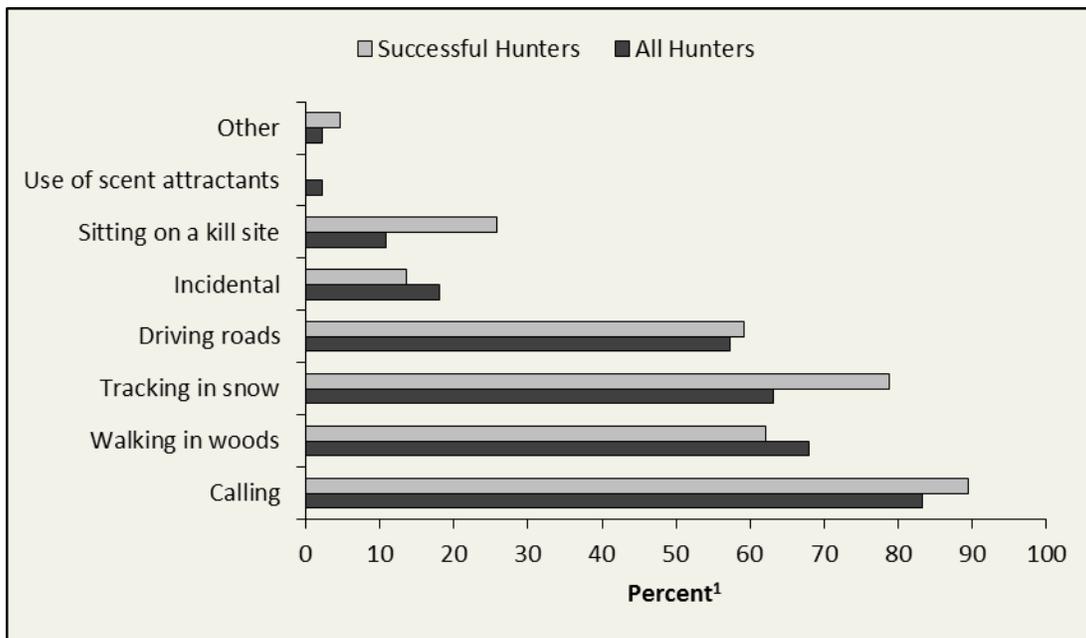


Figure 2: Methods used for hunting mountain lions during 2012 season

1. Percentages do not sum to 100 since hunters could select more than one method.

Table 2: Number of methods used for hunting mountain lions during 2012 season

2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season		
# Methods Used	Hunters	Percent
1	217	10.9%
2	444	22.4%
3	576	29.1%
4	529	26.7%
5	181	9.1%
6	29	1.5%
7	5	0.3%
8	1	0.1%
Total	1982	100.0%

2012 BH Mountain Lion Successful Hunters		
# Methods Used	Hunters	Percent
1	6	9.2%
2	11	16.9%
3	15	23.1%
4	20	30.8%
5	11	16.9%
6	2	3.1%
Total	65	100.0%

Lion Interactions – Eighty percent of active mountain lion hunters in the Black Hills reported seeing mountain lion tracks or other signs of mountain lions while hunting (figure 3). Approximately 18 percent of active lion hunters (n = 347) observed a mountain lion. Of those hunters who observed a mountain lion, 48 percent (n = 152) reported seeing only one lion and 52 percent (n = 162) reported seeing two or more lions during their hunt. Fifty-one percent (n = 177) of those who observed mountain lions reported not having a good or clear shot, 26 percent (n = 90) reported the lion was with one or more other lions, 16 percent observed a lion with a spotted lion (n = 54) and 13 percent (n = 45) saw a lion with spots (figure 4). Six percent of hunters who observed a lion (n = 20) reported shooting at but missing a lion, and one percent (n=4) reported possibly wounding but not retrieving a lion. Five hunters (1.4%) reported seeing an aggressive lion near a den. When asked if any of the lions observed were wearing a radio

collar, 62 percent indicated they were not and 25 percent were unsure. Only 13 percent observed a lion wearing a radio collar.

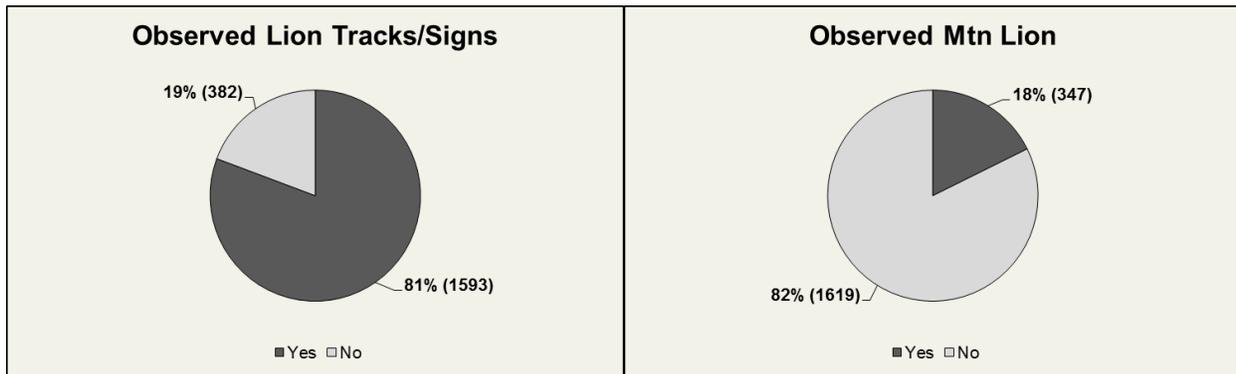


Figure 3: Mountain lion observations during 2012 season

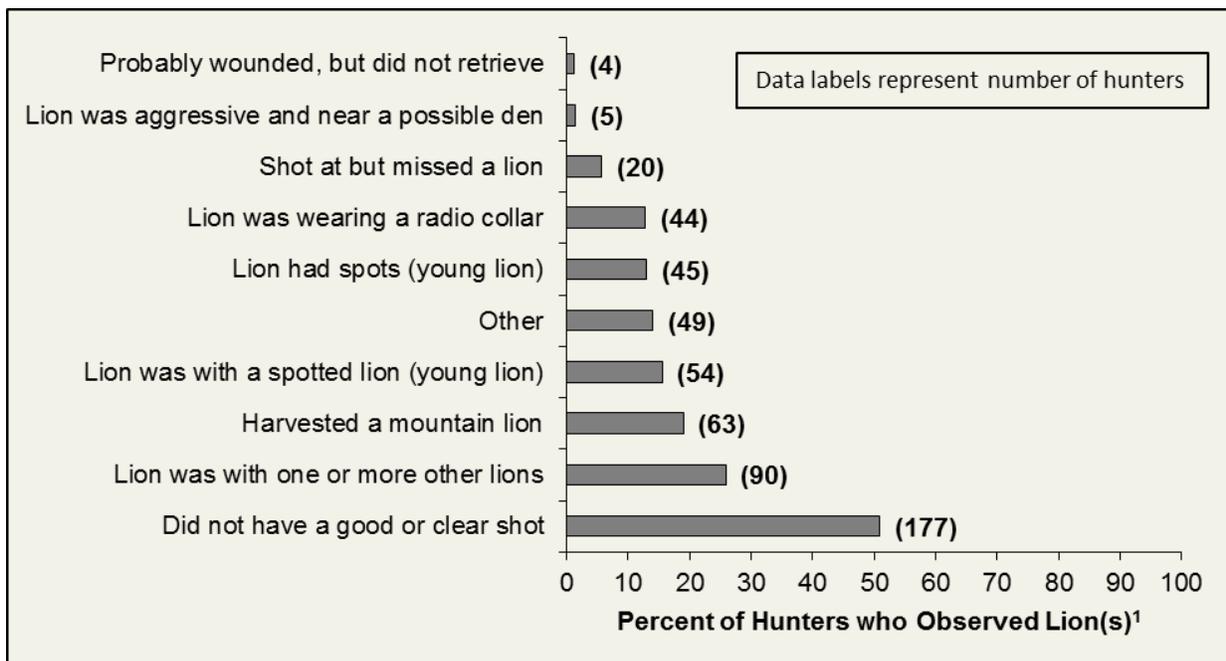


Figure 4: Distribution of hunters who observed mountain lions in during 2012 season

1. Percentages do not sum to 100 since hunters could indicate more than one situation.

Success and Satisfaction – Success per licensed hunter (includes all hunters with a mountain lion license whether or not they participated in the 2012 season) was 2.1 percent. Hunter success per participating lion hunter was 3.6 percent. Based on reported participation rate, a total of 2,646 hunters were estimated to have actually spent time hunting mountain lions in the Black Hills during the 2012 season (table 3). The estimated success rate of active lion hunters was 2.8 percent.

Table 3: Hunter success statistics for 2012 Black Hills mountain lion season

Black Hills 2012 Success Statistics	
Per Licensed Hunter	$73/3482 = 2.1\%$
Estimated Number of Active Lion Hunters	$3482 * 0.76 = 2646$
Estimated Success per Active Lion Hunters	$73/2646 = 2.8\%$

Lion hunters were asked to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with both the overall 2012 mountain lion season and the 2012 CSP season. Respondents' satisfaction was measured using a seven-point Likert scale.² On average, all licensed mountain lion hunters were slightly satisfied with the 2012 Black Hills season, and those hunters who were successful in harvesting a lion indicated they were moderately satisfied. However, an examination of the distribution of responses across all seven satisfaction categories indicated the modal response for all licensed hunters, both participating and non-participating hunters, was neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with the 2012 season (figure 5). About 35 percent of license holders were satisfied with the Black Hills mountain lion season as conducted in 2012; 53 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 12 percent were dissatisfied. Fifty-eight percent of license holders who reported actually hunting mountain lions during the 2012 season reported being satisfied with how the season was conducted; 25 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 17

² Likert items use a dichotomous scaling method (where the mid-point is neutral) to measure either a positive or negative response to a statement. The measurement scale used here is: 1=Very Dissatisfied; 2=Moderately Dissatisfied; 3=Slightly Dissatisfied; 4=Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied; 5=Slightly Satisfied; 6=Moderately Satisfied; and 7=Very Satisfied

percent were dissatisfied. The modal response among successful lion hunters was very satisfied. Of the 67 hunters who reported harvesting a mountain lion, 76 percent were satisfied with how the 2012 season was conducted; 6 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 18 percent were dissatisfied.

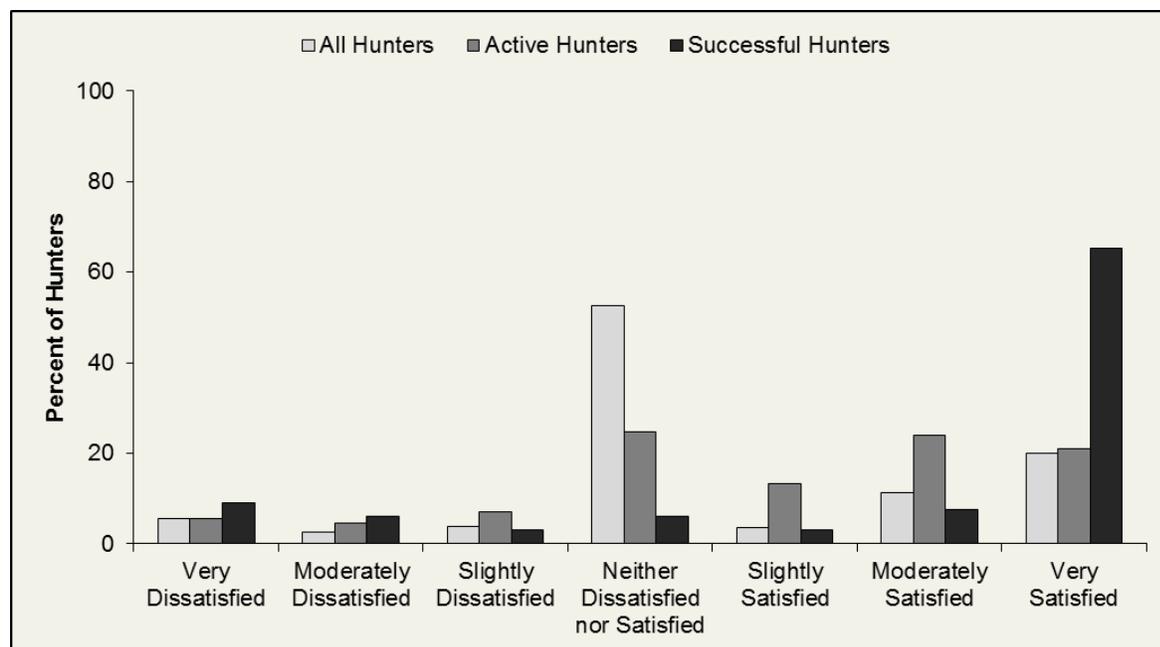


Figure 5: Hunter satisfaction with 2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season

Overall, hunters were relatively neutral in their satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the 2012 mountain lion season in Custer State Park, with the exception of hunters who actively hunted inside CSP (figure 6). Twenty-three percent of all licensed hunters reported being satisfied with the Custer State Park mountain lion season as conducted in 2012; 63 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 14 percent were dissatisfied. Of the hunters who reported actively hunting mountain lions in the Black Hills in 2012, 24 percent were satisfied with how the CSP season was conducted; 57 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 19 percent were dissatisfied. Of the hunters who held an access permit to hunt lions inside CSP, 64 percent

were satisfied, 12 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 24 percent were dissatisfied with the 2012 CSP season.

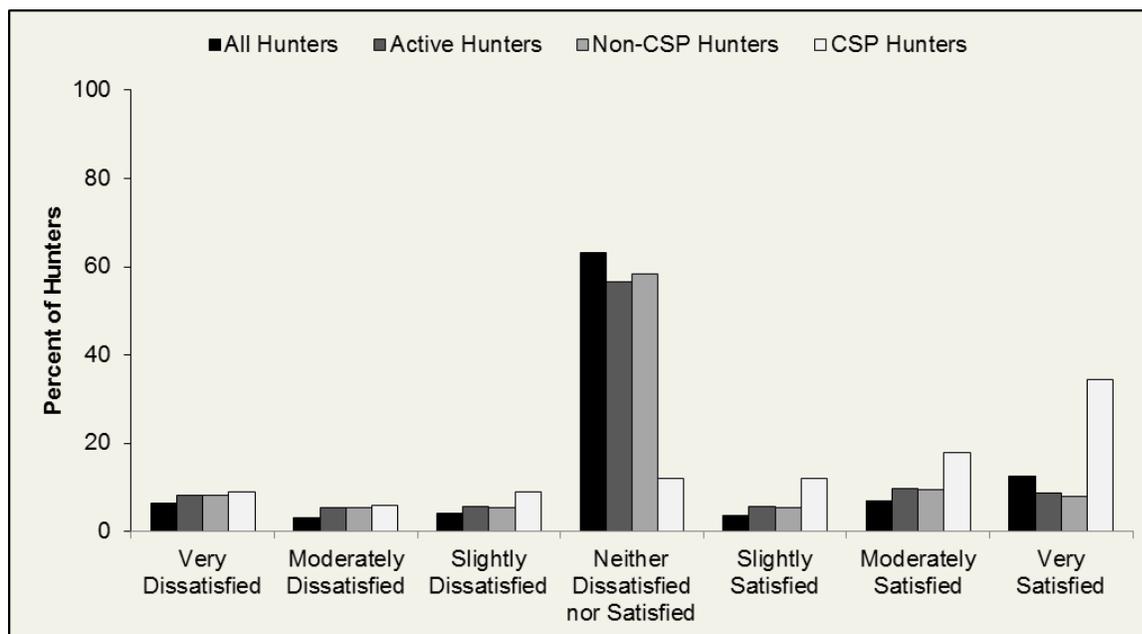


Figure 6: Hunter satisfaction with 2012 Custer State Park mountain lion season

Correlations with Satisfaction Level – Simple bivariate correlations using Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r) were conducted to identify statistically significant relationships between hunter satisfaction and four lion observation variables.³ Hunters’ satisfaction level was positively related to hunters’ observation of lion tracks or signs ($r = 0.14$ $p < 0.001$), harvest success ($r = 0.09$ $p < 0.001$), and observation of lions ($r = .08$ $p < 0.001$); however, for hunters who observed lions, satisfaction was negatively correlated with the number of lions observed ($r = -0.15$ $p < 0.001$). All four correlations indicated fairly weak relationships with hunters’ overall satisfaction. On average, hunters who successfully harvested a lion indicated higher satisfaction

³ A correlation coefficient indicates the strength of the association between two variables. The values range from -1 to 1, where an absolute value of 1 indicates a perfect relationship between the two variables and 0 indicates no relationship. General guidelines for interpreting correlation coefficients are: |0.1| to |0.34| = weak; |0.35| to |0.74| = moderate; and |0.75| to |1| = strong. In practice, a coefficient of 1 generally indicates a redundancy in variables. Correlation does not prove causation.

scores than those hunters who did not harvest a lion (5.7 versus 4.9; figure 7). Hunters who reported seeing lion tracks or other signs indicated a higher satisfaction score, on average, than those who did not see tracks or signs (5.0 versus 4.5). There was a slight difference in average satisfaction score between hunters who observed lions and those who did not (5.2 versus 4.9). However, the negative relationship between satisfaction and number of lions seen would indicate that the more lions a hunter observed the lower their overall satisfaction score (figure 8). Of hunters who observed lions, those who indicated they were dissatisfied with the season saw 2.7 lions on average, compared to 2.0 lions seen by satisfied hunters. While hunters who observed lions were more satisfied, on average, than hunters who did not, there appears to be a threshold at which point satisfaction stopped increasing and began decreasing to a level below that of the hunters who did not observe mountain lions while hunting. Hunters who saw four or more lions had mean satisfaction scores at or below the satisfaction level of hunters who did not observe lions during the season. It is possible this negative correlation is an indirect reflection of hunters' dissatisfaction with the harvest quota set for the 2012 mountain lion season.

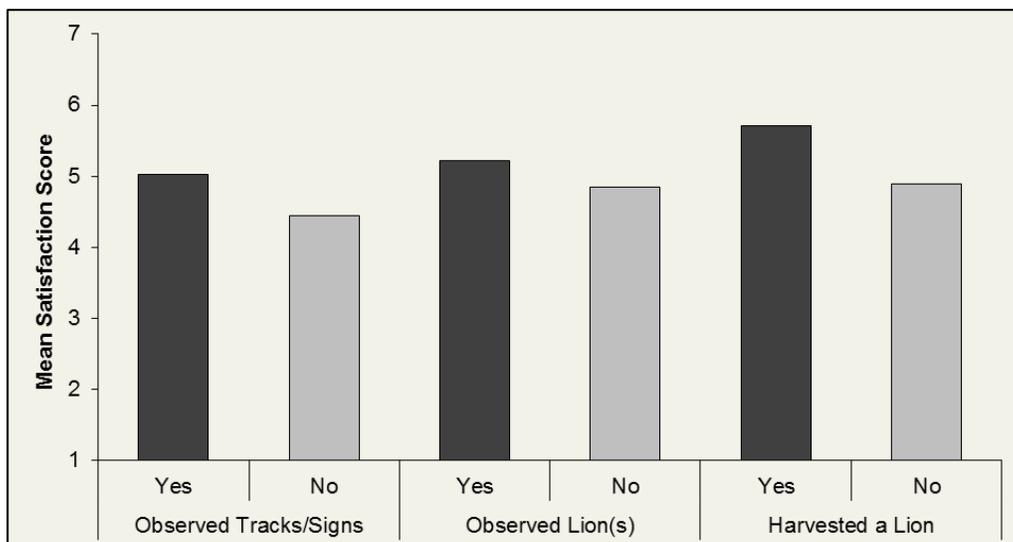


Figure 7: Relationship between satisfaction and lion observations

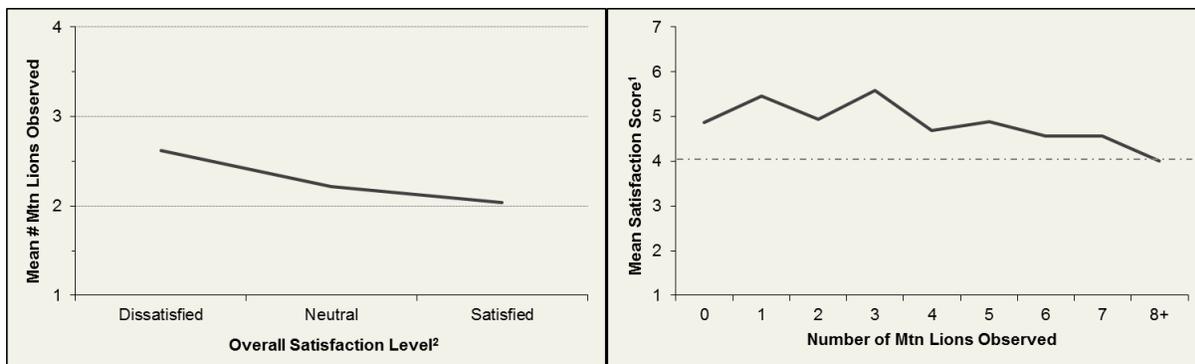


Figure 8: Relationship between satisfaction and number of lions observed

1. Dashed line indicates neutral point on satisfaction scale; 2. Collapsed scale is as follows: Dissatisfied = very dissatisfied, moderately dissatisfied, and slightly dissatisfied (1-3); Neutral = neither dissatisfied nor satisfied (4); Satisfied = slightly satisfied, moderately satisfied, and very satisfied (5-7).

Results – Custer State Park

Participation and Hunting Methods – All licensed mountain lion hunters who received an Access Permit that allowed them to hunt mountain lions within CSP were surveyed regarding their hunting experience in CSP (N = 74). A total of 67 questionnaires were returned for a 91 percent response rate. A total of 52 hunters spent some time hunting for mountain lions within CSP (figure 9), for an average of 4.4 days (table 4). Hunters were asked to indicate all types of mountain lion hunting methods they used while hunting in CSP during the 2012 season. Calling was the most reported method of hunting (figure 10). Eighty-one percent of hunters reported using calling, followed by walking in the woods looking for lions or signs (77%), driving roads looking for lions or signs (56%), and tracking in the snow (46%). Most hunters used multiple hunting methods; 83 percent used two or more methods for an average of three methods per hunter (table 5). Of the four successful hunters, all used multiple methods of hunting mountain lions.

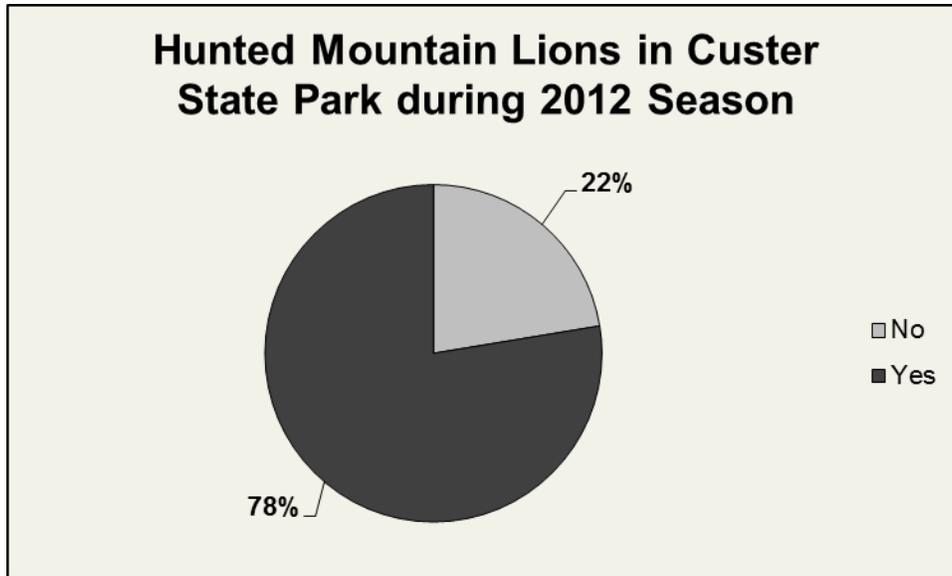


Figure 9: Participation in mountain lion hunting inside Custer State Park during 2012 season

Table 4: Number of days spent hunting mountain lions within CSP

2012 Custer State Park Mountain Lion		
Number of Days	Hunters	Percent
0	3	5.8%
1	8	15.4%
2	7	13.5%
3	9	17.3%
4	7	13.5%
5	4	7.7%
6	5	9.6%
7	3	5.8%
10	1	1.9%
12	2	3.8%
14	1	1.9%
15	2	3.8%
Total	52	100.0%
	Hunters	Mean # of Days ¹
All CSP lion hunters	52	4.4 (3.3 to 5.4)
Did not harvest a lion	48	4.3 (3.2 to 5.4)
Harvested a lion	4	8.6 (6.4 to 10.7)

1. Mean (95% confidence interval)

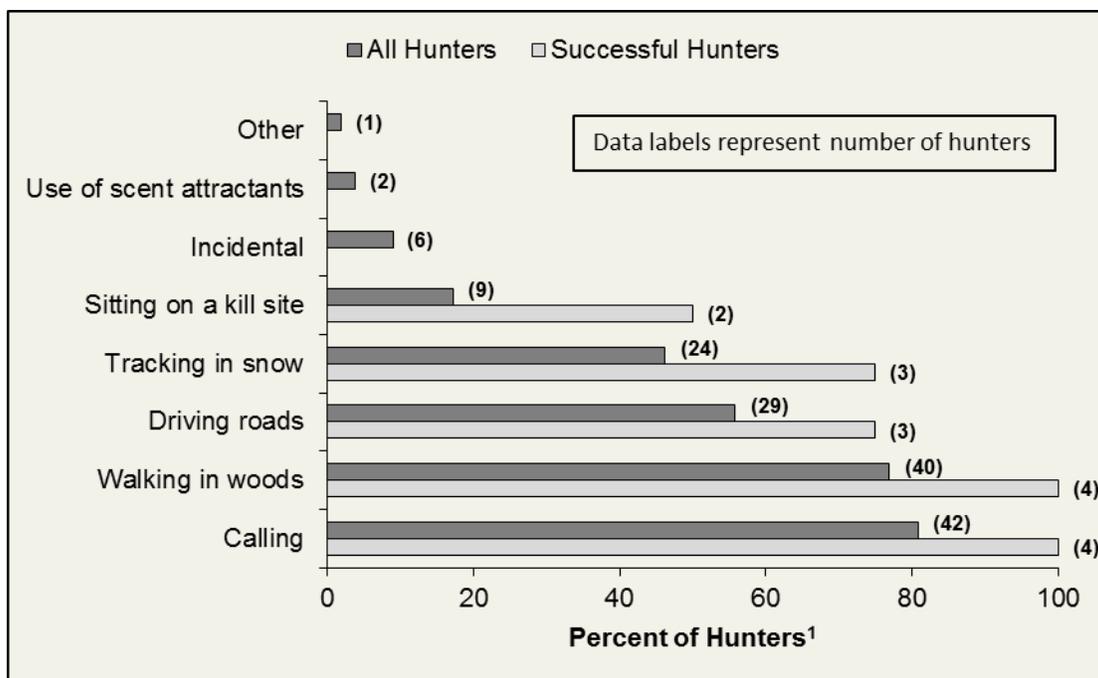


Figure 10: Methods used for hunting mountain lions in CSP during 2012 season
 1. Percentages do not sum to 100 since hunters could select more than one method.

Table 5: Number of methods used for hunting mountain lions in CSP during 2012 season

2012 Custer State Park Lion Season		
# Methods Used	Hunters	Percent
1	9	17.3%
2	12	23.1%
3	11	21.2%
4	11	21.2%
5	9	17.3%
Total	52	100.0%
2012 CSP Successful Lion Hunters		
# Methods Used	Hunters	Percent
2	1	25.0%
4	1	25.0%
5	2	50.0%
Total	4	100.0%

Lion Interactions – Seventy-nine percent of active mountain lion hunters within CSP reported seeing mountain lion tracks or other signs of mountain lions while hunting (figure 11). About 19 percent of active lion hunters within CSP (n = 10) observed a mountain lion. Of the hunters who observed a mountain lion, 63 percent (n = 5) reported seeing only one lion and 37 percent (n = 3) reported seeing two or more lions during their hunt. Thirty percent (n = 3) of those who observed mountain lions reported not having a good or clear shot, 20 percent (n = 2) reported the lion was with one or more other lions, and the lion was seen with a spotted lion or the lion had spots were both reported by 10 percent (n = 2) of the hunters (figure 12). No hunters who observed a lion within CSP reported seeing an aggressive lion, shooting at but missing a lion, or possibly wounding a lion but not retrieving it. About 33 percent of the hunters reported the lion they observed was not wearing a radio collar and 22 percent were unsure as to whether or not the lion was wearing a collar. About 45 percent (4 hunters) said a lion they observed was wearing a radio collar; three of these hunters (75%) actually harvested a lion.

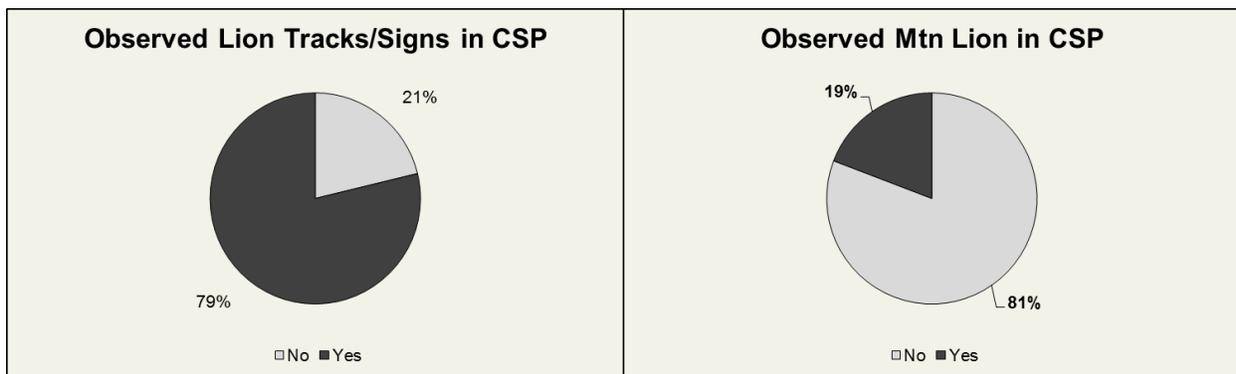


Figure 11: Mountain lion observations in CSP during 2012 season

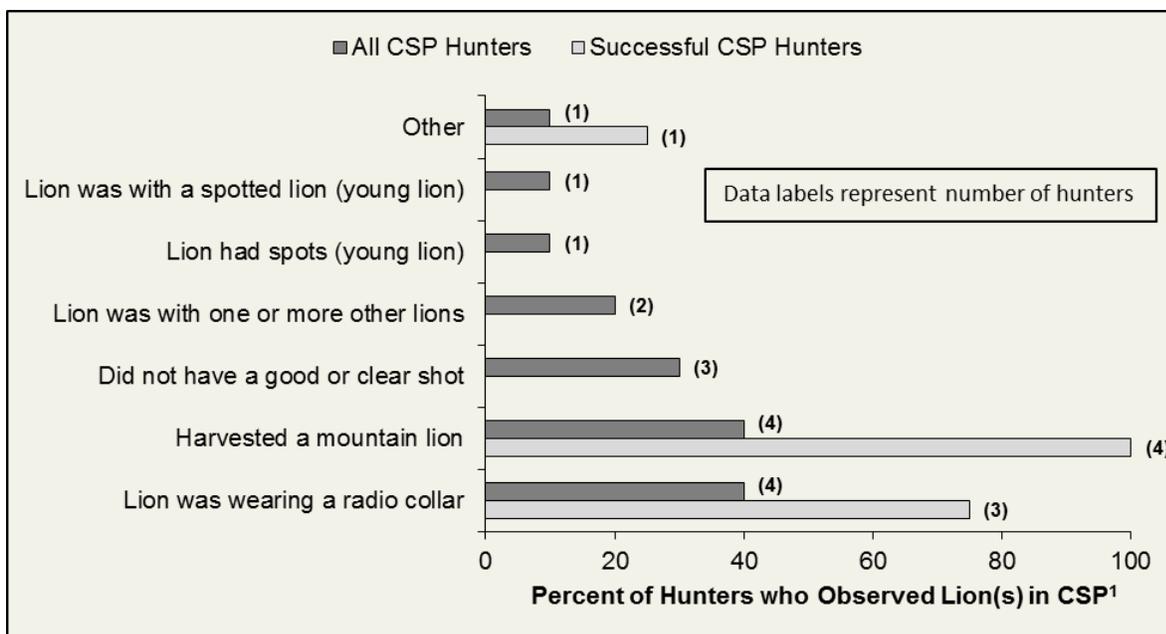


Figure 12: Distribution of CSP hunters who observed mountain lions during 2012 season

1. Percentages do not sum to 100 since hunters could indicate more than one situation.

Success and Satisfaction – Success within CSP per licensed hunter (includes all hunters with a CSP access permit) was 5.4 percent and success per active lion hunters within CSP was 7.7 percent (table 6). Based on the reported participation rate, a total of 57 hunters were estimated to have actively spent time hunting for mountain lions within CSP during the 2012 mountain lion season. The estimated success rate for active lion hunters was 7 percent.

Table 6: Hunter success statistics for 2012 CSP mountain lion season

Custer State Park 2012 Success Statistics	
Per Licensed Hunter	4/74 = 5.4%
Per Active Lion Hunter	4/52 = 7.7%
Estimated Number of Active Lion Hunters	74 * .776 = 57
Estimated Success per Active Lion Hunters	4/57 = 7%

As with the broader Black Hills hunter survey, CSP lion hunters were asked to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the 2012 CSP season. Satisfaction was measured

using a seven-point Likert scale.⁴ On average, licensed CSP lion hunters were slightly satisfied with the 2012 CSP season, and those hunters who were successful in harvesting a lion were moderately satisfied. About 64 percent of the licensed hunters within CSP were satisfied with the 2012 CSP mountain lion season (figure 13). Almost a quarter of the licensed hunters were dissatisfied, and 12 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Seventy-three percent of hunters who actively hunted mountain lions within CSP reported being satisfied with the CSP mountain lion season. Nineteen percent of active hunters were dissatisfied and 8 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Of the four hunters who successfully harvest a lion within CSP, three were satisfied and one was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the 2012 CSP season. The modal response across all three breakdowns of lion hunters was very satisfied.

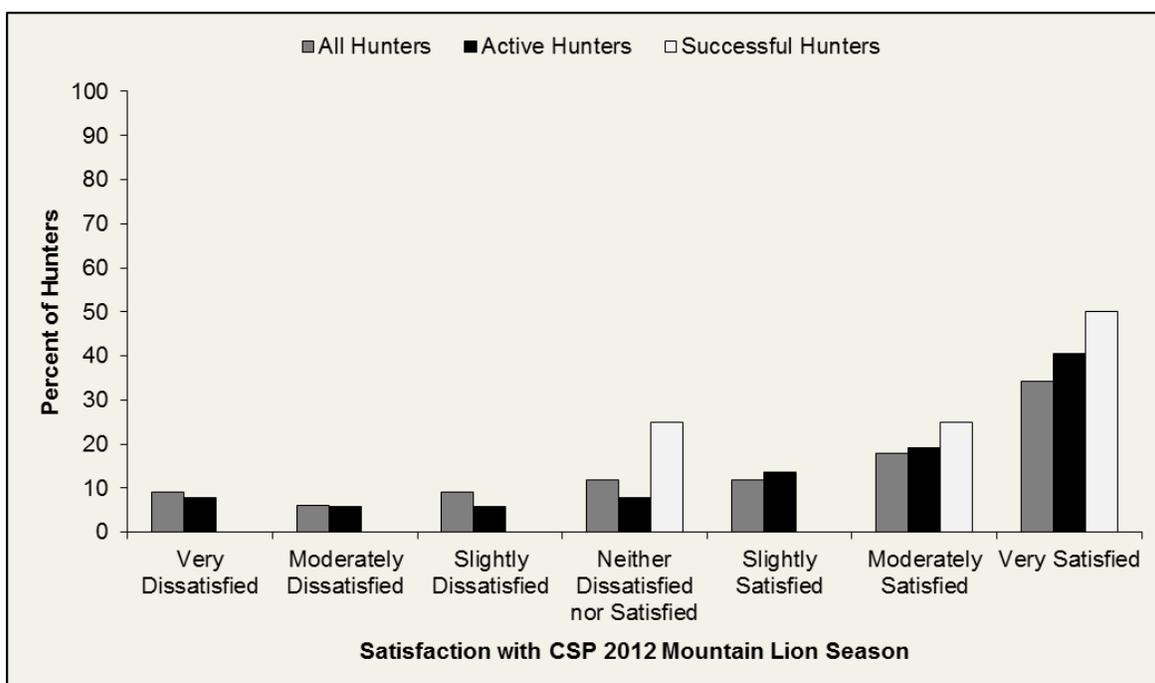


Figure 13: CSP Hunters' satisfaction with 2012 Custer State Park mountain lion season

⁴ Likert items use a dichotomous scaling method (where the mid-point is neutral) to measure either a positive or negative response to a statement. The measurement scale used here is: 1=Very Dissatisfied; 2=Moderately Dissatisfied; 3=Slightly Dissatisfied; 4=Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied; 5=Slightly Satisfied; 6=Moderately Satisfied; and 7=Very Satisfied

Correlations with Satisfaction Level – Similar to the analyses done for the overall Black Hills season, simple bivariate correlations using Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) were conducted to identify statistically significant relationships between hunter satisfaction with the CSP season and lion observation variables. Since some hunters who held access permits for the park may not have been able to hunt due to the statewide season closing prior to their specified hunting interval, the relationship between hunter satisfaction and participation was also examined. There was no significant relationship found between hunter satisfaction and the four lion observation variables examined (observed tracks/signs, observed lion(s), number of lions observed, and harvested a lion). Hunter satisfaction was positively related to hunter participation in the 2012 CSP season ($r = 0.28$ $p=0.02$). On average, hunters who actively hunted lions within CSP indicated a higher satisfaction with the CSP season than those who had access permits but did not hunt lions inside the park (5.3 versus 4.00)⁵.

Comments

Many of the respondents to the mountain lion hunter survey provided additional comments with their completed questionnaire (appendix B). These comments provide a qualitative description of hunters' opinions related to mountain lion management and concerns. These comments did not have to be specific to any question asked on the survey, but rather they were free to provide additional comments at the end. All comments are included in appendix B, and are organized by hunters' satisfaction with the overall 2012 Black Hills mountain lion season. Within each subcategory the comments are presented in numerical order of respondent ID number. Comments are presented in the letter case they were submitted. Misspellings and grammar are corrected when doing so would not change the intent of the

⁵ 1=Very Dissatisfied; 2=Moderately Dissatisfied; 3=Slightly Dissatisfied; 4=Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied; 5=Slightly Satisfied; 6=Moderately Satisfied; and 7=Very Satisfied

comment. Where expletives were used, they were not removed or substituted for. In the case where symbols were substituted, this was done in the original comment.

Additional Mountain Lion Information

In addition to the annual survey of hunters, GFP produces an annual mountain lion summary report prepared by Region 1 biologists in Rapid City, SD. The annual report and other information about mountain lions in South Dakota can be found on the GFP webpage. Also, GFP has supported a series of continuous mountain lion research projects by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at South Dakota State University since 1998, with the current project funded through 2014.

Appendix A: Survey Instruments
(Format Adjusted)

Email Invitation

To: [Email]

From: "sdgfpinfo@state.sd.us via surveymonkey.com" <member@surveymonkey.com>

Subject: 2012 Mountain Lion Hunting Survey

Body: Dear [FirstName] [LastName],

Please complete this short survey regarding the 2012 Mountain Lion Season through the link below. It is important that we receive a response from you whether you hunted or not so we can accurately estimate total participation and evaluate your opinions of the 2012 season.

You can complete this survey on-line or you can complete the survey by mail. If you complete your survey on-line before April 10, 2012 you will not be sent a survey by mail.

This survey should take about 2 minutes to complete. Here is a link to the survey:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address.

If you have difficulty opening the survey, please try copying and pasting the address link into the address bar of your Internet browser.

Thanks for your participation!

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx>

Survey Instrument – Black Hills



Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Foss Building
523 East Capitol
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-3182



May 2012

Dear mountain lion hunter:

The 2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season closed March 1. Although the season in the Black Hills is closed, licensed landowners outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District can still harvest a lion on their own land for the rest of the year (2012).

Please complete this short survey concerning the 2012 mountain lion season. The questions ask about your hunting experiences and general opinions about mountain lion management. This information is collected every year as an evaluation of the mountain lion season from the hunters' perspective. The information you provide is used by game managers in making future decisions about the Black Hills mountain lion season. Your prompt response will eliminate the need to send you another survey. Please take a few minutes to answer your questionnaire and return it using the pre-paid envelope provided. Also, please do not remove your address label as the ID number is used to identify hunters that have responded so we do not mail out reminders.

This survey only pertains to the 2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season (January 1 – March 1). Please answer your survey even if you did not hunt this year, since some questions are general attitude questions.

2012 BLACK HILLS LION HUNTER SURVEY

Game, Fish & Parks, 523 E. Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501

Please note that this survey only pertains to the 2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season
(January 1 – March 1, 2012).

Mountain Lion Hunting in South Dakota

1. Did you spend any time hunting for mountain lions this year (January 1 – March 1)?

- 1. NO → go to question #2 on the next page
- 2. YES → please answer the questions in **Box A** before going to question #2

Box A (answered YES to question #1)

A1. How many days did you hunt for mountain lions? _____ DAYS

A2. Please check all the types of mountain lion hunting methods that you used:

- 1. incidental while doing other activities
- 2. calling
- 3. tracking in the snow
- 4. sitting on a kill site
- 5. use of scent attractants
- 6. walking in the woods hoping to find a mountain lion or signs of lions
- 7. driving the roads looking for a mountain lion or signs of mountain lions
- 8. other → *please describe:* _____

A3. Please indicate which, if any, of the following types of interactions with mountain lions you have experienced during this year's lion season. *Please answer each item by checking either no or yes.*

- | | <u>NO</u> | <u>YES</u> |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Observed tracks or signs (e.g., buried deer carcass) of mountain lions while lion hunting this year..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Observed a mountain lion while lion hunting this year. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> → _____ |
| → If YES, please check <u>all</u> the appropriate situations: | | number |

- 1. Lion had spots (young lion)
- 2. Lion was with a spotted lion (young lion)
- 3. Lion was with one or more other lions
- 4. Did not have a good or clear shot
- 5. Lion was aggressive and near a possible den
- 6. I shot at but missed a lion
- 7. I shot at, probably wounded, but did not retrieve a lion
- 8. I harvested a mountain lion
- 9. Other: _____

→ **Were any of the lions you observed wearing a radio-collar or ear-tag?**

- No Not Sure Yes

2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season: Hunter Survey Results

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the mountain lion season as conducted in 2012?
Please circle only one response.

<u>Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Moderately Satisfied</u>	<u>Slightly Satisfied</u>	<u>Neutral or No Opinion</u>	<u>Slightly Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Moderately Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Very Dissatisfied</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. How satisfied were you with the structure of the **Custer State Park** mountain lion season as conducted in 2012? *Please circle only one response.*

<u>Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Moderately Satisfied</u>	<u>Slightly Satisfied</u>	<u>Neutral or No Opinion</u>	<u>Slightly Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Moderately Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Very Dissatisfied</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME COMPLETING THIS SURVEY. Results from this survey will be posted on GFP's web-page.

You can use this page for any comments you would like to make. These comments will be typed (provided they are legible) and put into a report that will be given to the Game, Fish & Parks Commissioners, staff biologists and administrators and made available to the public.



Optional Comments:

Electronic comments can also be sent to SDGFPINFO@state.sd.us

Please put **Mountain Lion Hunter Comments** in the subject line of your e-mail. Deadline for e-mail comments to be included in the final report is May 1, 2012.

Please return your questionnaire using the addressed, pre-paid return envelope provided.

Survey Instrument – CSP



Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Foss Building
523 East Capitol
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-3182



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May 2012

Dear mountain lion hunter:

The 2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season closed March 1. Although the season in the Black Hills is closed, licensed landowners outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District can still harvest a lion on their own land for the rest of the year (2012).

Please complete this short survey concerning the 2012 mountain lion season. The questions ask about your hunting experiences and general opinions about mountain lion management. This information is collected every year as an evaluation of the mountain lion season from the hunters' perspective. The information you provide is used by game managers in making future decisions about the Black Hills mountain lion season. Your prompt response will eliminate the need to send you another survey. Please take a few minutes to answer your questionnaire and return it using the pre-paid envelope provided. Also, please do not remove your address label as the ID number is used to identify hunters that have responded so we do not mail out reminders.

This survey only pertains to the 2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season (January 1 – March 1). Please answer your survey even if you did not hunt this year, since some questions are general attitude questions.

2012 BLACK HILLS LION HUNTER SURVEY

Game, Fish & Parks, 523 E. Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501

Please note that this survey only pertains to the 2012 Black Hills (including Custer State Park) Mountain Lion Season (**January 1 – March 1, 2012**).

Mountain Lion Hunting in South Dakota

1. Did you spend any time hunting for mountain lions this year (January 1 – March 1)?

- 1. NO → go to question #2 on the next page
- 2. YES → please answer the questions in **Box A** before going to question #2

Box A (answered YES to question #1)

A1. How many days did you hunt for mountain lions? _____ DAYS

A2. Please check all the types of mountain lion hunting methods that you used:

- 1. incidental while doing other activities
- 2. calling
- 3. tracking in the snow
- 4. sitting on a kill site
- 5. use of scent attractants
- 6. walking in the woods hoping to find a mountain lion or signs of lions
- 7. driving the roads looking for a mountain lion or signs of mountain lions
- 8. other → *please describe:* _____

A3. Please indicate which, if any, of the following types of interactions with mountain lions you have experienced during this year's lion season. *Please answer each item by checking either no or yes.*

- | | <u>NO</u> | <u>YES</u> |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| c. Observed tracks or signs (e.g., buried deer carcass) of mountain lions while lion hunting this year..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Observed a mountain lion while lion hunting this year. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> → _____
number |
- If YES, please check all the appropriate situations:

- 1. Lion had spots (young lion)
- 2. Lion was with a spotted lion (young lion)
- 3. Lion was with one or more other lions
- 4. Did not have a good or clear shot
- 5. Lion was aggressive and near a possible den
- 6. I shot at but missed a lion
- 7. I shot at, probably wounded, but did not retrieve a lion
- 8. I harvested a mountain lion
- 9. Other: _____

→ Were any of the lions you observed wearing a radio-collar or ear-tag?

- No Not Sure Yes

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the mountain lion season as conducted in 2012? *Please check (✓) only one response.*

Very Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Neutral or No Opinion	Slightly Dissatisfied	Moderately Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. How satisfied were you with the structure of the Custer State Park mountain lion season as conducted in 2012? *Please check (✓) only one response.*

Very Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Neutral or No Opinion	Slightly Dissatisfied	Moderately Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. Did you spend any time hunting for mountain lions **within Custer State Park** this year?

- 1. NO → go to next page
- 2. YES → please answer the questions in **Box B**

Box B (answered YES to question #4 regarding **Custer State Park** only)

B1. How many days did you hunt for mountain lions in CSP? _____ DAYS

B2. Please check all the types of mountain lion hunting methods that you used in CSP:

- 1. incidental while doing other activities
- 2. calling
- 3. tracking in the snow
- 4. sitting on a kill site
- 5. use of scent attractants
- 6. walking in the woods hoping to find a mountain lion or signs of lions
- 7. driving the roads looking for a mountain lion or signs of mountain lions
- 8. other → *please describe:* _____

B3. Please indicate which, if any, of the following types of interactions with mountain lions you have experienced during this year's lion season within Custer State Park. *Please answer each item by checking either no or yes.*

- c. Observed tracks or signs (e.g., buried deer carcass) of mountain lions while lion hunting this year..... **NO** **YES**
- d. Observed a mountain lion while lion hunting this year. **NO** → _____ number
 → **If YES, please check all the appropriate situations:**
 - 1. Lion had spots (young lion)
 - 2. Lion was with a spotted lion (young lion)
 - 3. Lion was with one or more other lions
 - 4. Did not have a good or clear shot
 - 5. Lion was aggressive and near a possible den
 - 6. I shot at but missed a lion
 - 7. I shot at, probably wounded, but did not retrieve a lion
 - 8. I harvested a mountain lion
 - 9. Other: _____

→ Were any of the lions you observed wearing a radio-collar or ear-tag?

- No
- Not Sure
- Yes

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME COMPLETING THIS SURVEY. Results from this survey will be posted on GFP's web-page.

You can use this page for any comments you would like to make. These comments will be typed (provided they are legible) and put into a report that will be given to the Game, Fish & Parks Commissioners, staff biologists and administrators and made available to the public.



Optional Comments:

Electronic comments can also be sent to SDGFPIINFO@state.sd.us

Please put **Mountain Lion Hunter Comments** in the subject line of your e-mail. Deadline for e-mail comments to be included in the final report is May 1, 2012.

Please return your questionnaire using the addressed, pre-paid return envelope provided.

Appendix B: Comments
Mountain Lion Hunter Survey (Black Hills and CSP)

*Note – Thirty percent of respondents (n=781) to the mountain lion hunter survey provided additional comments with their completed questionnaire (appendix B). These comments provide a qualitative description of hunters' opinions related to mountain lion management and concerns. These comments did not have to be specific to any question asked on the survey, but rather they were free to provide additional comments at the end. All comments are included in appendix B, and are organized by hunters' satisfaction with the overall 2012 Black Hills mountain lion season. Within each subcategory the comments are presented in numerical order of respondent ID number. Comments are presented in the letter case they were submitted. Misspellings and grammar are corrected when doing so would not change the intent of the comment. Where expletives were used, they were not removed or substituted for. In the case where symbols were substituted, this was done in the original comment.

Dissatisfied – 213 comments (27.2% of total comments)

- 15 I don't think that the people doing the mountain lion research should be eligible to draw or receive tags for them. I think this creates unfair advantage for the public. I also think that our mountain lion and other wild game can be managed different and better.
- 63 From the information I'm hearing from landowners and other hunters, it seems that there are frequent lion encounters/sightings even within the city limits of Custer! Here are my opinions: 1) increase the number of licenses for the 2012-2013 seasons. 2) Limit out of state to no more than 10. I think you should offer licenses to non-residents on the limited basis by lottery. 3) Allow the use of dogs to hunt if the lion limit is not reached by February 1 of each season. Lions in the Hills are not afraid of dogs. My hunting partners' neighbor said a huge male lion tried to kill his 100 pound dog this past year while he was working outside, and his dog was with him. Using dogs during the lion season might cause lions to have a healthy respect for dogs in the future.
- 84 I came upon cougar sign at every location I hunted after a short time on each hunt. I believe there are a lot more cats than estimated by GFP.
- 91 I would like to see the location of the kills on a map during the season.
- 97 The South Dakota mountain lion season should be open year round outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District, and the season should have a more liberalized harvest during the regular season in the Black Hills!
- 112 OPEN THE SEASON YEAR-ROUND ON CATS, SAME AS THE COYOTE SEASON.
- 158 Should be able to use dogs like the rest of the states. I know your number of licenses given is based on scientific fact and not the opinions of different groups. So, I would expect the number of licenses to be given out will increase the elk population. Plus, you should publicly admit that there are also wolves in the Black Hills. Not just individuals passing through. It's starting to sound like the mountain lion story all over again.

- 168 I would prefer if they halted the Mtn. Lion season for a few years so they can accurately tabulate how many lions there are in the hills. It's not that there are too many lions; we just have too many damn people encroaching on their areas. Why not designate a reserve in the hills where lions cannot be shot and people cannot develop? This area is becoming the next Yellowstone Park: first let's kill all the wolves....now that they are gone, the predator vs. prey levels go out of balance....then they reintroduce the wolves which brings the levels back to normal. Now they want to kill the wolves again because they are encroaching on livestock. Are humans never happy? We are a very short sighted creature. There are other states that protect their Mtn. Lions and view them as the beautiful creatures they are. I know that animals were placed on this earth just like humans; I believe that everything has its place. But humans were not left in charge to decide the fate of animals.
- 171 Would've hunted more, but when the winters are mild, there's more to do on the farm.
- 191 Very happy with harvest target.
- 204 HOW LONG IS THIS GOING TO TAKE PLACE WHEN YOU CAN GO OUT AND FIND 10:1 LION TRACKS TO DEER TRACKS? THE SEASON SHOULD GO YEAR ROUND. THE HUNTING IN THE BLACK HILLS USE TO BE GREAT, NOW YOUR LUCKY TO GO OUT 10 TIMES AND EVEN SEE AN ELK. ALL THANKS TO THOSE LOVELY MOUNTAIN LIONS THAT YOU PROTECT.
- 207 Keep getting the number of cats in the hills down. They are destroying the elk and deer population. I think you are one the right tract with this year's season, I do not want to see them eradicated but I don't want to see children on the menu.
- 227 More lions need to be hunted. 70 was not enough.
- 231 SDGFP AND NATIONAL FOREST SERVICE IS OFF TRACK ALLOWING ALL THE LIONS AND CATTLE IN THE BLACK HILLS. IF YOU MANAGED IT FOR ELK AND DEER YOU CAN MAKE MORE MONEY AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY WOULD BE BETTER!
- 252 Please stop the "call-in" part of the lion season. Instead use a time limit. If you don't get the amount of lions wanted just extend the season a certain period of time. Calling in before we go out hunting every time is stupid. We don't do that with any other game season. Also, keep gates on forest service land unlocked until after the mountain lion season. Locking them during the lion season makes it difficult to get into a lot of areas.
- 284 Need more licenses available. Mountain lions are wreaking havoc with our elk population. We would rather hunt elk than mountain lions.
- 309 Everyone, including the lions would benefit from allowing the use of dogs to hunt cats. You could eliminate cub death and minimize female harvest as most hunters will want to take the bigger males.
- 311 99% of the tracks I saw this season were 2 and 3 lions walking together. I am very opposed to hunting lions with dogs, which has to be the single most unsportsmanlike thing I can think of. I also think we have more people cheating to get their lion than ever

- before. Sadly, I think GF&P just doesn't care if people break the rules. And about these surveys...HELLO....HELLO...is anyone out there?
- 338 Do not like or approve of landowner privilege! Adding up all of my permits licenses fees, taxes and type of your expends I have started to balance the scale (you use) by a large margin.
- 340 Seen many groups of elk but no calves. A lot less deer. The season should last the entire length of mountain lion season. And dogs should be permitted to hunt the lions. There won't be any elk or deer left in the hills if more lions aren't killed.
- 353 Why are the lions allowed to ruin elk, bighorn, and mountain goat hunting? The Custer State Park hunting has been ruined. Something needs to be fixed at CSP. Shoot more Mountain Lions.
- 366 Would like to be able to hunt with dogs. Mountain lions should be hunted like other predators such as coyote without all the restrictions.
- 368 I have spent a lot of time in Custer State Park hiking, hunting in the past years. What has happened in CSP makes me sick. The first day I hunted I walk 10-12 miles in an area I know to hold elk, white tail deer, mule deer, mountain goats, and big horn sheep I saw only 4 whitetail deer and 3 cat kills this is so sad to see. Can the GFP not see this? how could it get this far? Now to the cat I shot and got away let's hope it died to make the count 74. I had trail cameras out in the area where I hunt and have pic. of a lot of cats collared and uncollared. I thought there were 5-6 cat in there until I talked to the GFP office and from what I know and they knew I could count 11 cats that includes 5 kittens. I now know why the deer herd went from 150 down to at the most 50 on the field there is no deer hunting on this property because of this. YOU HAVE TO SHOOT MORE CATS NEXT YEAR LIKE A 100 or even more to get a handle on this problem listen to the sportsman NOT the cat lovers.
- 385 Will we wait until the elk and bighorn sheep populations are completely decimated before getting the lion numbers under control is taken seriously?
- 392 Thanks for the opportunity to hunt them, will hunt other ways to find success. It was odd that neither my partner nor I saw any elk on the trip also.
- 432 There are way too many cats. 200 would be a good limit.
- 443 Need more time hunting them.
- 494 My dissatisfaction has more to deal with weather than anything else. My only available timeframe was second week of January - very cold, no snow.
- 505 I was dissatisfied, as I am 81 years old and know that my years of hunting are getting fewer. Lack of snow made it hard to track and lack of deer, turkey and elk sign didn't help either.
- 531 We knew that it would be tough hunting but we still had fun.

- 552 I was amazed by the amount of mountain lion sign we encountered while hunting. I can't help thinking that the number of lions to be taken should be much higher than 70. We are not even killing the number of new cats each year. Do we have to wait until the ENTIRE elk herd in the Hills has been decimated before taking a more aggressive approach to reducing the cat numbers???
- 560 We should be able to shoot lions year round with no license.
- 566 By the amount of kill sites observed, you are not even putting a dent in the amount of lions that are out there. Would like to see the quota raised to at least 80 lions next year. When you can kill 70 lions in 60 days without the use of dogs, you know there are a tremendous amount of lions out there. I would rather see more elk than more lions.
- 576 The season should be opened up to shoot as many lions as possible. They are difficult to spot (especially this year with no snow) and therefore the season should be opened from one date to another with no limit imposed. I enjoy elk hunting and the lions are getting to do more of that than people are because of their numbers. We shouldn't worry about PETA or any other animal rights groups. The hunters are the ones who bring the monies into our state funds.
- 620 I think we should be able to hunt with dogs.
- 621 We need more tags, open season November 1st and run till February 15th then open to hounds and fill quota 150 or more cats. How about those elk and deer everybody enjoys and likes around. Lions should be like bobcats or coyotes! Wake up ask the public who hunt and enjoy wildlife.
- 657 There are too many lions in the Hills! The quota needs to be raised to at least 100 next year if we are ever going to start to get ahead of the curve. I spend a lot of time in the woods, and it makes me want to cry when I see what has happened to our deer and elk herds in the past 6 years or so. Reducing the number of hunter tags each year has obviously not reversed our crashing population trends. Man up and admit you screwed up, as sportsmen would forgive you for that, as long as you take a drastically different direction than the deceitful, dishonest path you have chosen. One more thing, what's up with some people being drawn more than once for the Custer State Park Access Permits???
- 664 I would have loved to hunt in park to help get the problem to fix the elk population there should be no cats allowed in the park..... you guys need to increase the tags real fast to get this problem under control increasing the tags by just a few is not enough 28 calves in the park collared this year all are dead because of too many cats
- 668 The reason for my dissatisfaction was the low quota and short time frame of the season. My recommendation would be a 6-9 month long lion season with a quota of 1/4 of the lions which would most likely be an approximate amount of 100 to 175. Hopefully these changes will be made in the upcoming season to more properly manage the lions and sacrifice our deer and elk herds, before it is too late.
- 675 I think your Custer draw is a joke and the only way you get a permit here is your related are a friend of someone in GFP not just lion season but all other game seasons. It would be interesting to see how many of the same people have drawn tags here over the past

- 20 years or more. I think it's a great shame for how GFP leadership has managed the elk and deer herds in the hills to the number there is today. I felt that if GFP leadership does not get the lion numbers in check in the very near future there will be no more seasons. They should have 200 to 300 a year lion harvest and a season that runs year round or until the numbers are met. Or you should run the season January, February and March and no limit.
- 697 Need to make units for the lions. Hunted in Fall River co and saw 3 cats just didn't get a good shot. Our deer and elk population are very low and no cats got shot in Fall River co. Need to put 200 tags out for 2013 and put units so the cats in Fall River get under control. Need to be able to use dogs or trap.
- 706 Way too many lions!!!
- 712 I believe too much time is spent conducting surveys to find out why the elk herd in the Black Hills, and Custer Park in particular, are at an all-time low when the lion numbers seem to be out of control. I understand the State's position in trying to keep peace with the sportsman and the animal rights activists and that is a very difficult task, but I for one will be forced to look elsewhere to hunt elk because the quality of the hunt has declined severely in the past few years. The Custer State Park Elk Hunt was once one of the premier hunts an elk hunter could hope for, and now many sportsmen like me have no desire to apply for one of the 4 tags available this fall. The state should look at how much revenue is generated by the elk hunts versus mountain lion hunts.
- 743 Employees of GF&P should be held to a higher standard than regular hunters but the firing of an employee for not turning in a kill immediately was extreme. They are also people with lives they live on their days off and he was still within the law concerning his reporting of his kill. Makes me want to reconsider doing business with this organization as it is my hunting fees that help to keep your job too.
- 771 Make the season longer with a larger quota. If we can kill 70 lions in 2 months without much snow or the use of dogs, we have WAY more than we need. That's why all the elk and deer numbers are on the decline.
- 787 There were a lot more Mountain Lion hunters out this year than any other previous years. Law Enforcement or the US Forest Service needs to enforce the Black Hills Travel Management Policy. People are driving everywhere in the Black Hills and the Road Closure signs mean nothing. To me, the "good" hunting opportunities are slipping away because of this unenforced Travel Management Policy.
- 798 I received a CSP access permit for March 1-15. I had scheduled a hunt for March 2-5 but the season ended before that. My dissatisfaction lies with the fact that I truly believe that the count of 70 mountain lions is not even close to where the limit needs to be. I feel that the season needs to be changed so that it allows as many lions as possible to be killed during the season's dates. If there aren't that many lions, opening the limit up should have relatively little impact.
- 801 Deer and elk numbers were very low again this year. Most of the mountain lion sign we saw was in the areas where there were elk and deer. Weather was too warm – could of used some snow during the time of our hunt.

- 808 I will continue to buy mountain lion licenses, even though I didn't hunt in 2012 or 2011. 2011 – Interstate was closed when I had time. 2012 no snow during times I could have hunted. Too much controversy!
- 813 Game Fish & Parks need to stop playing politics and do what we pay you for. The state does a better job than most states in all aspects of up-land game, fishing, small game and big game hunting, except for the mountain lions. My home is surrounded by national forest, each time I came upon mountain lion tracks they had cub tracks with it. Because of the politics the total number of mountain lions is being under-estimated and therefore hurting our deer, elk and turkey population. Do what you are good at and stop playing the politics game! Thank you for your time.
- 823 It was a fun experience but I really wanted to see one even if I didn't get a shot. Saw lots of signs.
- 841 Need to shoot more of the VARMINTS!!!
- 842 I am tired of GF&P treating the general public as if we are stupid. Please quit lying about lion numbers and get them under control. Stop playing politics with my wildlife!
- 854 You have allowed the lion population to grow out of control which has more upset citizens than I have ever heard of. Our elk and deer populations are virtually gone as a result of your poor choice not to keep the lions in control. Coupled with severe previous spring snow storms, you have a mess on your hands. Open the season from Jan. through Mar. with a limit of one lion per person, regardless of sex for five years and watch our population of other big game animals flourish again, regardless of weather, and the GF&P name restored. Especially after firing a biologist for obeying the law.
- 882 I am retired and live here full time now, I spend much time walking, riding, shed hunting, and there are WAY too many lions in this environment. I personally have seen 12 cats at least in 10 years, and find/witness much evidence of cat predation here. I have hunted other western states with healthy cat pop. And have never seen one. This area is close to being "infested "with them. I and my hunting friends are sure there were 12 cats this season in a 5 sq. mile area. We have trail cam pics to prove it.
- 883 Kill them all
- 888 The area I saw a mountain lion last spring was completely devoid of deer and turkeys. My assumption is that the lions got them all and moved on. Custer Park- How in the world did you let the elk population fall from 1000 to 150? I have 20 preference points and even if you got rid of all the mountain lions it will take at least 5 years to build up the elk herd. I'm 73 now and with luck there will be elk to hunt when I am 80. I also hunted deer south of Wind Cave this year and where there were about 20 three years ago there were two this year. You have been managing for lions instead of deer and elk. If you aren't careful your cash cow will die and there will no longer be money to build as you have recently.
- 899 I like to hunt up in the higher areas and the season starts so late that there is too much snow up there. It would be nice to be able to hunt in December.

2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season: Hunter Survey Results

- 906 I wish the National Forest would close gates prior to deer gun season, too many road hunters!!!
- 921 The season closed right before my 15 day period opened for the park so I was unable to hunt the park. I feel the park should be a separate season considering the amount of troubles in the park and the restrictions placed on hunting there. As far as the last lion shot...I think the forest service employee was treated unfairly.
- 926 The weather worked against us - not enough snow for effective tracking. Appreciated the e-updates and phone info as lions were taken. Good system!
- 936 Need to kill more lions!
- 941 Have a longer season so we can get rid of every last one of them. People would rather see deer and elk roaming the hillside. Doesn't take a genius to figure out why the elk are disappearing!
- 942 I was able to find fresh tracks everywhere I went within 10 minutes, just no cats in the tracks, which tells me that there are a lot of cats in the hills.
- 943 I went early in the season and there wasn't any snow in the areas that I hunted and if I did go where there was snow it wasn't fresh.
- 978 Would like to see the season run from first day of elk season until first of April. No quota, no size, check in with in 48hrs. That way we would be able to hunt more of the hills our permits are good for.
- 979 Kill more cats. 100+
- 987 I believe that we should kill many more lions than we do now. The elk, big horn sheep, mountain goats, and deer have a value too. It is our duty to balance nature by reducing the lion population. Please save some game in Custer State Park.
- 1009 How do you people think we do not have a lion problem when you can get 70 plus lions killed in 60 days without using dogs or another type of tracking? Our elk population is decimated. I am waiting for another elk tag rifle for 25 years. Numbers for elk were not great then. We had a great herd going and you screwed it up again! So I don't know if I want an elk tag or not. Great Conservation Haha
- 1054 Need to up the # that can be killed.
- 1067 I would just like to add that I did see a mountain lion during season, just not while I was hunting. It was threatening my dog (she's a 65 pound lab), on my deck! The commissioners have received my letter regarding your problem with the cat population, I'm not happy about the amount of cats in the Black Hills to say the least. Don't tell me they're not there, because they are, I have proof...6 of them, within 3 miles of my home. Isn't a mountain lion's territory generally 30-50 miles so why would there be so many so close to my home, simple because there are too many! You better get more aggressive managing these things! Put a bounty on them or raise the quota to a couple hundred! By the way reinstate Lowell Schmitz!

2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season: Hunter Survey Results

- 1084 Think was an improvement from last year but just my opinion but still think should have more lions harvested think there is still too many lions in the Hills.
- 1091 I could not draw a time to hunt in Custer State Park.
- 1097 This was my first lion hunting experience. I look forward to more in the future.
- 1101 Need more permits in Custer State Park since the elk herd is so small. How about a year round bounty on lions - \$1.00?
- 1113 I feel there are too many lions in the Hills. I see three more tracks, three more times three tracks this year from last. My health prevents me from walking one from fresh tracks but had many opportunities. The absence of elk and deer in the hills is obvious "too many lions". We have a cabin in the hills and women and grandkids are afraid to walk because of the lions. You can see I think there needs more harvested back to what there were 10 years ago.
- 1141 I'm not satisfied with the lion season this year for two primary reasons: (1) we need to harvest many more lions than 70. A bounty would be the way to go. It is obvious that GFP cannot meet their goal of 175 lions because I don't think they have any real idea of how many there are out there. A bounty will knock numbers down to where they should be, which is only a handful....maybe 25 lions and (2) the firing of Lowell was wrong. He did not break the law and I feel he was terminated because he started talking about how many lions there really are and how the elk herd is not managed adequately. I urge you to re-hire him and then start listening to his scientifically based opinions and not cave in to the lion lovers!
- 1164 Need more tags (30) meet to 100 tags next year!
- 1170 I think the warm weather was the reason we didn't see much for sign or that many lions
- 1201 Give us a limited draw hound hunt so we can harvest trophy mountain lions!
- 1205 Too many cats in the hills. Not enough deer and elk.
- 1236 Overall in all the years I hunted for Lions, this was a year in which roads were not permissible to go on and the snow was hard. I like to hunt west and south of Deerfield about 8 to 10 miles. Overall lions are not being spotted; signs were none in that area. I only know of a couple taken, but east of Deerfield a few miles. I have a question; do you release information of where all the lions for this year were taken?
- 1239 1) Please increase the quota. 2) Include CSP in the general season 3) I would like to propose a separate archery season with its own quota opening Sept. 1st and running through March it until the quota is met. I have heard a few stories of bow hunters having encounters during the fall archery seasons. It would be nice to have the tag in the pocket, if an opportunity would arise. The lions would be easily identifiable.
- 1240 Please increase the quota and include CSP in the general season. I would also like an archery season.

- 1258 First off, I wanted to thank the SDGF&P for having a Mt. Lion season and giving us an opportunity to hunt this Apex Predator. With that, I still feel there are WAY too many Mt. Lions in the Black Hills. A move to 50 females and 70 total lions on quota this year was a move in the right direction. I hope that the quota will be increased to a minimum of 100 lions on quota each year starting in 2013. We had NO snow in much of the Black Hills for the bulk of the first 6-weeks of the season. We are NOT allowed to hunt with the aid of dogs or over a prepared bait site and yet we still managed to walk around aimlessly, call in or snow track (when there was some) and kill a total of 73 Mt. Lions in 60-days! Those statistics are undeniable and show the large amount of lions in the Hills. Couple that with the free-fall in our Elk and Deer populations, along with the serious negative effect on Mt. Goats and Bighorn sheep and it spells disaster for Big Game hunters in the Black Hills. I would also add that the cats are definitely increasing and pushing eastward. They will NOT be tolerated in ranch and farm country! I would suggest classifying them as a predator, much like a coyote or fox outside of the Black Hills National Forest. Requiring a landowner or farmer to purchase this tag is not a good way to effectively manage against their eastward expansion. Thanks again for the opportunity to have a Mt. Lion season, I feel we are getting on the right track, but we need the quota significantly increased to get out of the HOLE we are in with our other big game populations.
- 1293 Believe Deer and Elk numbers are down because of too many lions! We need a larger number of lions harvested. Would like to see a longer season implemented. Didn't have a Custer State Park license, but the mortality rate on elk calves, and you're collaring and darting of adult elk, implies there are too many lions according to the reports coming out of the park.
- 1320 Too many mountain lion tags. Also, not harsh enough punishment for people killing baby mountain lions (i.e. 29 lb. lion). Too many people following lion tracks when there is more than one set of tracks. Need more enforcement during lion season.
- 1322 The lions are ruining all other hunting. Killing all our elk, deer, and turkeys. I think you should have an open season and kill as many lions as possible.
- 1345 Once again I do not understand the lack of any sort of dog season for the hunting of lions. With a quota of 70 cats I can think of no other reason to not allow hound hunting other than the Game and Fish does not want to deal with dogs and landowner complaints. With this type of quota both hound owners and non-hound owners could both easily be appeased. You need only to allocate a certain number of tags to the hounds-men and as is done now, end the hound season when the quota is met. Honestly, there really is no plausible explanation for this. The explanation I got from the Game and Fish was that the general public is opposed to hound hunting. I find this hard to believe as I talk to a lot of people, I read all the articles in the papers, and have attended management meetings, to date, the only person I have ever heard even mention this is a GF&P employee. This is an excuse, not a reason. I also believe the State Legislature tried to intervene wanting to pass a law that allowed hound hunting. As a rule, politicians don't often try to draft legislation that the general public has strong opposition to. If I recall correctly the only negative comments to that attempt came out of the Game and Fish. Hound hunting is a far, far better management tool than the general walk around and kill them season that we have now. You can basically eliminate the killing of any cubs or females with cubs. You will select for the larger males as most will leave a small female in the tree. It really does defy any type of logic and science the

- stance that you take on this issue. I would also suggest that the Game and Fish be more active in their presence in the Hills when the season is going on. There is a significant amount of night hunting that occurs during the lion season. There is also a significant amount of unauthorized vehicle travel on closed roads in wildlife wintering areas during the season. Most every time I went out, I would run into a pickup driving on a closed road. This gets very frustrating after hiking 3-4 miles to get to a spot only to have someone drive up. The vehicles always immediately turn around and leave when they see you on foot and I have yet to be able to get any license plate numbers. The Forest Service does not have the man power to patrol the roads. The Game and Fish does and it is your season and your cats. No other hunting seasons are open at this time and I would think you could devote a significant amount of man power to patrolling the Hills during the season. I think the season and the regulation are very poorly run.
- 1351 73 lions in about 2 months of hunting – Increase the numbers again next season because there are more lions than we are being told.
- 1352 Need to up the limit for next year
- 1366 There needs to be more lion tags. Everybody knows there's way more than what they say are out there. Kill more lions so there will be more deer and elk. And more elk tags because they cut the amount of elk tags by a lot this coming year
- 1383 I think the Lion population has continued to grow and I hope you significantly increase the quota next year. There were four lions in Wild Turkey Estates last week.
- 1411 The season is fine. I think the quota should be set higher because from my experience there are more lions in the area than most believe.
- 1429 Hunt in October or November.
- 1438 Wish to use hounds as part of lion season, say after half of the cat quota is reached, then allow hounds to go, or maybe inside Custer State Park. I feel GF&P is discriminating against hounds men. For instance how would bird hunters feel if they were not allowed to use their dogs on birds? I put a lot of time, money, training, and thought into my dogs, and feel bad I can't use them on lion.
- 1451 I like having the lions in the Hills but I think That we still have too many, based on the fact that I don't think we should be able to harvest a cat a day by using the methods we do and also by the decline in some of our other game.
- 1467 Just from the sounds of it, there are still way too many lions. Harvest number should be a lot higher. Living east river it would have been kind of lucky to harvest a lion not knowing if there was any snow. There was no snow when I was out, not good.
- 1498 What if we opened the season from January 1 through the end of March? With a max of 150 cats or 3 months of the cat season being open. Another thing that I have noticed is that the most sightings of cats out of season tend to appear in areas that have road closures due to the wildlife reproduction areas, or on the edge of these areas. I think that some of the road closures should be re visited that leave areas not reachable by one days hiking. I do not think that I am alone in thinking that the only Wildlife reproduction going on in these large areas is that of Mountain Lions. I understand that the theory is for

- not tracking more than one set of cat tracks, but I have friends with up to 3 adult cats on trail cam pictures so to hunt those three cats would be illegal!
- 1518 Work on getting mountain lions out of Custer State Park
- 1523 Yes...simply open the season from Oct 1st to Mar 31st without a quota. There are too many lions and they are killing off all of the deer and elk. I own a cabin in the northern hills and the past 6yrs the pop. of deer and elk has dramatically decreased largely because of the lions. I am an avid outdoorsman---I know of what I am speaking of through personal observations. Question...would one rather have our BH forest thrive with deer and elk or lions?? The general SD population answers that---the former. Why don't we listen to the taxpayer and do something about this. Just look at the announced reduction in elk tags for 12.....you will not admit it---but it's directly linked to the increasing lion population.
- 1528 Way too many cats. Hurting our elk herd that we are trying to build. I think there are way more cats than they estimate. Should be able to harvest a cat if there is more than one together if you can see it is not a female with young kittens.
- 1530 Every year the quota has been filled prior to the end date of the season without the use of dogs. In my opinion that is a big indicator that there are more lions in the hills than most of us think. Elk and deer herds seem to also be taking a decline in numbers large part due to the lions. I think the quota should be raised again next year or maybe even not have a quota and let hunters hunt the entire length of the season with no limit.
- 1544 Think you need to keep someone out there to keep snow mobiles on their trails and off restricted areas.
- 1560 The lack of snow
- 1564 Keep the quota the same for next year. Also, put more snow in the forecast for next year!
- 1573 Open season through November 1 to February, and add 40 more to the quota. Tell the people more information on where the kills are and what cats were collared. Let us know what is going on and be honest.
- 1574 Landowners should be able to hunt on their land no matter where they live.
- 1598 Open more roads or put lion season with deer season.
- 1633 The season should be October to December not January.
- 1708 Too many cats in the hills
- 1748 Too many tags issued! I ran into people every time I was on tracks!
- 1767 Without the use of dogs, the hunt is very dependent on the weather. The use of dogs would allow the hunter to be more selective on the cat he/she wants to harvest. I feel an outside group, other than the GFP, that has experience with these animals needs to conduct a mtn lion study. We need to determine what is more important to the state of

- SD, keeping the PETA-type people happy or protecting our elk/deer population....which based on the numbers may be too late already.
- 1777 70 lions are not nearly enough. They should be hunted year round like coyotes. We have very few deer or elk in our area. The hunting pressure for deer is less than years before. It is mostly private land and landowners are trying to protect what deer and elk we have left, all too little effect with the GF&P current policies.
- 1783 I do not think there should be a quota on the number of Mountain Lions. More lions need to be harvested! The GF&P has failed to manage the Black Hills elk and deer herd in a responsible manner. I believe mountain lions have devastated the elk and deer herds and have deprived thousands of people an opportunity to enjoy viewing and hunting elk and deer.
- 1786 The mountain lion situation in the Black Hills is becoming a joke. I am all for having a lion population in the hills but not to the point where they are killing all the other game animals off. If you guys don't come clean on the total number of lions in the hills, soon we will not be able to hunt any game. Hopefully you don't lie about wolves in the hills until they become a problem. Like you did with the lions. I am very pleased that the lion quota was raised again this year, and I think it needs to keep going up until we see a growth in the deer, elk, sheep, and mtn goat populations. Keep killing the lions!!
- 1787 One day I saw more lion tracks than deer tracks. Far too many lions in my area. Deer population is down drastically and the local turkey population has vanished.
- 1812 Kill all the lions. The elk and deer are suffering badly from this lion infestation.
- 1818 Due to the lack snow this was not a productive season.
- 1851 Growing up and hunting in the hills it was rare to even see a track. Now you can walk 100-200 yds. in any direction and cut track. Soon sportsman will stop hunting game there because there will be nothing to hunt if the current trend continues. When will we stop managing the hunter and start managing the game as the GF&P was intended for from the beginning?
- 1865 I'm very disappointed in how all of our attention is being directed to the concerns of a handful of people who want to save all the mountain lions! Something has to be done NOW! The cats are out of control! I have been hunting deer and elk in the hills almost my whole life and this is the worst I have ever seen! I have hunted elk in three different areas of the hills that all had lots of elk! Now all three areas are void of elk period! Now all three areas I see a lot of cat tracks in the snow and no elk. All the deer are gone too! Far as I'm concerned these mountain lions need to be treated just like coyotes same season same everything! We will never get our elk and deer herds back the way they were before until we get these cats under control!
- 1882 We need to issue more lion tags so are elk and deer herds can start a comeback!
- 1891 Lots of Lions Killing Lots of Big Game
- 1917 Learn something from Wyoming's unlimited quota! NOW!

- 1954 We need to treat them like coyotes; they are eating everything, just look at the elk population and the study that was done in the park. The rest of the hills are just as bad if not worse than in CSP. They try and eat elk that are next to helicopters; yea we have problems, big ones!
- 1963 Need a larger quota, more lions than being reported. Deer and elk numbers are ridiculously low and no matter how the GFP spins it or caters to the minority voice of opposition they are responsible for the lack of quantity and quality of big game in the black hills. The fact that GFP continues to sell the amount of tags they do borders on complete injustice to the residents of SD. I feel that I will continue to give much more of my money to other states that give a shit about quality game hunting
- 1972 Upset with the firing of the GF&P employee.
- 2037 South Dakota needs a hound season. Killing 30 pound lions is a joke and doing nothing to help the elk and deer populations. A 30 pound lion is not killing deer and elk yet and is not the short term solution. I understand that eventually they would be killing deer and elk but not for at least another year.
- 2038 As an avid deer hunter as well, I believe the lion tag numbers are far to low! The fact that 70+ lions were harvested in almost 60 days tells me that the lion numbers are far too high! The deer and elk populations are dropping very rapidly and soon these "resources" will be gone if we don't get a handle on the situation. In some areas the lions are forced to overlap territories, I know this to be true because a good friend of mine has trail pictures of 3 different (collared) females and 1 male all coming to the same deer carcass. As hunters we have a limit on the number of deer that we can harvest, but lions do not! As I understand it one lion will consume one deer per week, that's 52 deer per year, multiply that by the number of lions in the Hills. If we don't do something we are going to be heading ourselves into a serious train wreck. A lion is a natural born hunter, if deer become scarce for them to hunt what do you think they will go for next? Livestock? Pets? People? Not a risk I think we should take. I fully understand that lions were introduced to the Hills to manage wildlife populations and I'm not saying kill them all off but we do need to get them under control...and in a hurry!
- 2064 There are many more mountain lions than what is being claimed by GF&P management. Unless a far greater number are killed very soon, everyone in the game management system will have to turn in your badges as there will not be any reason to have a GF&P. What do you plan on doing? More studies? That does not put elk and deer back to hunt-able numbers. I am also losing baby calves to lions!
- 2073 73 lions in 2 months without the use of dogs and very poor conditions for most of the season, do you think that the G F & P has a good idea of what is going on in the Hills? Less deer, less sheep and less elk, it doesn't take much education to figure out what the problem is. When you allow a very few, a minority, to dictate your policies you are headed for problems. Custer state park is a disgrace to your management policies.
- 2127 I think you need to consider allowing the use of hounds for hunting mountain lions. I have talked to several hunters and guides from west states and they all said the on effective way to manage mountain lions is by using dogs. They allow you to look over the mountain lion and decide if it is an adult that you want to take.

2012 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season: Hunter Survey Results

- 2173 In my opinion, the mountain lion season without the use of dogs is the only way it should ever be in South Dakota
- 2185 Season starts after steel gates are locked limiting access to lions that are in areas we deer hunt. They have decimated the big game populations in these areas to the extent of ruining our outdoor experiences. There are too many lions! This over populations of lions is ruining relationships between sportsmen/land owners/outdoor enthusiasts and GF&P.
- 2189 I saw many hunters driving on closed roads in the Black Hills in order to find tracks. Also, there were many hunters not wearing the required blaze orange. I hope the 73 lions killed this season will put a dent in the population so all the other wildlife in the hills returns. Saw only 1 elk, no turkeys, and fewer deer than I expected to see. These lions are killing everything off
- 2196 I think that there are too many lions in the Hills. We have to hunt more of them so other wildlife can have a chance to grow its population.
- 2230 Seriously folks? 73 lions shot in less than that many days, and 46 females. All without the use of dogs or bait! REALLY!? Do you seriously think this number (46) represents 55% of the entire breeding female lion population? PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE!!!!!! Consult with wildlife biologists from other states that have been controlling mountain lion populations for many more years than SD has attempted to. We will never be able to get ahead of the exploding lion population in the (once game plenty) Black Hills unless someone in our game department gets enough courage to make a drastic change in the number of cats to be harvested. Consider the game we have lost in our state due to the lions over population in the Black Hills and into farm land. Our elk numbers have fallen to unimaginable numbers and so have our sheep and goat numbers. It makes me sick to think of how much money our state has spent on repopulating the game animals in the Black Hills to supply the over populated lions appetite. Please make the tough decision and take drastic measures to reduce the lion population in the Black Hills ASAP.
- 2235 People and lions do not mix. Regulate the season and limit according to the lion count, like you have been. If PETA shows up, tell them to go back to California.
- 2243 If we as hunters are going to get to the cats in areas, we need to have better access to all areas. It seemed that most of the kills were in areas that the roads were somewhat open.
- 2250 I would like to see mountain lion season open year round. This is why we have had a decline in elk and deer herds over the last 5 years. We have had the greatest elk area in the world until the lions have taken over by killing the fawns. This can be corrected if you people take action and control the mountain lion population.
- 2255 I would like to be able to use dogs to track mountain lions you would be able to kill more big toms.
- 2256 Very dissatisfied with the dismissal of your biologist that didn't break any laws.
- 2298 Hunting season year round better get this problem under control

- 2302 Snow cover was very scant for most of the season, without snow or the use of dogs it is hard to hunt cats. When the snow came the season was immediately filled. With the number of cats being killed the last 15 days of season, when we finally had snow, it should show you the number of cats should be raised at least double. Had season started in November I might have got the cat that killed and ate my horse.
- 2306 I did not get to hunt in the park because the season closed the day my permit started. The only reason I put dissatisfied with the season was because I hunted out by Horse Creek. That portion of the BBNF is closed to vehicular traffic. Every time I hunted out there, there were people driving all over the place. That is discouraging to follow the rules and hike back in 3 to 5 miles to have some law breaking hunter drive past you in a truck. It was not an isolated incident. 4 out of 5 times I hiked back in, this happened. What good are rules and laws when the GFP and National Forest cannot enforce them effectively?
- 2311 Why is it that the tree huggers have more pull on how many lion we can take than the people that live to hunt deer and elk in the hills? I have many pictures of different lions on trail cameras less than 1 mile from my house and I live in town. Yet, we don't have a lion problem, right SDGFP?
- 2336 Give the hunters 3 months to hunt, regardless of the number of cats taken. That way the non-hunters would stop seeing the kill number in the Rapid City Journal daily. The deer and elk are being wiped out. I know the GF&P realizes this, because the cat quota keeps going up and the elk and deer population and tag numbers keep going down. I have lived here all my life, 55 years, and would love to hunt elk one more time in the Black Hills. But my son might not even, ever get the chance. Thank you for reading.
- 2357 I think once again the season should be extended. As a land owner I am aware that many more lions are still out there and pose a problem to livestock.
- 2360 I was pleased to see the lion quota increased. I would like to see the quota increased in future years to assist in controlling the number of lions in South Dakota. I feel the lion population has had an adverse effect on big game populations and big game hunting. It is time for Game, Fish and Parks to listen to the hunters rather than the lion lovers and recognize we have a lion problem that is on track to virtually eliminate big game hunting in our state.
- 2387 Should have increased the harvest to 140. Hardly saw any deer or turkey. The one lion that was in the area killed 4 deer.
- 2406 Needed to kill more in Custer.
- 2420 I would like to see a higher quota & season open during November.
- 2437 Without snow it was very difficult to find any lions. This was the first year that I applied for a lion tag. I have noticed a great decrease in the deer herds and especially the elk herds. QUESTIONS: Is there a reason that mountain lions cannot be hunted year long? Why is there an additional cost for a mountain lion tag, could it not be hunted under a standard hunting or predator license? Hunters could still be required to check in any lions killed. How much revenue does mountain lion tags bring into the department?

- 2445 I feel the GF&P is not listening to the public on lion management! All of our wildlife hunting species is suffering from lions and poor GF&P management of over harvest on elk and does. Sheep and mountain goats have had a terrible survival rate. Will you listen before it is too late? It already almost is.
- 2448 You need to increase the quota on mountain lions. We are losing all the wildlife deer, elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep all because of the mountain lions.
- 2449 There are too many mountain lions in the Black Hills and now the prairies and it is scary that it is going to take a young child or mother jogging before you cut loose on them! We already have lost a lot of the wildlife that was a large source of income. Please reconsider handling of this problem! More cat licenses and absolutely no doe season or cow elk season.
- 2463 I believe there are more lions in the Black Hills area than most people think there are. I believe a season is absolutely needed to keep these animals in check. Keep up the good work GFP!
- 2479 I feel hunters should be allowed to run dogs. This would accomplish two things. 1) You will have a better success rate. 2) You will be able to determine if the cat is female or male and whether to take it or not. With dogs you have the option to just walk away and pursue what you're after.
- 2487 I would like to see mountain lions hunted in the same pretense as coyote. So all you would need is your general hunting license. Otherwise, they are going to destroy elk and deer and possibly turkey hunting in the Black Hills.
- 2488 GF&P should allow SD residents to apply to be on a list to harvest nuisance cats. When GF&P responds to a nuisance cat and it is declared to be terminated the public should have an opportunity. And/or allocate a number of tags on lottery for the use of dogs.
- 2490 Shoot more Lions. 73 lions harvested. If 40 females have 2 cubs that are more new cats then harvested. We need to be more proactive to help the deer elk and big horns.
- 2494 I like how you are running the season, however I do believe that some of the cat hunters are using road kills as bait, I believe possible other illegal means to harvest a cat!! Hunter etiquette is at an all-time low!!! When a veh is parked at a closed forest service road, one should know and assume that someone is hunting in that area. Also I have heard hunters continue to hunt in areas where they find a cat track with one to two other cat tracks going the same direction!! One should be thinking it's a female with kittens!!! I have also heard and hope it's not true, but some cats are taken under questionable means, and very young with spots, and because of the public attitude, no arrest is made. I think your department needs to spend more time on hunter etiquette, and get more of the states' attorneys on board with game violations!!! Poaching is a crime, and they need to be dealt with!! I am in the law enforcement field, and I know how hard some of your personnel work to develop their cases, only to have the state's attorney "flush" the case. I have seen one case come back to court after a poor judgment by a young states attorney. And I commend your staff for working that!! But as far as the season, and how it is being ran. I think you are doing a very good job!! Thank you

- 2503 I HATE TO SAY THIS BUT IF YOU CAN KILL 70 CATS OR 73 CATS IN A 2 MONTH SPAN WITHOUT ANY SNOW TO SPEAKE OF JUST HOW BIG A PROBLEM IS THIS GOING TO BE????? I HAVE NOTICED A BIG DROP IN DEER AND ELK POPULATIONS BUT HOW FAR IS IT GOING TO GO BEFOR THERE IS NOTHING ANY BODY CAN DO? IF IT DOESNT GET UNDER CONTROLL ALOT OF PEOPLE DONT GET TAGS AND WHEN YOU GET TIRED OF NOT GETTING TAGS THEN YOU GIVE UP HUNTING AND THEN EVEN YOU GUYS LOOSE REVENUE AND THEN YOU CANT DO YOUR JOB. I BUY MY CAT TAG EVERY YEAR AND GO OUT TO TRY AND DO MY PART BUT WHITH EVERY THING GOING UP LIKE GAS FOOD AND OTHERS IT GET HARDER . I THINK YOU GUYS DO A PRETTY GOOD JOB FOR THE MOST PART ANYHOW AND I KNOW YOUR HANDS ARE TIED ON SOME THINGS BECAUSE OF VOTING AND ALL BUT GOOD LUCK WHIT IT ANYHOW.
- 2524 Question8. Did you apply for and receive an Access Permit that allowed you to hunt mountain lions within Custer State Park? Horribly written question. Should be broken down into two questions. 1. Did you apply for an Access permit to hunt mountain lions within Custer State Park? Yes 2. Did you receive an Access Permit that allowed you to hunt mountain lions within Custer State Park? No
- 2527 Had great time hunting. From the lack of deer and elk signs I would like to know why. Are there to many lions? I hunted in areas that I have hunted deer in the past. It was not many years ago that I would see 20 to 100 deer a day. This season I saw less than 20 deer and very few signs of deer or elk.
- 2531 It is obvious that there is a mountain lion epidemic in South Dakota. An unlimited number of tags should be available to residents, non-residents and also allow the use of dogs. It is also obvious that the people in charge of "counting" or estimating the number of these horse and baby kills is out of touch with reality and should be fired. The economic impact on our state is being felt by the lack of elk. What a joke!
- 2549 Issue more tags and mainly start the season sooner to be able to take advantage of more snow for tracking but keeping the same ending time.
- 2572 The state needs to leave more areas open so that the trails can be accessed by vehicle for people who can't walk 10 miles
- 2651 We need a higher quota on these cats. Our elk population is decimated and the quota was met well before the deadline in less than ideal hunting conditions. There are obviously more cats out there than we are giving credit for. RAISE THE QUOTA!
- 2707 The season should be open for 3 months with no limit.
- 2742 Sorry, I lost this and then found it later.
- 2761 Hunting all private land! One lion was in a housing development, so couldn't shoot. The second one was about 1 second to quick. Didn't want to risk wounding it. All together saw tracks of 6 lions. One adult with 2 young. The two I couldn't shoot and another that I called in but never saw. Came in behind me. Saw his tracks after I quit calling. Trailed him till dark. Picked up his trail the next am, but he soon went onto another ranch. The lack of snow in the prairie areas didn't allow for much good tracking. My feelings are that the number of lions is way beyond what GFP is saying. I found several deer kills. My

- observations show that 90 percent of the doe deer have 0 fawns, and most of the rest only have 1. Saw 2 does that had 2. I would like to see a 90 day season with no quota for a year. Then see what we have. Also, I don't feel Custer State Park should be included in the harvest if there is a quota. They are separate in all other aspects so they should not be included in the overall picture. The amount of lions now on private ranches & housing tracts has pretty much assured that the lion is here to stay.
- 2788 Let us run dogs we can use them on bobcats, this is ridiculous. 4 years ago we cut 7 lions to one bobcat. Last 2 years it was 9 to 1. The elk and deer herds are going down and if the lions aren't over populated why are we seeing them east river? I would like someone to explain this all to me.
- 2791 If one considers the numbers of mountain lions the biologist have collars on versus the number of lions harvested without collars one would realize there are a lot more lions than estimated by the GF&P. GF&P is all once again two steps behind on preventive reasoning. The Black Hills has $\frac{3}{4}$ more lions than what we should have here. Point made where are the mountain goats, where are the big horn sheep? Now the elk are being eaten up by predators. You so called wildlife managers lied about mountain lions in the Hills till the populations go so high you couldn't lie about it anymore. The same is going on with the wolves up in Deerfield. You biologists said and lied that there are no breeding pairs or families in the Hills, there is a pair of them in the Deerfield area and you are going to lie about it until you cannot get away with it, until it is mushroomed out of control just like the lions. We sportsmen pay your way and fund the deer & elk and your beloved wolves and lions. My lion a large 4 year old male had two cow elk and one deer all caught in the same spot. So don't try to say they kill only what they eat. Plus when a cat is on the move it will kill a deer or elk, eat one meal and move on and make another kill the next day.
- 2795 Need to use dogs to hunt lions.
- 2829 I believe there needs to be more tags issued for the amount of mountain lions.
- 2859 The reason I checked VERY DISSATISFIED is because we have WAY too many cats. The exact thing is happening in our entire black hills as in Custer state park!!!! I also feel much of the game and fish dept. realizes the problem, but do not take action due to political pressure from higher up's. I hunted 4 different cats this year, 3 wearing collars and I was never more than 200 yards from my house. That's less than 200 yards from my 3 and 6 year old kids!!!!!!!!!!!!THE GAME AND FISH NEED TO STOP DOE AND COW HUNTING AND KILL THE CATS.
- 2880 Need to start running dogs or we won't have any wildlife left and kill 3 times as many
- 2896 I have been hunting in the northern Black Hills for 30 years and have never seen the number of deer so low. I would think it would be in the best interest of the GF&P to get better control of the cat population. Increase the quota and allow dogs to be used. Using dogs will allow for better selectivity and help keep them away from the more populated areas. I hope the GF&P will not react so slowly to the wolves as they have the cats. It's a matter of time before someone is killed. Is the GF&P up for that?
- 2946 Kill more lions and increase the season.

- 2989 Out here many more lions need to be killed. Where I have hunted deer for 6 years I did not see one deer. I didn't know why until I searched the area, I found one fresh lion kill, one day old, picked clean. 5 days later 2 miles away another fresh kill picked clean, 6 days later 5 miles away another. I sat out in my stand before the season and after the season and it scares me how few deer I saw. If the kills keep going we can kiss deer hunting goodbye.
- 2998 There are way too many cats in the Black Hills plain and simple. I think something needs to be done and I think it needs to be done right away before any more damage is done. I started noticing the effect the high mountain lion population was having a couple of years ago. First it started with the porcupines. They are pretty much nonexistent in the hills today. Next I noticed the bobcat sign has severely diminished. Now I've noticed the deer numbers seem to be way down. I am not in elk country that much so I don't have firsthand knowledge of what's happening there but from what I understand it's not good. I don't understand what the big hang-up is with these animals. Sure they are a beautiful and majestic creature but they need to be managed just like any other animal. I would really like to see the use of hounds in some form to aid in the management of these animals. Even if they are not allowed in the regular hunting season I think they should be considered in the off season for management. I also feel that land owners (those that depend on the land for a living) should have the ability to be able to use dogs as a means of controlling the large cats. Thanks!
- 3010 Lions should be hunted with dogs the only people that are getting them are people who live in an area and continuously see them or own land and see them all the time! I think there are way too many I seen more tracks of lions this year than deer they are killing all the wildlife. We did fine for years without them now they are ruining good hill hunting and are even chasing prairie deer. The hunters should get together and see if the state will pass a bill to allow dog hunting it's only a matter of time till we start seeing fatalities.....thanks
- 3019 We should raise the limit.
- 3020 We have encountered a lion (or different lions) on our property in the past year, in much closer proximity than we are comfortable with. Spring-summer, usually around 11:0 am. Have reason to believe that three move through the area (tracks we've seen, neighbors reports, etc.) - although we did not see them during hunting season. Just the tracks; and an hour or a day late. We understand that certain property owners, in certain areas, are allowed to dispatch a lion any time during the year the license was purchased - or, if physically threatened (without a license). We do not happen to live in one of those areas where it's allowed year-round. I admire the magnificent, beautiful animal..... But I also worry about gardening with my back to the woods. Lion killed a deer in the yard last summer, so we are alert and cautious. I hope that, with further and better research (thank you for conducting this survey!) we can all get a better understanding of the comfort/threat-level, and maybe move the map or quota so everyone feels safe and the predator/prey animal- levels are "balanced" at least as much as we can manage. It's a tricky job you do - I appreciate all your efforts and hard work. Thank you.
- 3021 Mountain lions should be treated like coyotes they serve no purpose in the black hills other than killing deer and elk that sportsman love to hunt. Then to pacify anti-hunting groups you fire an employee that did nothing wrong. Your approach to this makes all of us sportsman look like idiots somebody should be fired and it should start at the top.

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- 3035 First time hunting for lion's in the hills was a good learning experience. I will be back next year.
- 3038 You guys need to get the mountain lion population under control. I spoke to a hunter from Montana who could not believe that we filled 70 tags "73" cats in a month and a half without using dogs. His exact words were "you guys are way over saturated." I also know for a fact that one hunter this year shot and missed a large male, than turned around and shot a different large male in the exact same spot the next day! That means two large males sharing the same territory. Someone will be hurt soon if we don't get numbers down soon.
- 3046 I believe the numbers, like most residents, are not even close. The liberal attitude in my state needs to be curbed and facts be given to the public, not east/west coast mentality.
- 3064 I can't tell you anything you haven't already heard. More tags should be issued the kill quota should be increased.
- 3069 Open the season year round, the mountain lions are killing too many elk, deer, turkey, etc.
- 3132 Need to start cat season same time as archery antelope end it on March 31, NO QUOTA. Way too many, when you see 73 harvested in 48 days. The cats are costing way too much revenue to manage and do not generate the revenues that the deer and elk they eat, would generate. We all understand the effects of hard long winters and killer spring storms on our ungulates as well as EHD, blue tongue, and CWD that reduce their numbers. The mountain lion plan is PURE Genocide on our deer, elk, and wild sheep populations.
- 3151 Less lions = More Deer, Elk, Sheep, ETC. Know what I mean?
- 3166 Continue the season until they are under control
- 3195 Are you sure there are as many lions as you claim I spent 16 days in the hills and only cut 2 tracks
- 3206 The GFP is responsible for the decimation of the Elk herd in the Black Hills. The lack of a proper management plan needs to result in leadership change.
- 3216 Structure of hunting in Custer State Park does not allow for enough pressure to be applied to the lion population in the park nor in the Black Hills as a whole. Our big game herds are being devastated by an overharvest of breeding female populations while the overabundant mountain lion population continues to take a heavy toll. The harvest of 73 mountain lions by hunters in two months of hunting time, along with a substantial number of road killed lions and lions harvested by GF&P personnel due to complaints tells everyone that your lion population estimates are bogus.
- 3233 By the amount of lion sign and lack of other wild life sign deer, elk turkeys. I think the lion season should run through the end of March and using dogs allowed with Custer Park included no special permit just to hunt there. You have a very big problem with the amount of cats in the hills by the amount of tracks we saw in the snow old and new. We at one time had a large Elk herds with trophy bulls not matched by any state but maybe

- New Mexico, Arizona and Southern Colorado. Now thanks to the lion management those herds have gone from 50 to over a hundred to 25 and less per herd. I also had my archery elk tag this last fall and was shocked at the demise of our elk herds compared to 11 years ago when I had my rifle Elk tag. As far as I'm concerned the GFP dept. needs a complete overhaul from the top down. What we need is someone concerned about our big game and not about some mountain lion lovers! We as sportsman need to voice our concerns when the next Governor election is and get someone into office that will take care of the problem instead of giving into the animal activist. That being said, have a great day.
- 3244 I do think it's bullshit that the game and fish worker got fired over the reporting of those last few cats and think the higher ups need to use their heads. If there is supposedly so many cats out there don't think that 1 or 2 more is that big of a deal in the whole scheme of things. I understand rules are rules but come on. Just my opinion.
- 3288 I think they should harvest more lions in the park.
- 3319 I can't understand how you can kill males sight on seen, seems to depend on luck. Dogs are the only way to ethically hunt mountain lions.
- 3328 There are too many Mountain Lions in the Black Hills and it is time for you to step up and manage the problem. Reinstate the biologist you fired in Rapid City and fix the real problem with game management in our state...the leaders of your department!!!
- 3330 Didn't actually see the mountains lions during the hunting season. Saw two mountain lions during pheasant season, which inclined me to get a land-owner's tag for when I went coyote calling in case I were to see one.
- 3359 Mountain lions should be reclassified as vermin and anyone who kills a mountain lion should be rewarded with a free extra black hills deer tag or a few preference points toward an elk.
- 3370 I carry a landowner permit, so I save it in case I find one on my land. I agree with the Black Hill's resident hunters, the lions are decimating the deer/elk herds. They need to be controlled in a stricter manner. Same as Custer State Park, I saw the picture of the lion with the cow that had been shot with a tranquilizer and wandered into the brush. I fully support the GFP biologists and know they have a tough job, but unless I am shown different I don't believe it's sickness that is depleting the herd.
- 3373 I feel that the limit should be higher and that dogs should be allowed.
- 3384 THERE IS A LOT OF CATS OUT THERE BUT WITHOUT SNOW THEIR HARD TO HUNT!!! UNLESS YOU WOULD ALLOW US TO USE DOGS!! THE KILL NUMBER NEEDS TO BE HIGH YET. THERE WERE 43 CATS KILLED IN 43 DAYS WITH A SNOW COVER.
- 3423 Open it up and kill as many as possible. They are doing damage to species that we have worked so hard to bring along sheep, goats, elk and deer have all suffered! There are far too many if we are killing this many without dogs! Kill more we won't be able to kill them all.

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- 3431 My concern: one species is allowed to dominate at the expense of others (elk). We have a responsibility to all wildlife not just the mountain lion. I realize that GF&P is under pressure from all different opinions but bottom line, you have to do what's best for the whole system.
- 3443 Please allow dogs, and open the season for a year and let's see what happens to all the deer and elk populations that have been destroyed because of mismanagement.
- 3450 I happened to be at the new outdoor center in Rapid City the day the Commissioner's made their decision on the number of tags to be issues. Had I known that this is what the meeting was about I would have definitely participated. From what I understand, the GF&P biologists made their recommendation and the Commissioners basically ignored their request and must have pulled some number out of a hat. It's the same way they set up West River deer in 2011 and by that I mean the very NW portion of the state. Thank you for letting me comment.
- 3459 I think you are on the right track with a larger tag quota as the 70 cats on the quota would probably be plenty for the Black Hills. I am a rancher here in Western S.D. I got my tag just in case I see the cat on my land. I had deer killed on my land that was probably a lion kill in October. My neighbor found a fresh one in August that was about ½ mile from the one I found.

Neutral or No Opinion – 145 comments (18.6% of total comments)

- 16 Next year
- 38 No snow made the hunt tough.
- 57 See you next year
- 68 Spent a lot of time in the field big game hunting this past fall/winter. Helped a friend with elk hunting, black hills deer, and mountain lion. Pretty much was afield from October through February. Saw more lion sign than we saw elk sign!!! Found multiple sets of tracks of lions (when there was snow in November) in the same 10-15 square mile area; as a novice would estimate there are at least 4 - 6 lions in that area. Used to see herds of 200 elk in this same area. Now in four months we saw one group of 15 elk that contained two small bulls, thirteen cows and not a single calf. That pretty much tells me a story! At the same time, we probably saw more whitetail deer than we've seen in years - as many as 70 distinct deer in a single day. All this activity was in the same hunting area. This tells me that lions are not having the same impact on deer that they are on the elk. Understand the inherent problems with using dogs for lion hunting given the mosaic of private land in the Black Hills. But...surely there's got to be a more effective way than cold calling - particularly when there is no snow. The fact that 70+ lions were harvested in these conditions tells me hunters are getting more skilled and that there are most likely WAY MORE lions in the hills than estimated. I would love to get a lion to add to my accomplishments, but we definitely need to rebuild the elk herd!!!!!!!
- 79 I had very little time to hunt this year and it was my first time calling any predator so I am happy with the coyotes that came in. I think there are plenty of lions out there and I would prefer to see more elk and fewer cats. I hope to see the lion limit numbers way up

- next year and the elk cow way down for a few years. Love the GFP Android app. Keep making it better.
- 92 I received a Custer State Park permit for the last session and obviously didn't get to hunt there. I wish there was perhaps a separate quota for CSP and it wouldn't close until the end of the season. I also don't think that other people that had an earlier permit for CSP and didn't get one during their allotted time should be able to hunt there during the last session.
- 93 Too many 4 wheelers running trails not leaving people on foot a chance – already chased animals away and also several people observed using dogs witch is illegal. Other than the forest work going on kind of a hassle but not bad, and there were a couple of gates closed on roads that were marked open so we had to turn around and lucky able to do so and get back out they were open on one end closed on the other. Otherwise I had a great time.
- 102 Kill more lions too many of them
- 136 Snowmobiles should not be allowed
- 210 First time lion hunting a lot to learn yet
- 254 Drawings for Custer State Park were too far apart. Not able to plan as I was far away from the hills at that time. Would have rather seen all drawings happen in one shot. This way you would know what kind of hunt to plan for on the front side. I do love the hunt and am very grateful to the State of South Dakota for allowing this hunt to continue. Only hunted once because it was unclear if I would get a CSP permit, would have planned a longer hunt if I would have known.
- 314 This was my first time hunting mountain lion. I think that the lack of experience and lack of snow contributed to me not being able to even see one. I will try again next year though; I really want to be able to get one.
- 318 Was hoping to get out more but things come up...
- 324 There need to be more mountain lion tags. Too bad we have to lower elk tags because the state can't manage the cat population.
- 344 It is painfully clear to see that you people don't have a clue in what you are doing. I just wonder how much more you will screw up the hunting here in South Dakota.
- 363 I think if the harvest spots where a little more precise then it would be easier to know if a lion that was harvested was one that you had been tracking. I know for me a couple times I was unsure if I should continue to hunt an area due to lions being harvested in the area. So therefore if the harvest updates could include forest service roads or other more detailed descriptions that could be a lot of help to hunters. Also this was my first year lion hunting and found it hard to get information on how to hunt them in our state with our regulations. I think that an open forum or blog on the GF&P website in the lion section could be helpful so hunters could share their successes and failures and be able to ask one another questions.

- 415 Please raise the lion limit next year so we can have successful deer and elk hunts in upcoming years.
- 426 I personally see no reason to nature the existence of mountain lions (of the wolves) in our outdoors in this state or many others. The obvious determination to ours and other states' elk herds has had tremendous impact on the availability of licenses for our citizen. It happened in the part there is a very obvious reason these cats and wolves were nearly extinct, from the homesteaders through rule development. They destroy more wildlife than their presence is worth! These animals provide no worthwhile benefits to nature or the furtherance of mankind. If you can't manage their existence while protecting their pretty from being divested why have they at all? I hope it is costing lots of money in lost license revenue.
- 475 Hunted Custer Limestone area all my life I am 51. Deer and elk populations are down.
- 488 I did NOT SEE ANYWAY I HAVE TO DO A SURVEY SO DONT TELL ME I MUST DO THIS I ONLY HAVE A PHONE TO DO THIS ON AND IT SCREWS IT UP SO STOP WITH THE SURVEY OR I WILL STOP HUNTING
- 492 Saw many more lion tracks than deer or elk tracks. The lion population will have to come down more before the deer and elk hunting approves in the hills.
- 516 Kill more lions and save more elk, I would sooner hunt elk.
- 523 What about the wolf population in the hills? We heard from many other people about wolf sightings.
- 539 Is it really that hard to get into Custer to hunt? I applied to at least 3 different slots and was unsuccessful each time.
- 689 Need to be more mountain lions taken because of declining elk herd numbers.
- 693 Weather was too nice - not enough snow to hunt proper. Couldn't track lions very well without snow. I also had to have a knee surgery. These are the only reasons that I did not hunt this year.
- 709 I didn't get much time to hunt.
- 734 With that many harvested with the type of hunting that we are limited to it is obvious that we need to continue this season and numbers.
- 755 We need to kill more lions. I no longer have elk on the ranch and the deer are fewer every year!
- 779 You should allow a depredation mountain lion hunt in the park to kill at least 5 more lions this season so hunters that have unfilled tags can help with the problem in the park. Open more roadless areas or give passes to hunters to kill cats in the wintering grounds. DO NOT GIVE OUT ANY COW ELK TAGS FOR THE PARK THIS YEAR AND VERY LIMITED COW TAGS FOR THE REST OF THE HILLS. GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO REBOUND

- 781 they need to increase the numbers shot, to help bring deer and elk numbers back up , and as for outside the black hills they should let hunters hunt private land with permission from the land owner after the regular season
- 885 Once again I heard and even saw people hunting lions with dogs. There were on several occasions where we ran into atvs and snow mobiles on closed trails that ruined our hunt as we were tracking a lion. This is getting old as it happens every year. It's to the point where our group doesn't want to apply and pay the amount of money to have our hunts ruined by this. Especially since the price has increased so much. If we are going to pay this much have a drawing for tags because GFP is making bank on this and the issue is getting worse every year.
- 905 IT WOULD BE A LOT EASIER TO FIGURE OUT WEATHER THE LION IS ONE WITH BABIES IF WE COULD USE DOGS
- 913 I would welcome mountain lions on my property.
- 935 Keep killing cats. There are too many out here.
- 946 I was only able to hunt the tail end of the season due to surgeries just after Christmas. Had I been stronger, I would have hunted more actively. Seems that most of the people that I spoke with that were seeing cats during the season were using electronic calls. Perhaps next year will be different. Regardless, the ungulate population in the Black Hills is in decline. Every year, my Son and I are seeing fewer and fewer whitetail and elk in the Hills, while the mule deer population in the Hills is just about non-existent in areas where only 7 to 10 years ago they were plentiful. This past deer season, my Son and I came across numerous lion killed deer in several of our "honey-holes", much to our chagrin. Needless to say, there is no shortage of mountain lions in the Black Hills and with the decline in the whitetail population; we will continue to apply for lion tags.
- 984 Having an unlimited number of licenses with a quota is an awesome idea. You should strive to do the same with deer and elk. The opportunity to hunt is a lot more valuable than the trophy potential.
- 1015 It was a poor season meaning not much snow and they still bagged them in record time. That tells me that you need to kill way more!
- 1036 I would like to see the use of dogs in the park.
- 1048 Kill more lions or the deer and elk will all be gone, a blind man can see what is happening.
- 1073 Just curious, of the 72 lions killed, how many were collared and then how many are collared in the Black Hills. Was the percentage the same or are we looking at a bigger number of cats then we need? I and some other people are going to apply for points only for elk season, as it sounds like the number of surviving calf numbers were so low last year that the total number of tags available is way to frigging high anyways. We had something special for our state as far as the Elk herd we had and now it is very disappointing to let it go to sh_t. I think this whole mountain lion thing is taking a lot of revenue out of the GFP pocket. The deer population is so low now we have to apply separate and the hunting is terrible now also!

- 1085 I feel we have a big problem with lions in and out of the park in the Black Hills. I feel it is hard enough to draw elk and deer tags but trying to compete with the lions getting the amount of deer and elk is unacceptable.
- 1133 Start the season November 1st and let it run until 75 females are harvested. The lions are killing WAY too many deer, elk, pronghorn, turkey, etc. Elk calves do not even have a chance with the number of cats in the Hills. Thank You.
- 1148 Driving around on my ranch where I did most of my hunting I observed many mountain lion kills, 4 elk and several deer.
- 1181 Applied for but did not receive a mountain lion access permit in Custer State Park, up the quota again until we don't meet the quota, so at least you know where you are at with the numbers. I want mountain lions in the Black Hills, but I also want deer and elk. Get the numbers down so that there can be a projected balanced harvest between the lions and sportsmen. No sportsman that I have ever spoken with wants to see all mountains gone from the hills. Decreasing antlerless elk and deer permits does nothing unless you deal with the real mountain lion problem, until that is dealt with. The only action in the future will be, do we want to issue one elk permit or no elk permits? One more thing, Lowell Schmitz is a good man, did not deserve what happened to him. It is really unfortunate that you are sending out this mountain lion survey to gather information from someone like me, when he spent his career gathering the information needed in order to make recommendations to the officials of the GFP to effectively manage the Mountain Lion population. Please pass these comments onto the right officials within the department as I do not believe that the hardworking biologists and conservation officers in the field are responsible for the mismanagement of the mountain lions, the decisions are coming from Pierre. Thank You
- 1182 I come across a lot of lion tracks on our summer range where we run cows and hunt deer. What concerns me is the deer herds have about 3 fawns to every 10 does. The elk calves are also way under numbered. Hopefully it's not lions but all the kills we come across sure indicates we have a bad lion problem.
- 1194 Although I was not successful this mountain lion season, I believe there are many more lions than GFP has led the public to believe. We had the worst hunting conditions...no snow, cannot bait, cannot chase with dogs yet 70-lions were killed in 60 days. I have noticed an enormous decline in the deer herd in the Hills. Where I usually hunt, it was normal to see 20-30 deer in an outing.....this year, that number dropped to approx. 5-7 deer per outing. Something has got to be done to reduce the mountain lion population and stop the decimation of our deer, elk, turkey numbers.....
- 1203 I don't know how many licenses were issued for the park, nor do I know how many lions were harvested there, but I believe the number should be increased to help strengthen the elk and deer herd within the park. Thanks for your efforts.
- 1256 Opinion: You guys have a tuff job and this is a touchy subject. I like the ability to Hunt another animal such as a Lion in SD but it sounds like most South Dakotans including myself would rather see our Elk, Deer, Mt. Goat, etc...Population #'s back. Shooting 70 lions in that short amount of time sounds a little too easy. I did plan a trip to hunt Lions this year but had to cancel at the last min. Make your money by selling tags but allow dogs to increase the success rate. Keep the Lion #'s down, Success rate up by using

- dogs, and issue tag #'s, as needed, on the lottery system to keep making money. I certainly don't have all the subject matter info regarding this issue. Maybe not feasible?? Good Luck Thanks for your Hard Work. I Love SD!
- 1301 Need to offer more kills in the future...take a look at declining deer and elk populations in the Black Hills
- 1317 I feel the quota should not decrease next year. Seems like there was no problem meeting the quota this year. Which tells me there's a large healthy population and it can withstand the hunting of that many cats.
- 1318 Season quotas seemed to be thought out fairly well in my opinion
- 1371 With the populations of the elk and deer, many of us feel the lion hunting should be part of a general license.
- 1374 We need to kill more lions to get our deer and elk numbers back on track.
- 1426 I feel there are way more lions in the hills since near 7 were taken within 2 miles of our ranch.
- 1489 Not all of the snowmobile trails should be closed during mountain lion season, maybe just the main routes, and the rest should be at least open to ATV's and UTV's for the season. I'm 62 years old and cannot walk like I used to, so I'm restricted to areas closer to the roads than I'd like.
- 1517 It is obvious there is a lot of lions if they killed this many this fast with no snow.
- 1531 Increase mountain lion tags to help elk rebound. I wish I had more time to hunt...doesn't everyone.
- 1541 I primary purpose for getting a lion tag was in case I shot one on my own property in Meade County where I have livestock. I hunted one week-end with some east river friends.
- 1553 I still think that dogs shouldn't be allowed to hunt lions or bobcats. Hunters are claiming they are bobcat hunting and "accidentally" come across a mountain lion.
- 1597 Due to a major back surgery I was unable to hunt this season.
- 1624 I intended to hunt more but I had major surgery in early January. I intend on hunting more in 2013.
- 1625 On the front of this questionnaire you're getting opinions on lion management you should have wrote lion mismanagement, SD GF&P knows absolutely nothing about managing wildlife, money is their deciding factor on everything they do. Our elk herd is in need of management by SD GF&P not by the lions that prey on them every day of the year.
- 1673 I got a cat off elk kill on argyle but follow his track for a mile or so he went up the side on the canyon and got away from me, it was too bad that we only had good snow to track one time that I was able to hunt

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- 1685 Saw mountain lion tracks several times. Not much sign of any other game. Either the lions ate them all or they moved to safer territory.
- 1700 I think there are more mountain lions than estimated or reported to the public. I and many of my fellow hunters are tired of the mountain lions killing all the deer and elk and think more drastic measures should be taken. I think the mountain lions should be put on the predator list because they are going to ruin hunting in the hills and surrounding area. At the very least the hunting season for lions should be year round and unlimited after all coyotes are shot year round and there are still more coyotes than we can get rid of. The lions are going to affect the amount of people that are even going to apply for elk and deer tags.
- 1717 I live on a ranch north of Whitewood, S.Dak. we seem to see sign a lot. I hope we can keep the lion population in check. Thank you
- 1744 I think we should be able to hunt the lions Nov. Through Feb. UNLIMITED TAGS.....there are too many lions!
- 1747 Run the season 3 months with no quota.
- 1792 The season was over before I was able to get time to hunt. Next year there should be more tags.
- 1821 Need to kill more lions
- 1842 Too many cats in the Hills. Need to up the limit. They are the reason the elk and deer numbers are falling in the Park and other areas of the Hills.
- 1876 Continued harvesting of lions is needed.
- 1919 Had CSP access permit but season closed the day my season opened
- 1947 You need to somehow get some limited hound hunting. The number of cats in the Hills is ruining the elk and deer hunting and wolves are on their way. I have been seeing wolves in the Slim Buttes the past three years.
- 1948 You need to significantly increase your number of tags or you are going to (or have already) ruined all deer and elk hunting in the Black Hills.
- 1989 I feel that there should be more lions harvested in and out of the park.
- 2045 I'm 80 years old so walking is out of the question, short distances is even hard to do anymore. On back roads I saw where three deer had been killed by a lion and I see tracks most every time out. I don't think hunting has slowed up the population of lions.
- 2070 There was no snow on the ground and the weather was in the 50's. I spent most of my time prairie dog hunting on private land outside the Black Hills National Forest.
- 2118 Due to lack of snow, I did not hunt.
- 2124 I think there should be a raise in the limit

- 2128 Should issue a cat permit with every elk tag!
- 2136 More lions need to be harvested to raise the elk herds.
- 2137 Was too busy to go mountain lion hunting this year.
- 2172 Need to have more licenses. The Black Hills are way over populated with Lions, our Elk and Deer population are extremely decreasing due to over population of Mountain Lions in my opinion. If I had more time to hunt I would have made it out this year to put in my contribution to filling my tag.
- 2187 The lions need to be kept under control if we want to have an elk season in the Black Hills. It should not matter what the lion is shot with, as long as it is killed humanely and legally.
- 2188 I think the lack of snow at the beginning of the season was a problem for us.
- 2228 I did not have a permit to hunt the park I just had a Black Hills tag, my opinion for the park you have priced me out of that hunting option. As for the rest of the season it was fine and a challenge as I know I was on the cat(s) as I had seen plenty of signs and had actually heard what I believed a couple of times a lion howl in one area I hunted. Tracking was hard as the area had either no snow or it was too deep and hard to travel not allowing me to go very far by foot. Personally I'd like to see the season longer or a larger number of lions taken. I believe there was a great amount of area that was not hunted in the western and northern black hills just due to the simple fact allot of area was close due to snow depth.
- 2307 I feel we should be able to shoot a lion when seen we have way too many of them. You should up the quota if nothing else we are not going to have any game left if you don't do something. We find several kills we spend a lot of time in the woods it's really sad to not see any elk and deer anymore.
- 2367 Lions are about all that's going to be left to hunt here. If they are not thinned out more, Custer State Park herd down to 150 from a 1000. Maybe we can hunt wolves to when all the deer and elk are gone. There are so many eagles and other raptors there isn't any small game hunting to be had.
- 2368 I had a friend hunt with me this year. He always wanted to know exactly what people who shot lions were doing when they got one. This information would be helpful. Last year I tracked one part of two days which taught me something of that cat.
- 2389 Up the quota
- 2421 I live in Philip S.D. (actually 2 miles out of town) and many times residents reported seeing a mountain lion. I still have my landowner tag and hope to use it. I haven't seen any by my house but I've seen a couple of deer carcasses shredded to pieces and my dog and my cat disappeared during the time the mountain lion talk came upon our town.
- 2422 Lack of snow cover made this a tough season for finding cats. The use of dogs would have been helpful this year.

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- 2457 Why comment, you probably won't listen and do anything anyway!
- 2489 Open the season to the use of dogs. Make season statewide. Increase quota or no quota at all.
- 2504 I talk to 100 people a day mostly outdoorsman and every day 20 percent have seen a one lion or more! You have heard it before too many lions! Deer population is as bad as it has been also elk is way down! Thanks
- 2513 Open more opportunities next year to increase the Mountain Lion kill.
- 2530 A successful hunt should have to wait a few years before they can apply for another tag. This will allow other hunters who were unsuccessful to have a better chance at harvesting a lion.
- 2540 I bought the tag to shoot one if I saw one around my house, which there are but didn't see one.
- 2597 Need to harvest more than 70 next year.
- 2615 I applied for and received a tag, but wasn't able to find the time to travel to the black hills and participate in the hunt. Hopefully next year.
- 2617 Any resident with a license, and permission, should be able to hunt them year round outside of the Black Hills.
- 2632 Didn't have time to hunt this year. Next year
- 2644 I spent a lot of time in the woods this year looking for a big male. My thinking was to shoot a fully mature male. I would like to see a very short time period to be able to hunt with someone that has hounds to harvest a fully mature male. I think it would be an extra revenue source for the GFP and give a hunter like myself to harvest a trophy lion. Thank you to all the GFP staff for the hard work and professionalism that is required to give me a great state to be an outdoorsman.
- 2650 When are you guys going to realize we need to harvest more lions before they completely destroy the elk population?
- 2655 Don't allow hunting with dogs.
- 2671 I strongly believe we have a mountain lion problem. I did see Mt. Lions during deer season and there seems to be numerous sightings on highways and other areas. Keep the season going and don't cave in to the save the mtn lion interest groups.
- 2678 Please consider issuing a number of permits that allow the use of dogs in trailing cats.
- 2687 I would like to see the numbers lowered from 70 to 50 or 60. I think you are bringing the numbers down to fast.
- 2702 We need to kill a lot more lions.

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- 2704 I have only seen lions during the archery deer season. In both occasions I could have harvested a big tom with my bow.
- 2723 Start eradication effort on October and continue to the end of March with no limit!! Quit BSing hunters about over hunting elk.....hunters don't write their own licenses..... Your department issues them! Your department can't manage for the majority..... like the Forest Service manages for the whiners that don't buy the licenses and not the animals?????
- 2724 It's hard to hunt and call with 45mph winds and driving rain.
- 2798 I observed a lion while archery hunting elk in the black hills last fall. You need to be more specific if you wish to have had it answered "during season."
- 2813 EVEN THOUGH I DID NOT KILL A MOUNTAIN LION THIS YEAR, I THINK THE LIMIT SHOULD BE RAISED TO AT LEAST 200.
- 2839 I think the reality of mountain lions and having a limited quota on them is this; without the advantage of using hounds there is no way cats could be over hunted, there are more cats than the hills can sustain and the deer and elk herd is proof of this. Quit worrying about what the tree hugging granola eaters want and manage the resource for the betterment of the resource and not to prevent a backlash from the goofballs.
- 2853 I believe mountain lions should be listed as predator species and hunted the same as coyotes or bob cats.
- 2856 More mountain lions tags = more elk, deer, big horn sheep and mountain goat tags.
- 2863 More cats needs to be harvested.
- 2890 We need to use dogs in Custer State Park. We also need to harvest 100+ (for a year) cats so the elk can grow.
- 2933 I would like to see the mountain lion status changed to that of the coyote, namely that they can be shot year round. I have hunted in the Hills for almost fifty years and have seen only and have seen only one mountain lion and many coyotes, and do not believe such a change would seriously impact and certainly not decimates the lion population. I believe this would be the best way to re-grow the elk, deer, mountain sheep, mountain goats, etc.
- 2965 The Mtn Lion hunting was more effective in the Black Hills with snow on the ground this winter. Due to limited snow cover over the course of the winter made the hunting more difficult. Due to the number of Mt Lion in the Black Hills, I would suggest a longer season to address Mt Lion population. I saw tracks nearly every day when I was out hunting in numerous different areas. A longer season could address the actual number of Mt Lions that exist in the Black Hills. It would be beneficial to hunt with dogs for age class/appropriate sexing of the Mt Lion as well, but with the understanding of private property issues.
- 2972 I have a cabin on the Custer Limestone Rd 7 miles west of Custer. We used to have between 40 and 70 deer at different time of the year also we've had up to 175 elk in our

valley. Now we see only 7 to 10 on a regular basis and hardly ever see elk anymore. We've had lion tracks on our deck and by our garage. Our neighbors have lost 2 house cats and 1 small dog. The GF&P needs to start telling it like it is. The cats are decimating the elk and deer and everyone knows it as a fact except the GF&P. We have 9 grandchildren that when they play outside we have to be with them. I keep a loaded gun in my garage, I won't miss.

2986 Still too many lions

3031 I just ran out of time for the trip to the Hills, but will go next year.

3062 I am 53 years old and have lived in the Black Hills all of my life. I've been an avid outdoorsman. You are cutting tags on deer, elk etc. maybe you should increase your cat tags. You don't have to have a biology degree to figure this out. I appreciate all the hard work and great job the GF&P has done in many areas but let's face it we are failing here!

3068 Season ended before I was able to use my CSP license. You guys really need to get a handle on the lions in the Hills. We sportsmen didn't build up the elk and deer herds only to see them be decimated by your ineptness and low balling their numbers. You first said that the elk population drop was due to the drought. I am not a biologist but I knew that was BS when you said it. Now you are finally admitting that over half of the elk young are being killed by lions and you continue to wring your hands and suggest to the commission a ridiculously low quota. Last year when the anti-hunters hijacked the CSP tags you could have done the right thing and announced staff were going to kill lions or have another special season but you are too worried about being politically correct and let them have their way and more elk were killed because of it. I have a combined 58 years of preference points built up for elk, sheep and mountain goats and I am really wondering if I am ever going to get drawn and if I do how I will feel to be hunting an unhealthy population of animals. You guys need to explain to us why we should keep sending in our \$5 license fee when before we believed it was being used wisely to manage the herd. Now it appears you are using the money to do studies that are two years too late. Whoever is in charge of this stuff needs to be fired and hire someone from a western state who knows what they are doing.

3078 My understanding of the purpose and existence of the South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks is for the protection and management of wildlife and to provide for the benefit and enjoyment of hunters as well as local commerce. If indeed this is the point of this department, it is my opinion that anyone would be hard pressed to argue that you all are doing a good job. Total populations of Elk, Deer, and Sheep have been decimated both by over issuance of licenses and excessive Mountain Lion populations, thus driving down the opportunity and enjoyment of hunting these animals as well as diminishing the local benefit as far as commerce. Total populations of Mountain Lions have increased beyond a healthy level, especially in the park, and limits to hunting them are ridiculous based on actual numbers. In addition, I don't feel that lying to the general public about actual mountain lion counts is within your job classification. I have had several people that should know actual counts, tell me the same thing; Game, Fish & Parks refuses to honestly communicate actual numbers of Mountain Lions within the state. My feeling is that you need to do your job; don't kill off game simply because the Ranchers make a bunch of noise. Likewise, don't allow hunters or animal activists to dominate the decision process simply because they cause a stir. Do Your Job. Manage the wildlife in a balanced fashion which will provide for everyone's benefit. Thank you for your time!

- 3081 Kill them all
- 3085 Limited hunting on the prairie only.
- 3104 Mountain lion season should overlap more of deer season to provide more incidental opportunities because gas prices are too high
- 3114 THE BLACK HILLS HAS A MOUNTAIN LION PROBLEM!!!!!!!!!!!!!! When I can go out and see that many lions I know you have a problem. I saw more lions than deer, elk, and turkeys. When are you going to step up and do something about this problem? This situation is no different than the wolves in Montana. You will wait until there is nothing left then you will try to do something. There is public outrage on how you are handling this problem and I feel that you are ignoring the problem. You have been saying there are only 250 lions in the hills for the past 5 years. Don't you think they are breeding? When people can go out in 60 days with little to no snow and shoot 70 lions (1/3 of the lions in the hills according to you) don't you think there is a problem?
- 3229 Open the season when elk and deer seasons are going.
- 3232 On question 3 about mountain lion season in the Park for one, the tag is extremely too high to want to hunt a cat in the park. There are too many cats inside as well as near the park boundaries. You need to lower the tag fees and set high limits. Also, to open up for elk to cross back and forth from Wind Cave to Custer State Park, you're feeding elk to the mountain lions. We live just 2 miles from the Park entrance, Custer side we have at least 5 to 7 cats in the area. Maybe create hunting units outside the park this may help with limits within the correct areas.
- 3235 I only hunted for a couple hours one day during the season. There was no/very little snow so was not very eventful. Basically just went to the hills to visit a buddy and used lion hunting as an excuse to get off the farm for a weekend.
- 3293 I saw dog tracks in the area (Nemo/Norris Peak) some leading up to blind areas. This cat was worked hard, I was not a witness of the shooting of the cat nor involved but have I saw many dog tracks that were next to the cat tracks. I work in that area and believe a dog or two were working the area. I wish I would have taken pics of tracks.
- 3314 It should be held during deer and elk season.
- 3340 I had planned to use Spring Break to hunt, but the season ended sooner than that. This is not a complaint, just an observation. I plan to apply again next time.
- 3342 Did not make any organized effort to hunt lions. Held permit in case one was seen on my property and would remove it for ranch safety for myself and my livestock.
- 3369 I'm just another sportsman concerned with the Elk population in South Dakota... That's the main reason why I applied for a lion tag and will continue to do so... That and I use this time to scout for other upcoming seasons. Plain and simple here folks, Honesty is the best policy..! We need an accurate count on lions for the public. Why are we detouring the people from the truth...? Everybody I've discussed this with believes the counts are way off based and low. We need everybody on board to help protect all

species that call the Black Hills home. Let's start thinking with our heads and not our hearts. Thanks SDGFP for all that you do..! Concerned Dakotan,

- 3388 The Custer Park lion population needs to be reduced before they totally decimate the elk herd. Overall the mountain lions have hurt the population of deer, elk and turkey in the Black Hills, the quota should be increased to 150 and moved back to Sept. – Dec. season for earlier hunting.
- 3442 As a landowner in Perkins County I buy the ML tag each year as insurance in case a lion is found harassing any domestic or wildlife on our property. I would hope that any rancher that kills a big cat has the appropriate license. The price of a tag is cheap insurance for the opportunity to keep it legal. Thank you for offering the landowner ML tag.
- 3463 Did not have time to hunt. But I was amazed at how fast we reach the quota the hunting conditions were not good no snow. That would make you think the quota was too low. By the looks of the deer and elk herds declining
- 3475 Larger quota? Where is the deer herd? Elk herd is hurting badly. The quota was filled in terrible lion hunting conditions. Are the lions the new big game attraction? That's awesome if it is but then lets harvest at a rate that other herds can still exist in strong or at least stable conditions. Feel very strongly that the state has no idea how many lions really exist in the Hills. Yes, I know, that number is hard to track and estimate, but it's important information.

Satisfied – 423 comments (54.2% of total comments)

- 6 Very satisfied with the season. Wish I had more time to hunt. I hope next season allows the same number of kills for the Mountain Lion season.
- 14 Bring on the hounds. In my opinion, hunting with hounds would be the best way to selectively harvest mature lions. Honestly....how many lions shot around 30 some pounds? We could still have the check in and not allow lions to be shot that have spots or barring.
- 17 Custer State Park needs its own quota. I really like the free permit drawing, but I feel that they need their own quota to manage the area cats better.
- 24 We did see a large male Lion during Black Hills Deer season. It would have been great to have had the season open during that time!
- 26 I applied for but did not receive a CSP permit. That was a question and wording that you did not ask.
- 37 while hunting in the hills I was in the Nemo area and did see tracks but was unable to tell how old they were I hunted for 4 day Jan 1-4 and one day in mid-February I also tried calling in Tripp county after local ranchers has seen them the day before but with no snow here there was no chance of tracking.
- 48 I take pride in my state and the regulations that are in place for the hunting season. I also trust that adequate research was done prior to the season to allow 70 lions to be

- killed. My only dissatisfaction from the season was not being able to see a lion in the wild. However, it was very rewarding to learn about lions and their behavior. Hiking over 114 miles, I came upon fresh scat, fresh kill sites, scrapings and even full body impressions in the snow. I tracked numerous lions this season, and also had the privilege of hearing lions respond to my calls. It was a great opportunity to observe wildlife and penetrate parts of the Black Hills I've never explored before. I feel honored to live in such a unique place, and to be able to hunt an array of large game. Hopefully, I'll have better luck next year. Can't Wait!
- 52 Was somewhat dissatisfied with the Custer state park eligibility to access the park. I live very close to the park and not being able to access was frustrating. As we all know the elk herd and other big game species are suffering in the park. Lions I'm sure being part of the problem. I feel we somehow need to have more local committed hunters access the park or allow the use of dogs to get a more predictable harvest.
- 53 Saw many tracks so I know there are plenty of lions around. Hope next season has same quota or more. Need to keep lion population under control.
- 61 I hunted different areas throughout the hills and while I wasn't successful, I found tracks/sign on nearly every trip. There are still a lot of lions in the hills.
- 71 I would like to see the Total increased next year. There are so few deer left in the Hills and on the Prairie where I hunt. Weather not good this year...need to get with God on that one. Thanks for what you folks do!
- 73 As suggested by the speed in which the harvest limit was reached this season I believe we still have plenty of lions left in the Black Hills. I applaud the GF&P for allowing a greater harvest limit this past season. Please continue to monitor the estimated number of lions in the hills and do not hesitate to reduce or curtail the lion season if it appears we are over harvesting in the future. I love hunting lions but hope we will always have a good breeding population in SD.
- 76 I do the license for the landowner option
- 94 Had fun, learn a lot for our first season, looking forward to next year. Website, email, and app need the bugs worked out, but still helpful. Suggest as the season nears closing: a posting that indicates that the season is either open or closed that day. Post it by 4AM. Thanks!
- 95 The last day was pretty confusing. We were on our way out hunting when we got the last minute "season's closed" email on our phone...just by luck! It would also be very helpful if we could get an updated map on the CURRENT YEAR'S harvest location during the season.
- 98 I think you should allow people to shoot more than one. We obviously have too many
- 101 Limited success primarily due to lack of snow during my CSP 15 day season but it is still great to have the opportunity to enjoy the park. On a side note, I saw one bull elk in the park in 3 days of hunting, and very limited elk sign. I have been fortunate to hunt elk in the park several times in the last 15 years including early archery where I harvested a great bull, and several late season archery including a hunt just a couple of years ago.

- At that time it was hard to believe the lack of elk in the park compared to previous hunts. I made a decision at that time to only apply for preference until the elk population recovers to a level where they can be enjoyed by both hunters and park tourists alike. I would support/suggest closing the elk season in CSP (at a minimum for antlerless) until the elk population recovers and the cat population is under control, otherwise the losses to cats (primarily calves but I am sure adults as well) combined with hunter harvest of adult elk will not allow for any measurable recovery of elk populations. Thank you for the opportunity to experience the variety of hunting that the SDGF&P makes available to us all.
- 120 The season was completed prior to my scheduled hunt in Custer State Park I would have hunted more days but sustained an injury that prevented me from hunting more days
- 121 I THINK THEY SHOULD STILL HARVEST AT LEAST 10 MT. LIONS FROM THE PARK REGARDLESS OF THE QUOTA, I HAVE A TURKEY LICENSE FOR THIS SPRING IN THE PARK, AND I WOULD LOVE TO BE ABLE TO SHOOT A CAT IN THERE IF ONE WAS SEEN. ANYTHING TO HELP OUT THE DEER, ELK AND SHEEP FROM BEING DECIMATED.
- 130 Open limited hunting for lions per draw during elk or deer seasons. Left remaining go to rest of season.
- 133 The permits to hunt in CSP were a great idea and I think fair. It also would have been nice to be able to hunt in the Park at the end of the season if that had worked out, as because of my work schedule, I did not get a chance to hunt during the period that I had a permit. I think that once you are drawn for a permit you should be removed from the system. I drew the first two weeks in January and I continued to get notices that I was still in the pool, but had not been selected, etc. Also, a friend of mine harvested a lion early in the season and then later drew a access permit in the Park - which he couldn't obviously use, and he also should have been removed from the system.
- 152 I did not participate in the drawing for a Custer State park permit but believe it was a great idea
- 154 Regarding question 8...I applied for every period, but DID NOT receive a permit.
- 156 Can't wait for next season. Really enjoyed walking around Black Hills in winter. Wished I could have opportunity to hunt when they finally got some snow. If there is a season next year I will apply.
- 161 I feel that the way that the season was structured was very good. It gives hunters plenty of time to be in the woods when there are no other seasons going on. It tests a hunters skills and it gives everyone who wants to hunt, a chance to do so. Please do not allow the use of dogs in the future, as it would take away the skill from the hunt and it would turn into an outfitter or paid hunt scenario. This season as it was structured, is a way to control the population while giving everyone a chance to hunt.
- 163 I prefer this method of kill limits over highly restricted lottery like for big horn or elk.
164 THE SEASON ENDED BEFORE I WAS ABLE TO HUNT IN CUSTER STATE PARK. THIS WAS VERY DISAPPOINTING. AS A HUNTER AND AVID BLACK HILLS HIKER, I

- BELIEVE THAT THERE IS AN OVERPOPULATION PROBLEM WITH THE LIONS IN THE HILLS. I ALSO FEEL THAT THE CUSTER STATE PARK SEASON SHOULD STAND ON IT'S OWN. IF I WIN A DRAW TO HUNT THE PARK I SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HUNT IT. THE LIONS ARE SO THICK IN THE PARK THAT YOU HAVE TO FIGHT THEM OFF OF THE TRANQUILIZED ELK. I HAVEN'T SEEN A MOUNTAIN GOAT IN YEARS. WHERE DID THEY ALL GO? ARE WE GOING TO WAIT FOR THE LIONS TO DECIMATE THE ELK AND BIG HORNS TOO? AND I KNOW THAT NO ONE IS ASKING ME, BUT I JUST HAVE TO SAY THAT THE FIRING OF AN ESTABLISHED BIOLOGIST BECAUSE SOME ONE COMPLAINED ABOUT WHEN HIS KILL WAS REPORTED IS NOTHING SHORT OF LUDICROUS. THE TIME LINE WAS COMPLETELY INSIDE THE GUIDELINES REGARDLESS OF HIS PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT. ONE DAY THE RAPID CITY JOURNAL REPORTED THAT ALL OF THE LAST DAY KILLS WERE LEGAL AND THE NEXT DAY HE WAS FIRED. NOW WE WILL HAVE TO REPLACE HIM AND PROBABLY PAY A LAW SUIT FOR WRONGFUL DISMISSAL. I CAN'T SEEM TO MAKE SENSE OF THIS. JUST SAYING. THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS MY THOUGHTS.
- 165 Hopefully next year the quota will be at least 100.
- 169 Had a wonderful time, hope to get a lic for 2013
- 173 Very satisfied with season! Wish I could have had more snow had lots of fun hunting because it comes at the best time of year.
- 181 I liked the changes they made to the CSP hunt. I think the park could offer the same setup for the season next year but allow more than 15 hunters per session (perhaps 20?). My father had a tag and we never saw another hunter during the two weeks he had a tag, but saw lots of lion sign. Allowing 20 hunters per session would increase the harvest in the Park, which I believe would be positive.
- 186 Due to the quota being filled before the time deadline, I believe the quota should stay high. I don't believe we've harvested enough cats to ensure we can start to see our deer numbers rise. I hope your organization will continue to serve the sportsmen of SD and not cave in to animal rights groups or members of the public who do not hunt or fish in our state. Keep up the good work!
- 188 It seems like there is a lot more lions, than we are led to believe. Maybe there should be an open year around season for a couple of years to get these numbers back to normal.
- 189 Keep the quota high and the season the same. Very good season.
- 198 I'm happy that SD does not allow hunting with dogs. Most SD residents do not have dogs trained for that sort of hunting, so allowing the use of dogs would take away the sport for guys like me. I say that because I don't think a hunter tracking and calling could compete with the hunter using dogs.
- 200 It was my understanding that if you wanted to hunt in Custer State Park, you would apply and if you were successful, they would assign you a period when you could hunt. I work full time and am on the road. I was not going to apply and they have the chosen time frame impossible to work into my schedule. If it had not been for that, I would have applied in that State Park.

- 213 Need to be able to use dogs to hunt.
- 214 I live on the Rochford road and often find “kill” remains and lion signs while hiking and hunting. The new season is well thought out and appropriate.
- 217 I was only able to hunt in Custer State Park one day because the season closed by the end of the day. I feel Custer State Park should set their own limits and have their own time periods. No one should be able to take a lion in the Park and an additional one anywhere else in the state.
- 218 With the number of animals being killed in Custer State Park by Mountain Lions, I feel they should have their own quota that does not affect the number by the GF&P. If you did get one in the Park you would then not be allowed to fill your tag any other way.
- 229 Please legalize hounds.
- 233 I was very pleased with how the South Dakota mountain lion season was conducted. I applaud the GF&P for enabling this large game hunt for in state hunters, and it felt like a treat to us residents whom participated. The only issue I had was the younger cats weighing less than 60 pounds being shot and counted as a lion kill. I understand it would be difficult to see the stripes in the woods or hills, but these are young cats that I do not consider fair game due to their young curious ways. In the future please do not allow such small and young lions to be harvested and accepted as part of the mountain lion hunt.
- 244 More mountain lions should be harvested in the Black Hills Area. Elk herds are down substantially!
- 248 Map of location of kills on website other than just county during the season
- 249 Will try again next year.
- 258 The limit on Mt Lions should be eliminated. Keep the season but allow as many lions to be taken in the set season. Black Hills deer should be allowed to recover.
- 261 Lack of snow (with the exception of my last day) really dampened my ability to hunt. Overall, a great experience.
- 268 This was the first year lion hunting for me and my hunting partner. We are planning on applying next year.
- 270 Thank you for the fine job you are doing! I did not go to the meeting about the hunting regulations, but if I could, I would like to urge you to allow coyote hunting in the Park again. I hunted the Park a couple years for coyotes, and it was some of the best hunting memories I have. I did not get drawn for mountain lion in the Park, but I will probably apply again next year. Also, if I could respectfully add my opinion about the employee fired for not turning in the lion kill. I believe it was a mistake to fire him since he was within the time allowed. I do not feel he should be held to a different standard because he is an employee. Keep up the great work! We have one of the best GFPs in the country (if not the world).

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- 274 Drew first 15 day access permit... killed on 3rd day of hunting... 3 Jan... lion was collared and tagged
- 285 I spent a lot of time in the woods, my observation is, too many elk, deer, and turkeys taken by mountain lions.
- 293 I enjoy the mountain lion hunt, just as you have it this year. Thank you all very much. There just was no to very little snow for my days of hunting this year, but it was still very good and I enjoy it all.
- 317 I would recommend two changes to the CSP limited access pass system, especially since the current system resulted in only four Lions taken from CSP, and the surrounding area immediately adjacent to CSP resulted in 13 Lions (Source: 2012 Mt Lion harvest map). 1. Double the access passes per interval from 15 to 30, I feel even if you have 30 hunters inside the park, hunting pressure will still be minimal, and rarely will all 30 hunters be hunting at the same time. 2. Decrease the intervals from bi-monthly to weekly intervals. This is a special hunt and in my opinion those willing to apply for this should be dedicated enough to take time when they are granted passes.
- 323 There needs to be more cat tags. If not our elk will be gone. I would think most everyone would rather have elk in the hills than cats.
- 331 It was my first time and I really didn't know what I was doing and really didn't put the time in necessary to give the hunt a chance. I look forward to next year.
- 337 This year/season I did observe 5 sets of lion tracks walking side by side. 1 set was just a little larger than the rest. I thought there was a little unusual. All the time I spent in the field I observed 21 sets of tracks.
- 343 There are way too many mountain lions in the Black Hills and the quota needs to continue to be raised. Lions are a major contributing factor in decimating animal populations. When the season ended 1 month before expiration, and we had a very mild winter with little snow, it is very evident the mountain lion population is still very high. Almost all of the people I know that hunt in and around the Black Hills all say the deer and elk populations are steadily declining and in some places don't exist. They say it is largely due to mountain lions and too many of them...Not too high of license numbers and everyone being successful.
- 357 The use of hounds should be permitted in South Dakota.
- 372 There are fewer deer and elk in the areas I hunted. CSP hunt may need to be extended. Lack of snow of a big factor during my hunting period.
- 375 This is a great time to spend with your family and enjoy the black hills.
- 378 Needed more time
- 391 Hurt my neck this year during season. I will hunt more next year.
- 393 Overall a decent season. I think 73 cats is pretty good. In the future I would consider maybe upping the quota to around 100 with possibly a split season. There could be half of the 100 during November so that if a deer hunter ran across one, they would be able

- to harvest it legally. This would increase the number of tags sold also. AKA more revenue. If the quota ran over by a couple of cats in the first season then they could be limited to 48 or whatever in the 2nd season. Yep, I saw lions during the BH deer season. Five different cats to be exact. I think this would give the East River hunters something to look forward to also. I do like to have the cats to hunt in Jan-Feb though. I feel the tag allotments and length of season gets better all the time. Keep up the good work.
- 409 Way too many lions living in the black hills. With all secondary roads inaccessible or closed, snowmobilers going everywhere the lions have a preserve to extinguish the delicate herd of elk and deer. When is GFP going to quite listening to the greenie's and huggers and realize the problem at hand. These people do not buy license, guns shells etc. or support Rocky Mountain Elk Found. Yet they cry and the GFP jump. Stop IT, man up and regulate the wildlife in a responsible manner. Lions are reproducing and killing game faster than you can tranquilize and collar them. What a shame>>>>> How about a season from the start of archery elk through the end of the year, unlimited numbers and let's put them back in check when roads are open and hunters are out, see how many there really are out there.
- 411 Keep up the good work.
- 420 I WOULD LIKE TO SEE WHERE A HUNTER WHO WANTED TO HUNT WITH DOGS COULD INSIDE THE PARK WITH A PARK EMPLOYEE IF POSSIBLE. THAT IS EASIER SAID THEN DONE BUT I FEEL THE LION NUMBERS FOR IN THE PARK NEED ATTENTION FOR THE SAKE OF THE SOMEWHAT ELK HERD THAT IS LEFT. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO TAKE THIS MOMENT TO THANK THE GAME FISH AND PARKS FOR MAKING THESE LAST FEW SEASONS SUCCESFULL. ALTHOUGH I NEVER MADE IT OUT TO HUNT THIS LAST SEASON, I LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT YEARS HUNT.
- 421 Would have appreciated the opportunity to be considered for a second hunting period in CSP if all the 15-day periods were not completely full.
- 429 Up the quota!
- 431 Start date should be November 1 as you would sell more tags to deer and elk hunters. Cat's breed year round so kittens are not an issue.
- 435 Only bought license to support mountain lion program
- 441 I was very pleased with the way the season was conducted again this year. I was glad to see hound hunting was not allowed giving everyone an equal chance. I would like to see the season open at the same time as elk and bighorn season for people who have an elk or big horn tag.
- 442 Thanks to all in the Department for what you do for me as an avid outdoorsman in South Dakota. I appreciate all the opportunities given to me and especially the Park hunts. Keep up the great work and try to remember that the number of satisfied sportsmen far outnumber the few slobbs who find negativity in every aspect of your position. Thanks also to the Park staff who were a great help. I never harvested a lion this year but that was not my ultimate goal as I simply cherish the time I spend out there. Thanks again,

- 448 Thank you SD GF&P for another wonderful opportunity in 2012. I would like to see lion seasons ran with the same or some of the bobcat regulations. My partner and I hunted 10 days when the snow finally came towards the end of the season and we cut tracks of one set of 4 cats, two sets of 3 cats and five sets of 2 cats while only catching 2 sets of 1 cat. After traveling some of the same roads it didn't take long to realize a lot of hunters were following multiple sets of tracks. A lion is a predator like a coyote or bobcat I would like to see more of the predator hunting laws to make it fare and honest hunters. Can't wait till 2013! Thanks Again.
- 450 It seems evident to me that the number and influence of mountain lions in South Dakota is much greater than the citizens of the state are led to believe through the information handed out by our Game Fish and Parks staff, as a body. If the goal of the Department is truly to serve the citizens of the state, then I feel the Department should be much more forthcoming in its release of information, and much more open to interaction with hunters, recreationalists, and particularly with land owners. I remain disappointed in the Department's management decisions, especially in regards to the declining population of large mammals in the Black Hills, where hunting big game USED to be a treasured opportunity for the sportsmen of this state, and where it is now fast becoming a "once or never" circumstance. Why not admit to the public that there are more lions present than you have ever acknowledged before, and act in accordance with that in allowing much more liberal harvesting of lions, in an effort to salvage whatever might be left of Elk, Deer, and Sheep and Goat populations, instead of allowing their decimation?
- 451 I live near Rochford. Prior to the season we had at least three lions in our area. Last summer and in early fall the following three incidences occurred: A large cow elk was taken down by a lion about a quarter of a mile from our house. Her head was turned a full 180 degrees by the kill. Second, a 6x6 bull was taken down about 3/4 of a mile from our house. Third, it was not uncommon to see a group of cows with no calves. We observed a group of 9 cows. Not one had a calf. It is obvious to people who actually live remote and are observant, that the lions are taking to many elk and deer. The season. With its higher harvest number, was definitely necessary.
- 460 It seems to me that the number of lions will just keep increasing with the way the hunt is being conducted. There needs to be earlier or let females with kittens to be harvested, however cruel that may be it is the only way in my opinion. 46 females (mature) harvested after litters are well old enough to fend for themselves.
- 466 More people should get Custer State Park tags.
- 471 I had the March 1-15 CSP hunting period. I left for there early the 1st of March. The quota had not been met when I left home. Mid-morning my son contacted me by cell phone and told me the quota had been met so I came home, only having hunted a couple hours, quite a disappointment. I heard that there are way too many lions in the park and they have become very accomplished elk killers. I'm an archer and I just found out that I won't be able to apply for a late season archery elk permit in CSP because the lions have reduced the herd to the lowest point ever. That sucks! By the looks of the tracks and other sign I observed, the number of lions is out of hand throughout the hills. I have always read/heard that mountain lions are a solitary animal. I no longer believe this as I saw several instances where there were multiple adult lions feeding on a kill or traveling together. I believe the law about not tracking or shooting when there are multiple lions needs to be changed. In areas where I have hunted deer in past years I

- saw very few deer this year but did see many lion tracks. I noticed that not many lions were harvested in the areas where the roads are closed to travel for the winter. I feel that needs to be addressed, either by keeping the gates open during the lion season or changing the dates of the lion season to when those gates are open. These areas are wintering areas for elk and deer but they are also a prime killing area for the lions but are nearly inaccessible to lion hunters.
- 478 The state needs to up the quota. I think all 70 cats could have been shot in Custer County alone?
- 487 Though I didn't hunt this year, I am in favor of the management of lions. Too me reaching the 70 lion quota so quickly shows there may be way too many lions in the Hills. Another year with an increased quota in my opinion may be appropriate.
- 489 Keep up the good work. I would like to see a higher harvest quota (over 100). Although I do not want to eliminate them, I feel there are too many mountain lions.
- 493 Saw a mother lion and 2 nearly grown cubs also applied for 3 different periods to hunt in Custer State Park. Not successful
- 498 Love the hunt. Keep it going for many years to come!
- 502 Above all I personally think the lion quota should be raised each year until the lion numbers are back under control.
- 506 I saw a mountain lion September 1939 in Boulder Canyon by the "now" golf course. It ran across the road. I wonder if it was the first lion in the "Hills" after they had been eliminated.
- 515 You should kill more lions in the park.
- 519 I do not wish to see lions eliminated. But I feel they are still at such a high number that they are depleting the Elk and deer herds.
- 538 Need to reduce numbers a lot more.
- 541 We didn't have snow when we hunted.
- 548 I really enjoy being able to hunt mountain lions in South Dakota. I am pleased to see that the quota of lion harvest is being met with the type of hunting allowed without allowing hunting with dogs or permitting nonresidents to hunt.
- 554 I noticed less deer and Elk than usual this year. Maybe more lions need harvested.??
- 557 We are not seeing any young elk by time winter sets in. Did see more prints of lion by the cabin and creek this fall and winter.
- 558 I Think custer state park charges way too much for the tag
- 559 I was disappointed when I found out that a tag for the park didn't come with entry fee paid for. I would also like to see an icon or list on your website inactive map indicated if a

- trail or road is closed. Many times I found myself finding an alternate route because a road was closed for winter wildlife use. I did walk a lot but for those times when I went out after work or just briefly before dark many times the road was closed. I did enjoy myself, what a rush when I came upon a lion.
- 569 Based on GF&P studies of lion predation on elk populations in Custer State Park, it would appear that a significantly higher number of lions need to be harvested from the Park next year. It is a shame to see the elk population decimated in the Park. I would also support raising the overall quota since it would appear that there are so many lions in the Hills that hunters are reaching the quota no matter how high it is set. I used to enjoy watching large numbers of elk around my cabin (near Custer Crossing), and now I have not seen a single elk for over 2 years. I would strongly recommend that the quota be increased so that we can reduce the significant overpopulation of lions in the Hills, and their detrimental effects on the deer and elk populations.
- 574 Process was fine; I was impressed with how quickly I got my tag when I put in. I did not hunt because I did not have much free time, and there was virtually no snow. Neither of which is the fault of GF&P. You guys did a great job getting the word out. I always knew exactly how many lions had been harvested.
- 580 I am not sure how the regulations are decided on how we will hunt for mountain lions. But as a suggestion I would like to see if you would consider the use of dogs. The positive reasons I see is there could be more selective hunting. This year alone I saw in the harvest report four cats taken that were under 6 months old. That is in my opinion unacceptable. Hunters would also be able to determine if it is a male or female and the approximate age before harvesting. Thanks for the time.
- 586 I have enjoyed your lion season very much. I appreciate your keeping this season to SD hunters only. Also the use of hunting is appreciated. Please consider the methods you are using to be successful. In my opinion the use of dogs would be a mistake as your quotas are being met without dogs. Thank you for your job well done.
- 588 You should open up Custer State Park to everyone. I saw 4 lions this season but couldn't get the scope on them quick enough. Fun! Lots of lions!
- 589 You should open season for one year with no quota and using dogs. That will give an idea how many lions are in the Black Hills. If there is a season the following year with a quota and shorter season this would be reasonable.
- 595 Put a season for the hounds separate from the other one so we can just take out the old toms with dogs. "There your trouble makes, think about it".
- 607 I would like to see the Elk and Deer and Turkey population rebound, and the core of the problem is the number of mountain lions. I live out there half of the time and the numbers of lions I see and the tracks are unbelievable as the rest of the big game is getting less and less. I'm to the point of never letting the grand children play outside alone even close to the house; it's not 'if' it's just a matter of time. Thanks
- 619 From what I seen (tracks & buried deer kills) and the fact that 70 plus lions were shot is such a short time. This tells me that there are a lot more lions in the hills and that the 2012 season quota should be raised again for the 2013 season.

- 627 I had a bad ankle for 7 weeks or I would have much more, you do well.
- 628 Increase the number of lions again. I really wish you guys would give the public the real cat number. 250 ya right.
- 629 Hurt my ankle hunting deer last fall so I did not get to hunt lions as much as I have in the past. Have lived in Black Hills for 35 years. Hunt, camp, hike all the time and have never seen a cat. My wife has seen 3. Frustrating!! Sure is fun to find a track in fresh snow and take off following. Sure hope i find one before i get too old.
- 632 I would like to see a split quota system for the lion season. If 73 cats can be harvested in 61 days it certainly appears as though the population could handle the change. Have a smaller quota available in both the elk and deer seasons. The incidental harvest numbers would be small and more people would at least have the opportunity to harvest a lion should they see one. I sure I'm not the only hunter that has issues justifying the cost of multiple trips from the east half of the state. I would certainly appreciate the opportunity to take a cat if I see one during deer season. I don't think the SDGFP should lend much credence to the small vocal minority that would complain about the earlier season dates risking the orphaning of kittens. Young animals are orphaned every day in nature, whether by predators, other natural causes or cars. SDGFP sanctions this kind of population control with depredation season hunting of pregnant deer. SDGFP should return to working for the "less vocal" vast majority of the citizens of this state that use and pay for the operation of GFP through user fees and licensing revenue. Thanks for listening
- 633 Too many lions... get a clue
- 636 Let us use dogs that way it would give the younger kids a chance to take a lion. Have an archery season and allow dogs.
- 637 Landowners in the Black Hills Fire Protection District with a license or without should be allowed to hunt year around. I've seen 10 lions in my life (50 years), 5 just this year. There are way too many lions in the Hills and it's just a matter of time before a kid or adult is attacked. Dogs should be used to hunt, so that lions will fear them instead of looking at them as a snack. 2013 should be a no quota hunt until the lion population is at a sustainable level.
- 643 Chad in CSP was very helpful.
- 655 Should allow use of dogs in the Park.
- 656 Too many lions!
- 659 I think the lion population is still too high based on the lions and sign I found during the season and would like to have the opportunity for an archery only season. I have successfully taken a lion in a previous season and therefore I am more selective in the size of animal I want to take but would have had no trouble filling my tag.
- 674 Gentleman, I only got out a couple of times and had no trouble cutting mountain lion tracks almost in every location that I checked due to a preseason injury I had difficulty walking the distances required to pursue a lion. I hope to kill one next year. The season could be lengthened and the bag limit raised we have way too many lions for the habitat

- available. If this continues for much longer I will be going to Colorado, Montana or New Mexico to hunt elk and deer. As you lose your sources of revenue so go your programs. If the lions ate pheasants like they do elk and deer they would have all been dead by now. Thank You
- 687 The lion I saw was sitting on a rock and was gone in 1 second. I found its tracks on the downhill side and in about 40 feet was joined by what appeared to be 2 moderate sized cubs. I never pursued or tracked any farther. With the help of sparse snow I found tracks in the other places I hunted about half the times I was out. I hunted in the Strato bowl area, cosmos and tee pee gulch area and the Horse creek burn area.
- 688 Keep tag number high and reduce lion population greatly.
- 692 I would like to suggest that you allow 30-45 hunters a 30 day period in CSP to hunt next year. 15 days just wasn't enough to ensure chances to get good snow for tracking or even observing sign or tracks. I feel that more lions would be harvested in CSP if hunters were allowed a 30 day period. Overall I am satisfied with the 2012 Mt. Lion season. I am concerned that we may not want to harvest as many next year. I feel that we as hunters have taken a huge bite out of the numbers. Thanks for raising the quota to 70 for this season. It was a big step in the right direction for helping control the population to a manageable level.
- 697 Need to make units for the lions. Hunted in Fall River co and saw 3 cats just didn't get a good shot. Our deer and elk population are very low and no cats got shot in Fall River co. Need to put 200 tags out for 2013 and put units so the cats in Fall River get under control. Need to be able to use dogs or trap.
- 704 I hope they up the quota on the cats after hunting another long year, still not seeing a hair of one. Congratulation to the people who harvested a cat or even witnessed seeing one in the woods. I do agree that cat numbers are high and that trying to reduce the elk heard in the last 5 years has not help the elk. To bring production back the cow tags should be cut back drastically. May we all get to hunt elk and lions in the future.
- 707 Kill more lions!!!!
- 717 Still way more lions out there than what you are telling us.
- 718 In my opinion and the majority of all other hunters that enjoy hunting in the black hills. The state need to allow the harvesting of quite a few more lions. Within the next ten years if the state doesn't cut back the lion population majorly there will not be any other big game animals in the hills. In ten years the only season there will be in the hills is for mountain lion and wolves. A major portion of the hunters here in South Dakota believe the main thing the GF&P is worried is their money from the tags and applications. You should be more worried about the wildlife in the state. What are you going to do when the lions have devastated the elk herd and there are none? You won't be getting money from applications and tags. Help out the states elk population while you still can by getting rid of lions so there will be a hunting future in this state. One more thing I have to add is what other states do they not allow you to use dogs in? The only one I know of is Oregon, and this past year they had a bill to allow the use of dogs while cat hunting again. Every other state and providences in Canada see it just fine to use dogs while lion hunting yet what does South Dakota see that they won't allow it? Hopefully you will read

- this and actually think of the future of hunting and SD and realize you guys have to do things different
- 719 Too many seasonal road closures during the lion season, consider soliciting the forest service to keep additional roads open until the end of the lion season.
- 720 Let's keep hunting mountain lions.
- 726 Mountain lion season should be like other predator season (all year long). Best solution in my opinion would be \$15 all year long, no quota. You will never get rid of them all without dogs and aerial harvesting.
- 728 I have sent a lot of cat pictures this past fall to John Kanta , I thought after the season the numbers would drop off my cameras is getting as many pictures now , my work schedule change so I did not get to hunt like I had hoped , but next year I hope to get a lion
- 729 There are a lot more lions out there then what people think. My cam recorders took pictures of a lot of different lions,
- 730 I enjoy the opportunity to get out and hunt. I have seen lions more than once in the past, but not during hunting season. I enjoy all hunting and truly feel the lions are hurting the deer, elk, and goat and sheep herds. I think everyone agrees that due to the lack of snow this year the lion hunting was slowed down. But, once we got snow the hunters reached their limit quickly. I believe this is an indication of how many lions are in the hills and a good argument to once again raise the limit.
- 735 Due to lack of snow the hunting season in the Southern Hills and Custer state park needs to be expanded. I would suggest that you reduce the number of days for the Custer state park permit so more people have an opportunity to hunt. I would also designate a quote in the park under the current system and allow hunters to continue hunting until March 31. The same system needs to be implemented for the Southern Hills. Actually, I think it would be wise to break the Hills into several regions for quota purposes. I am not suggesting that the licenses be limited to a specific region, only that regions are closed when the quota is reached. Ray Dvorak
- 737 Lions are more fun to hunt than deer or elk
- 744 Need to take more lions in Custer State Park. Elk herd is nonexistent. There is little hope for the sheep recovery with so many lions.
- 745 I am sure you are tired of hearing this but we need to kill more lions. In my opinion Custer State Park shouldn't be a separate hunting area. All you are trying to do there is make more money and the kill rate is less. The plus side is Wind Cave elk are going to be migrating into the park so the lions won't run out of food. Let people hunt the park just like the hills. Keep hearing way more stories of people finding elk kills. I rarely go out hiking in the hills without finding a deer kill. Why don't we start using dogs so we can be more selective in the lions that are killed?
- 747 Need more tags. You need to get rid of cats to increase and properly manage elk herd.

- 751 Why not just open up CSP to hunters anytime they want to go in being there is obviously plenty of lions there that need some thinning out, Many of us do not live close enough to hunt CSP on a regular basis, so I do not think you would end up with too many people in there. Also maybe the amount of lions killed needs increased with how many lions were killed and so fast, This spring I have been up in the hills numerous times looking for white tail and elk sheds and have hardly seen any deer and no elk yet, well I did find one dead cow elk, and came across plenty of cat scat. Hope the GFP gets this figured out!
- 754 It has become very obvious that there are way too many lions in the Black Hills. Look at the decline of elk tags the past 5-6 years. Having hunted and been on elk hunts for over 20 years in both CSP and the Hills the decline in the past 5 years is very depressing. Example 30 collared elk calves in CSP 11 lost collars on fences, of the remaining 19 there are 16 CONFIRMED lion kills, 2 undetermined predator kills and one live calf !!! We are told not to read too much into those numbers, come on!!! This past year my Daughter had an any elk tag in the Southern Hills, we saw a herd of 80-100 elk with less than 10 calves in it. Same deal outside the park as in CSP!! Set lion limit to 100 see what happens, to kill 70 this year in less than ideal conditions in approx. 60 days and without dogs, incredible. Imagine the lost revenue because the elk are being killed as calves thus less mature ones. Elk hunters hunt for longer periods and generate many tax dollars in the Hills region. Let's get elk back to better numbers before it is too late!!!
- 764 Increase Quota Don't allow Dogs that will turn lion hunting into a rich man's sport, average guys like me won't be able to afford the hunt.
- 786 Custer state park draw is a joke.
- 788 I feel that the manner in which one of the GFP's own biologist was a complete cover up and hope that the truth of a cover-up is exposed. Time to get politics out of the management of South Dakota's wildlife management!!!! Maybe more landowners should close their private land to ALL forms of hunting.
- 792 Increase mountain lion harvest numbers to 100. Give Lowell Schmitz his job back in Rapid City.
- 794 Mountain Lion hunting in the Black Hills is a Joke!! We don't need these animals killing all our turkey, deer and elk. We pay you to manage our wildlife! And obviously you're not doing your job! We use to have the best elk hunting in North America and now no season because of Mountain Lions!!!!!! Let's get rid of these cats and get our great turkey, deer, sheep and elk hunting back!!! Even with unlimited Lion tags we would never kill them all!!!
- 815 The season was good. I do not think Mountain Lions are as big of a problem in the park as people think. I spoke with a park employee who had lived there for 5 years, and in that time, she said that she had only seen 2 lions. I do wonder, however, why we cannot use dogs in the SD season. I cannot think of anything I would change with the SD mountain lion season. I LOVE that it is only open to SD residents, KEEP IT UP!!
- 825 This year's mountain lion season was difficult mainly due to lack of snow for tracking/cutting sign. Frankly if the state wishes to get serious about managing mountain lions; hunting needs to be allowed utilizing dogs. Additionally allowing trapping should be

- explored. Mountain lions have in my opinion become a nuisance animal that is destroying other big game species at an alarming rate.
- 828 When a 70 lion quota can be filled in such a short time, without the use of dogs, the number of lions in the Black Hills is out of control. I would favor placing them in the same category as coyotes. In lieu of that, a 100 lion quota next year would be a small step in the right direction. Your firing of the biologist who shot what "could have been" the last lion was purely catering to the anti-lion hunting fringe. It was unjustified. I hope he hires a good lawyer and hangs you out to dry.
- 831 I think us people without a computer should be able to apply for Custer State Park on paper.
- 833 I work on a ranch 6 miles southwest of Hermosa, SD. We used to have elk, good amount of whitetail and mule deer around the surrounding area, but for the last four or five years the populations have gone down every year. We don't have any elk here anymore and the mule deer you just see a couple just once in a while, the whitetail you see a few here and there. Since 1-1-12, I have put out 4 game cameras, I have pictures of 1 female and her 3 cubs, saw lion running up along the creek with yearling heifer chasing it, also walking the dog at 7:30am in the morning around the corral and the barn and the open sided shed and the dog disappeared in the shed and to my surprise when I walked around the corner of the shed the dog was looking at a lion setting on its tail about 20 feet from him and I was calling to the dog to come to be about 10 feet from the dog. The dog came to me and to the house we went. Made a couple of phone calls and went to the shed to find the lion gone. Too many lions! For me I'd like to see no licenses issued for elk in this unit. As for the deer season, for 1 of 2 years issue no deer licenses in our unit and or don't issue any doe tags. Shooting cow elk and doe deer your killing off the factory, till their shortage of deer and elk recovers don't issue tags for a few years.
- 836 I live in Roberts County, Once in a while a lion will pass through. So every year I will buy a license just to be ready in case I am lucky enough to see and shoot it!
- 839 I did not like that I might have had to share my time in the park with others who had already had their chance in CSP. Season didn't go long enough for me to use the park. That I completely understand and have no issues with. But the idea of sharing my time with someone who already had theirs is upsetting!
- 851 Please talk to the forest service and let them or something, keep all the trails open it's very disappointing when you are so limited on trails.
- 868 Guess we didn't kill enough if you can't dart elk in the park without a lion getting to it first. We need to level the playing field if our sheep and elk have a chance to come back in numbers. So turn the dogs out and let's get it done, or would that mean a drop in ticket sales.
- 880 I have been applying for the mountain lion seasons for several years and I have noticed that the prices for the tags have consistently gone up in price. This year \$25 seemed to be overly high. I have enjoyed being able to hunt mountain lions and I recognize that in many states this is a much more expensive tag with a drawing process; but they also offer the use of dogs and therefore success is much greater when drawn. I don't mind the hunting style that we have in South Dakota (i.e. no dogs) and I rather enjoy the

- opportunity to be able to hunt them each season until the quota is reached. However, it feels a little like Game and Fish has found a real money maker in the lion tags and have only continued to increase it. I have visited with a number of other lion hunters who feel this same way. How many tags were sold last year at \$25 a piece? It's getting a little bit ridiculous!
- 893 Dogs! Even if just a pursuit tag.
- 901 You should up the hunting permits on Cats....I've seen the Deer #'s dropping every year...I know Cats kill a lot and I do mean a Lot of Deer.
- 912 I believe that there are too many cats. Deer, turkeys, elk, sheep, pretty much all big game numbers are down. Treat them as a coyote, you see one we should have no worries of shooting, there predators; they will never completely go away.
- 915 I would think that the ease with what mostly novice lion hunters without the use of dogs, mostly a lack of snow for tracking and a higher lion quota would indicate a very high lion count, and as of this date 4/27/12 I'm still hearing of lion sightings even in broad daylight. It might even be possible for a larger harvest next year. Note that it only took 2/3rds of the allotted season to take 73 cats, over 1 a day. Remember the Black Hills is only approximately 40 x 65 miles of habitat not a very large area! Other lion hunting states must be somewhat jealous.
- 916 First weekend hunted area east of Custer that we found seven different lion tracks in a three mile radius. Most days we hunted, had some type of snow cover and found signs and tracks every day. Even with the number of lions taken this year, I am convinced there is no shortage in the lion population. I was privileged to raw a Hills deer license this year, in my fifty years of Hills deer hunting, I have never seen deer numbers this low. The lions are contributing to this problem on the few days. There was snow, lion tracks were not hard to find, but deer numbers were not there. I urge the department to continue to be aggressive with their lion quotas. There can be a balance between lions and deer/elk populations. We are not there yet! In a lion season of very little snow, hunters killed 73 lions in sixty days without the use of dogs. This kind of data is unheard of in any othe5r state that has a mountain lion season. We have a lion problem! Please continue to address it, so my children and grandchildren can enjoy the hunting experience that I did growing up in the Black Hills Area.
- 925 Saw a lot of tracks and sign. Fresh snow helped and was amazed at the amount of sign.
- 930 I bet the season would have ended sooner if there was more snow. I came across female tracks with 2 sets of cub tracks on two occasions. My sixth season and covered a lot of ground. Tracked a large cat for 2 days but no luck. Wish we could use dogs. Great season and great country to look at and explore. I tell my wife it's my "spiritual journey". So jealous of the guys that get a cat.
- 944 Keep upper the tag numbers.....I am finally seeing more deer back in some of the areas I hunt around Nemo, SD. You guys are doing a great job....please do not allow use of dogs. It will turn into a rich man sport only then.
- 947 I really enjoyed lion season. I saw lions I could have legally shot but turned down due to smaller size. I witnessed and took video of two separate younger lions as well as filmed

- two very young cats after I almost collided with the mother in the park. I will lion hunt every year from here on out.
- 962 Need to stop trying to manage CSP differently than the rest of the hills. Also need to increase lion harvest until deer & elk populations recover.
- 974 Regarding Custer: Considering I saw more cats than elk when scouting elk a few years ago, I'd say a cat population reduction is in order. If I understand correctly, there were non-hunters who applied for Custer cat tags, then didn't use them (non-politically correct="tree huggers"). Is there a way to control this issue or had it already been resolved? I guess the only other recommendation would be to clarify the reporting procedure, specifically towards the end of the season. The problem with the perceived "failure to report" in a timely manner by the biologist just fueled potential fire between hunters vs. non hunters.
- 982 I was quite happy with the number of lions that we were allowing to harvest this year. Since there were 70 lions taken in less than 70 days, I hope this shows that the Hills are over populated with lions.
- 983 Still learning how to be successful
- 992 I believe the overall harvest number was set to high. Lion hunting is a great resource and I think that the numbers of cats taken is too high for the future health of the lion population.
- 995 It would have been nice to access all of CSP roads via vehicle instead of just the main ones. I believe hunters would've had better luck and lion numbers would be further reduced within the park. I'm looking forward to next year's hunt if the season is offered again. It's become the most frustrating thing I love to do!
- 1007 Please do not allow dogs in future hunts it's not fair chase!
- 1013 There are a lot more lions in the Black Hills then people realize.
- 1014 I do not feel the # of tags is set high enough when it can be reached as quickly as it was.
- 1034 Too many lions in the Hills not enough deer or elk should be able to use dogs to hunt lion should be able to shoot like a coyote and there would still be to many
- 1035 Our deer and elk are getting less and let's shoot more of them
- 1040 No snow made it tough in late January, but would like to try it again next year.
- 1044 This was my first year mountain lion hunting and therefore also a learning year. I plan on hunting them again next season and applying what I have learned. Hopefully I will be more successful although the challenge and experiences are just as joy to me. I do believe there are more mountain lions in the Black Hills than are recorded and ask that you do not let special interest groups sway your decisions on the seasons or quotas.
- 1049 I found nothing wrong with the season; just happened the weather did not cooperate the weekend I had slotted to hunt. There was no fresh snow, full moon. Found the hunt fun

- and interesting. I am having trouble accepting that 3 cats were harvested with the weight of 28- 32 pounds.
- 1051 The last day I hunted, I crossed 5 different sets of cat tracks all within a mile and a half of each other. The tracks were crossed on a 45 minute walk after I quit calling. If the wind hadn't been blowing 30 miles an hour the two days I was hunting, I sure would have had a good chance of killing a cat. I don't think you have a clue of how many cats are in the Hills.
- 1059 I saw tracks of 4 different Mt Lions. Deer herds and turkey flocks are at an all-time low. We MUST control the exploding lion population.
- 1068 I was hunting in areas that were closed to vehicles but yet four wheelers and trucks were a regular sight behind Silver City on China Gulch road
- 1076 I hunted numerous locations in a large area of Custer State Park, and saw many tracks in all areas hunted. Although I liked the structure of the season, there needs to be more cats harvested in the Park to reduce numbers. More hunters at the same time would cause over-crowding for hunters. Perhaps an extended season after the harvest limit is met in the Black Hills, or an early season for the Park would be an option.
- 1087 We need another big hunting season and should start December 1st so the hold hunters can ride the forest roads that are closed gates December 15th. This would allow me to do some hunting.
- 1089 There are still too many lions need to have higher kill limits.
- 1099 With the success of the 2012 hunting season it show that there are too many lions in the Hills. I personally see the decline in deer and elk calves in the central hills. Please keep up the good work. Don't cut back on the season at all!
- 1102 As a landowner we see a lot of signs in the mud/snow/dust tracks and lion in Custer, Pennington, and Fall River Counties.
- 1106 Need to keep tag limit at 70 or above for next year. There are many cats still out there! This said I will hunt no more SD cats. Let others enjoy! Saw no elk in my area used to be many, very few deer also!
- 1122 Lack of snow during much of the season limited days to hunt
- 1137 Raise harvest limits, they are killing our deer and elk.
- 1144 Gentlemen, you have many more lions in the hills than you think you do. If you don't take increased steps to trim the number of lions the deer and elk populations will be significantly impacted.
- 1154 I would like to see a map of the Black Hills showing all kill sights with date, time, method of hunting, weapon used, types of call (if used) and size and sex of kill.
- 1160 More lions need to be harvested; deer and elk numbers are way down.

- 1162 Certainly didn't appreciate all the closed trails. Would never use excessive speed but would try to be quiet with the 4 wheeler but so many roads were blocked I and my brothers were very dissatisfied.
- 1174 Ramp it up a little. I think that the season ending 28+- days prior to its scheduled close is telling. Lots of cats. Don't get me wrong, the hills w/o mountain lions is as bad as too many.
- 1183 Cut wolf tracks near Deerfield Lake. Tracked them on cross country skis for approximately 3-4 miles. Tracks consisted of 7 different animals.
- 1184 1. I did apply for CSP but was not drawn to hunt the park. This needs to be opened up just as the outside, this draw is a farce, there is nothing in the park that you could disturb during this time frame. This is just another way for GF&P to have their thumb on your hunting days and control a person's daily hunting routine. 2. The reporting system is still another joke, if you have 24 hours, it should not make a bit of difference of who you are or what time of the season it is, you still have 24 hours to check it in. 3. Why do we have to have the reports in the paper every day, there is not another state that hunts lions that has a daily log, of time, age, sex, weight, this has no place in the paper. WY, MT, ID, UT, CO, AZ, ND, none of these post a thing in the front pages of the paper every day, is the newspaper that has to have to run it every day. 4. I firmly believe that GF&P has overstepped its authority on lion numbers, times of harvests, to justify their agenda for lion harvest of season ending kills
- 1190 I disagree with having the mountain lion season and bobcat season at concurrent times. Several times while on a set of lion tracks, I ran into hunters using dogs to "Bobcat" hunt. These hunters also conveniently had mountain lion tags. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know what these guys were doing.
- 1192 The game department has spent more time and money studying lions in the Black Hills and in the process have ignored what the lions are doing to the rest of the animals. The number of lions has increased to the point where they are destroying the rest of the animals. The seasonal kill numbers have not even kept up with the reproduction rate. Your department has no idea how many lions there are in the hills and the published numbers are no more than poor swag. The idea there can be very few lions in a given area is false. There were at least 8 lions back off my place at one time. Anytime hunters can kill over 70 lions in a 60 day period indicate there are large populations. I have kept track of the deer numbers over spring on the hay field with the following numbers 2009 and before – 125, 2010 – 75, 2011-75, 2012-60 the only thing that has changed is lion numbers.
- 1215 Thin mountain lion numbers down even more next year. I don't know if the mountain lion is all the blame for the rapid decline of the population of elk in Custer State Park but I am concerned that at age 55 how long will it take to build the herd up again. I have a combined 40 years preference in the park and I am wondering if I will ever get to hunt the park. It would be nice if you could put a program together to give tags in the park to a combination of age and preference points so that a person in their 70's or 80's might still have a chance to harvest an elk in Custer State Park.
- 1229 We need to have another season with a large number of mountain lions being killed. Besides big game being down (elk, deer) the number of turkeys is getting smaller every

- year in the higher hills. You (GF&PO) have helped create a predator problem that should be connected soon. Wake up!
- 1245 Lots of tracks and lots of dead deer found need to up the tags; focus on elk and deer hunters to better the number of elk and deer not many sightings of them.
- 1248 Feel that quota should continue to be raised.
- 1252 You need to up the lion tags. I was hunting in my deer hunting area and only saw 4 deer in 8 days.
- 1255 The quota should be increased.
- 1261 I think that there should be more tags put out. There are more lions than you think.
- 1269 Keep raising the tag numbers; every time I went out I seen tracks, they are every where
- 1272 I prefer when the season was the same as Black Hills deer.
- 1282 It was a great hunt! Harvested a 100 pound male and will be buck next year to help manage them.
- 1284 There needs to be a higher quota. The elk, deer, and sheep numbers are suffering too much due to the lions. There are far more lions than what is being claimed.
- 1294 What's going on with the elk, mountain goats and bighorns? Is it all because of the cats?
- 1296 I really liked that the limit was raised this year.
- 1297 I know you have heard this before, but why don't we keep the season open from the first of January to the end of March? And how ever many longtails we harvest we harvest. After a couple of years, we would have a pretty good idea how many lions we have. WE don't need to spend all the money studying predators, let's spend it on habitat and bring the mtn goats and bighorns and mule deer back. Thank you for all your hard work, I know you guys are the good guys.
- 1298 Open CSP to hounds. It is fenced in. There would be no problem with dogs on private land.
- 1303 I had at least 3different sets of cat tracks on my property in the snow in February. I have one night trail cam photo of a very large cat in our back yard. The tracks are as close as 30 yards from our patio. Our deer numbers are half of what they were a couple years ago. We usually have as many as 50 turkeys around (100+ acre property) but have only seen 1 lone gobbler since last Labor Day!! TOO many cats!!!
- 1304 Poor questions at the end. I applied for CSP several times. Are you sure hunters are getting the tags or lion lovers? I am disappointed in your management of the park. 1000 elk to 150. I have spent a lot of time and money looking forward to my once in a lifetime tag or archery tags and now the herd is ruined. If I did that poor of a job I would be fired. Please get more lions out of the park. We used to be noted for our Elk and you haven't done a good job managing it.

- 1307 Lions would be easier to manage if people weren't so divided on management. The increase in the quota is a step in the right direction.
- 1308 The lions have seriously hurt the deer and elk population I think you have done enough studies on that. Also the smaller game animals Bobcat porcupine skunk coon etc. there is nothing left out there thank you
- 1325 The number of cats allowed to be taken was too small
- 1334 Would like to know more information about how to be successful and what areas in the Black Hills are the best areas to hunt. I also think there needs to be more thought into the area closures by the Black Hills National Forest for and travel management plans to accommodate not only Mountain Lion hunters but hunters in general.
- 1337 The hunting was fun beside the lack of snow. Sure makes hunting in South Dakota almost year round.
- 1343 I would rather see more deer and elk and no mountain lions. I believe lions should be the same status as coyotes, hunted year around! If you need to sell licenses sell only one license per person per year good for one lion any time during that year with no quotas!
- 1346 While hunting mountain lions I could find and track lions on all outings. The snow was great and there was always fresh lion tracks and activity in the hunt areas. Lots of lion sign
- 1362 I would hope that you continue having an annual season the quota was reached rather quickly once tracking conditions improved.
- 1368 GF&P needs to get a better handle on the mountain lions in the black hills I was in some good country in CSP and didn't even see an elk or signs of elk. This is become a problem. I did see a few deer. I think that it should be that lion hunting should be on year round. SD had one of the best Elk herds in the country and we are about to have none because of lions. And we will not have any in the years to come if we don't get a better lion harvest. I say up the quota for next year.
- 1370 Tell us the number of cats in the hills, good or bad quit lying to us. If only 6-8 collared cats were killed and at a ratio of 10 or 11 cats per collared cats and 63 cats with collars on- that would make about 693 cats. We are all big boys here and if you only want 70 cats killed per year so be it, but tell us the true number of cats in the hills and surrounding area.
- 1384 Not enough snow when I was there. Not enough knowledge for good mountain lion hunting success.
- 1386 Weather was the biggest factor i.e. lack of snow in my area. However we did have cats on our trail cams with 4 miles of Rapid City limits. Also while looking for land to deer hunt just north and south of Hermosa all we would hear is there are no deer or elk because of lions. Heard about many encounters. We won't kill off all the lions in a year. I feel we should open it wide up for a year then back down to our current tag numbers and do

- some research. They have their place and are a neat creature but let's get a handle on them. Thanks
- 1394 Was told that Custer was off limits by some guy that didn't know squat. Also when will GFP get up to speed with USFS fish cops? I buy an \$11,000 and change RZR head up the Nemo trail and find out everything is closed off the main track to Nemo. I am 71 years old. Walking is an option, but a slow one and I can't get to the flats near my home where I know cats reside. I found I was fighting for cutting a cross track off Nemo and other open trails beyond Nemo because too few trails open and to many hunters moving on what was left open every day there was snow. Question? What the hell were all the lights all night long moving up the Nemo trail from my place? I thought night hunting was a big no-no. Again I was wrong. Every night fresh snow veh tracks and lights all night long. You boys need to patrol this deal a little more it would seem? A guy even stated in the RPJ paper that he started day two of hunting on a track before day break. What's that? However, did call in a young male lion, and the young man with me had him cold stone dead at 50 yards, but didn't take the shot. Now that's class. Wanted a trophy and not just a dead young cat. I guess I had a ball overall, but we need some acceptable participation by the federal boys re trails up there on the mountain. Also a patrol squad every now and again would be nice. Thanks for the chance to hunt.
- 1402 I continue to be amazed that SDGFP reaches the harvest quotas that are set. Congratulations for attempting to manage this lion population as it probably continues to increase. I recently moved to the Black Hills from the S/W U.S. I thought we had dense lion populations until I learned of your program! I manage hunted wildlife species on several large western ranches including lions, bighorn, elk, deer, pronghorn, and turkeys. The wildlife population in the Black Hills is certainly sustaining a high level of predation. As desired prey becomes limited, secondary or opportunity prey will really deplete quickly. Good Luck!
- 1410 I would like some information on the lion I harvested its ear tag number was 36
- 1427 More Lions out there than what you think. Saw 3 different sets of tracks (different sizes) near my neighborhood but no lions were shot near here. One of them ate my pet cat and I would like to repay the favor. Raise the quota, or better yet, treat them as you do coyotes...all year round, no limit. Thanks,
- 1439 It would be nice to see at least some percentage of the tags go to hound hunting.
- 1456 I believe we need to harvest at least 70 plus cats for a few more years still too many, the deer and elk herds are showing for it. People would like to hunt deer and elk rather than cats. I do like cat hunting but you make more money with the others.
- 1461 GF&P does a good job please don't let the one who yells the loudest or gets the angriest make the rules.
- 1462 I think the season is good the way it is. They only comment I would have is make it possible for some hunting licenses that would be good during elk and deer season, that way if you had a deer or elk tag you could have a possibility of drawing a tag and taking a lion while hunting elk or deer.

- 1471 Due to the short time it took for hunters to harvest 73 lions, it seems obvious that we still have too many lions in SD. I personally don't think we need any, if our game licenses are managed correctly. Lions should be on the predator list with coyotes and skunks and treated as such!
- 1476 Very good experience
- 1501 Great job and continue to protect our resources.
- 1506 There are too many lions in South Dakota. The state should reclassify them as a varmint or at least raise the quota much higher.
- 1511 Still way too many cats.
- 1525 I think it time to up the quota again. Let me see 73 cats in what 61 days. The estimated population is around 300 cats, so let see that would mean hunters harvested about 25% of the lion population in 2 months. One would also need to take into account that only about 25% percent of the hills our accessible to hunt this time of year with all the road closures. Seems awful weird that two years in row we loss or almost loss an elk during populations studies in Custer State Park. WE NEED INVEST IN A POPULATION SURVEY AND A MANAGEMENT PLAN ASAP BEFORE WE NO LONGER HAVE A POPULATION OF DEER AND ELK TO HUNT IN THE HILLS. THE SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN OF SOUTH DAKOTA SPEND MORE THAN ENOUGH MONEY IN THIS STATE HUNTING AND FISHING. SO I FEEL IT IS YOURS RESPONSIBILITY TO US TO PUT THIS ISSUE AT THE TOP OF YOUR LIST OF THINGS TO DO. PLEASE ALSO KEEP IN MIND THAT BIG GAME TAG FEES ACCOUNT FOR A LOT OF YOUR YEARLY INCOME, AND AT THIS RATE PRETTY SOON YOU MAY FIND YOUR ACCOUNT A LITTLE SHORT ON FUNDS.
- 1545 It is my belief that the Mountain Lion season should run Jan.1 - Mar.31 with no limit. Just have each lion checked in the same way Elk are. I live out in the hills and spend a lot of time in the forest service. Based on all the cat sign I have seen in the last few years tells me there is no shortage of cats in the Black Hills right now. Thank you!
- 1548 Keep up the good work on the season or the elk and deer will be gone completely.
- 1549 My opinion is that GFP have really under estimated number of lions!
- 1554 Have tags all year long, hunt with dogs.
- 1581 I own land on the west side of Wind Cave Park and use to see Elk all the time...now never???
- 1588 You need to shot another 72 lions, before some little kid gets killed.....
- 1592 While living several hours away and planning hunts at a moment's notice due to waiting for snow it is somewhat difficult to get access to hunt Custer lions in the current set up.
- 1610 Keep up the 70 lion quota or add more.

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- 1620 We need to thin out the coyote population also. I have noted coyotes doing a lot of damage to the deer numbers. Control more lions!
- 1630 In 2 days of hunting, saw no elk and only 2 or 3 deer - very little deer sign except right near city limits. I suspect as this continues, there will be more lion encounters on edges of towns. Seems it was pretty easy killing 70+ lions - maybe should be 100 for next year!
- 1631 Way too many lions not enough elk that is a real problem!
- 1632 Harvest more lions so that the elk and deer numbers rise
- 1634 With all the sign of lions I saw, I think a higher quota would be appropriate. I believe that I would have harvested a lion if the season did not end when it did, due to the quota being met.
- 1651 I would have really liked to hunt in the park but never got the opportunity. One idea/suggestion would be to limit the park to a certain amount of hunters every day and have a check in system or sign-up sheet each day so more people can have the opportunity.
- 1653 I believe the cats are becoming a very large problem in the Bethlehem Cave area.
- 1669 What if anything has become of the GFP employee fired for not calling in his mountain lion kill? This was handled pretty poorly, unless of course there's information not released to the public and then if you're not going to tell the whole story why tell any story.
- 1676 Raise the quota
- 1678 This season is for a trophy animal in South Dakota, the second in number only to bighorn sheep and I feel that successful numbers need to have mandatory waiting periods just like bighorn sheep and elk. This is so others get opportunities to take one of these trophy animals.
- 1683 Had a great year say lots of sign and got to be with in thirty yards of a cat, took a shot but missed. First year doing it had a blast will be back next year for sure.
- 1687 When the season first opened a few years back, I remember the comments, without baiting or dogs we will never kill any lions. We must have a boat load.
- 1688 I would suggest raising the number of lions killed next year. There are way too many lions, coyotes and wolves. The elk, deer, and mountain goats need to build up their numbers.
- 1692 Don't allow the use of dogs. It's more of a challenge and more fun without dogs.
- 1693 Too many Lions. Season should be the same as coyotes-predator.
- 1694 Season closed before my time frame to hunt in the park.

- 1718 I think the Custer Park should have a separate quota then the hills. Also until the elk cows have a higher percent of calves that make it in to the second year and we start seeing spike elk in the cow herds again we should keep the lion quota high. Would like to see the Goats and mtn sheep come back as well. You can't have them back when you hunt them 365 days a year.
- 1749 It seems like the mountain lion season has been helping some there was without a doubt getting to be too many of them. You could tell this just by how bad the deer and elk population was getting too. Finally starting to see a few more deer again, but I still don't believe there are as many as there were 5 years ago or as many as there should be today.
- 1754 Although my two hunting buddies and I were not lucky enough to get a lion this year we are all excited for the next season. One thing we heard over and over from hunters who didn't hunt any lions this last season was they would hunt if they could use dogs. Is there a chance that would ever happen?
- 1756 With the amount of lions taken so quickly with hardly any snow on the ground indicates a lot of lions in the area to me. We have seen 3 different lions on our trail cams last fall but I never got the time to get out this season to hunt. With the reduction in elk, turkey and deer in the Black Hills we need to take a lot closer look at how many lions we take out. Thanks
- 1762 Unbelievable opportunity. This might now be my favorite type of hunting.
- 1764 Non-resident tags would be nice. Split the quota 10 during elk, 30 during deer, rest in January. Many more lion license sold = money. I loved chasing cats hold the quota for a few years.
- 1765 We had no snow the entire season and I just sat and called almost every evening for about an hour Once or twice during the season all the deer disappeared from the area for several days telling me there was a lion around but I was calling alone and perhaps he approached me from my blind side and saw or smelled me before I ever saw him. I even worried that I trained him to my call so that he knew there goes that human again. It was the mildest winter in 25 years and with no snow it was really tough to tell what was going on. Lastly I still believe that we need to kill more lions each year until the deer and elk herd a number recover and before some child gets hurt or worse.
- 1772 I liked the increase in the numbers and think they should stay high or even higher just 1 week ago 3 of my friends saw a lion each, 1 killing an elk, 1 killing a whitetail, and one around a housing development. We have a lion problem. Keep up the numbers.
- 1789 Job well done on the season. If the impact of mountain lions on the elk population is as larger as it sounds, I believe the season limit on mountain lions should be raised. The limit of 70 was not hard to meet this year. That is for sure.
- 1796 There were 3 of us that hunted; even though we didn't get a shot the experience was great! What a great way to explore the canyons in the Black Hills. We hunted Spring Canyon and Spearfish Canyon. Met some very nice people that were very helpful too, that showed us where to hunt. John Kanta was very helpful over the phone when I called him on the way out!

- 1797 You should post the numbers of lions you tagged last season with the number of tagged lions shot.
- 1819 I like the way South Dakota handles the Mountain Lion Season.
- 1846 I believe the GF&P is doing a good job. Too keep a balance on this beautiful predator is a tough job. Keep up the good work!
- 1847 It seems to me there is still plenty of lions out there I just had a problem with too much work during the season and couldn't get out to hunt more. I do like the season being held January thru March.
- 1855 I like the way the season is set up without dogs. I would like to see 5 tags set up for dog use. This could be a draw like any other season. I was glad to see the quota set at 70. I think it is clear that the game and fish employee that shot the 70th cat and didn't check him in till the next day clearly broke the intent of the law, but he DIDNT break the law. It was a chicken shit move to fire him over that. What's the real story? There shouldn't be any cow tags in the hills for a few years to allow the elk numbers to rebound. Any elk tags should be changed to antlered tags. No elk tags, INCLUDING any elk, should be issued for at least 2 years to allow elk numbers time to rebound. Land owner tags need to be seriously evaluated. There is no reason they should get an any elk tag every year. Give them a cow tag every year and a bull tag every 3-5 years.
- 1859 Keep the season to residents only and no dogs.
- 1862 I like the way the mountain lions season is being run in SD. I hope they don't start allowing dogs to be used for mountain lion hunting. I think the yearly quota needs to be increased more yet. The mountain lions have decimated the deer and elk herds in the Black Hills.
- 1874 Need to harvest more lions.
- 1879 Put them back on the predators list.
- 1881 We need a Northern and Southern separate season; all lions are getting killed in the northern unit!
- 1884 I did not spend time in CSP hunting as the season was over. I did scout it and found lots of lion tracks. There are an unhealthy number of lions in the Black Hills and CSP and the quota need to be higher and much higher. Conservation is for all animals not just lions...
- 1886 Disgusted with the off trail motorcycle and ATV riders looking for tracks or just riding.
- 1889 Raise the quota!
- 1897 Once again the mountain lion season PROVES to the Black Hills Area that there are way too many of these animals here. There was very little snow for most of the season and somehow hunters managed to kill an average of just over 1 mountain lion per day! Imagine the kill ratio had there been more snow! This just proves to us that the "estimate" of 240 mountains lions is grossly underestimated. Every hunter out there who enjoys hunting for deer, elk etc. is dismayed at the destruction of these animals by the

- ever increasing population of mountain lions. I hunted deer for two full days in an area where we routinely have seen 50 to 100 head of deer a day. The landowner informed us that the mountain lions have taken a huge toll on his deer and elk population. In two days of hunting his property we saw no elk and only 2 deer! 2 deer in an area perfect for a healthy deer population. I am happy that the State of South Dakota has increased the quota each year. However, I would like to see a quota of at least 100 to 150 mountain lions per season in the near future. If we don't, it's only a matter of time before a human is taken down.
- 1912 Why was GF&P employee relieved of his duties after harvesting a mountain lion? It doesn't sound like he violated any laws.
- 1931 The Custer State Park hunt will never be a success until the GF&P allows significantly more hunters in to hunt. The entire Black Hills is invested with lions. Without an aggressive approach to population control our area will be damaged for generations to come.
- 1951 Season was great had ample time to hunt and enjoyed seeing tracks, and signs of mountain lions but no luck this year. Where I hunted there was obvious signs of many cats, all the way to the last day.
- 1956 I've been hunting lions since the season first began. I've seen tracks before but no lions, but this season I saw two of them. One was lunging through the air after some pray. I would have filled my tag but it was in someone's yard, but was cool to see.
- 1964 Hunt more cats have fun hunting them.
- 1976 I always felt like the weather was killing us. No snow and lots of wind, but that's hunting!
- 1985 Allow the use of dogs to hunt mountain lions.
- 1987 Hunting lions is the best hunt ever.
- 2016 Open season on lions in the park till the elk numbers come back. Increase the overall number of lions in the quota to at least 100 or more. Start the lion season earlier so the deer hunters can hunt lions while deer hunting. It is hard for some people to hunt both seasons because of the price of gas. I for one would have liked to spend more time hunting lions but had a difficult time going because of the expense.
- 2018 I appreciate the higher allowed numbers for mt lions this season.
- 2026 During the Feb. 10 – the end of season I had no time to hunt. I help direct other hunters to get lions. I was calving cows for the season from Feb. 10 to the end. I hope the other hunters got a chance to see or get a lion. For us Ranchers we see them quite often.
- 2030 I liked the e-mail updates on the total lions taken. That works well. I think we need to take more lions in Custer State Park, and get the elk herd back to normal numbers.
- 2041 I live in Johnson Siding with Rapid Creek running through my front yard. In the last four years I have had Lion tracks visible in fresh snow, three times. These have been in my front and back yard. This year they were about 10' from my front door. I have two small

dogs and they were the reason I purchased the Lion tag thinking if the lion returned I would probably have to do something, he didn't return. I was one of those who opposed the first Lion season and am now of the opinion that there is definitely too many Lions do to the facts regarding the survival rate of Fawns, Elk calves and Big Horn Sheep lambs. Common sense tells us that if can harvest 73 lions with the poor tracking conditions we had this year due to the lack of snow then something is definitely out of whack. As the Lion population increases there will be more competition among them for food and the likelihood of injuries forcing them into unwanted interaction with humans. There is without doubt room in the Black Hills for both Lions and humans. However, not in the numbers we apparently have now. You will do the Lions no great favor if their numbers are allowed to increase. Thank you.

2042 Still hunting.

2052 Something needs to be done with the over population of the Lions! There needs to be a good balance in our wildlife and you guys are not getting the job done!! It is a shame what has become of our Elk, Deer, Turkey, and Big horn Sheep herds! You guys need to start listening to the hunters, and C.O. out in the fields and take care of this problem! What's it going to take.....a child being killed by a Lion???? I would hope not!!

2058 There are too many tags. I would hope to see the number of tags reduced.

2060 Do not raise the kill quota.

2061 I would enjoy hunting longer during the season. The tag limit went very quickly this year. It would be nice to see more tags issued. I have seen 2 mountain lions near the Pactola area since the season has ended.

2077 I saw the first mountain lion ever and I have lived here all my life in the woods! I did not get at one. Second to the last day I tracked the cat to some rocks and we surprised each other but I missed the cat and it was collared!

2088 I found very few elk or signs of elk in Custer State Park. I think there are too many lions.

2091 It will be great to see our deer and elk herds increase.

2107 Let more people in to the park to take out more cats to save the elk/deer herds.

2129 I buy a license so that I can take a lion on my ranch property if the opportunity rises

2176 Please include dogs in the hunting

2190 The season should run January thru March with no limits on harvest. I would like to see the deer, mtn. goat, bighorn sheep, and elk populations come back so my son has the opportunity hunt them. As a residence of the Black Hills with Forest service surrounding my property I have seen the population of deer, elk, and mtn. goats decrease to the lowest numbers in my 24 years living here.

2192 I am pleased with the work that is being done to manage our wildlife. I think there are a lot of hard decisions to be made and I'd like to express my gratitude to GF&P for their efforts in wildlife management. I think the lion population is still too big and I'd like to see

- one more year of increased quota up to maybe 80 or even 90. I think after that it will be possible to lower the limit back down and try to maintain the population. Every time I choose the elk and deer over lions so I am for increased hunting of the cats. You guys aren't always popular but you are top notch in my book. Thank you for your continued conservation efforts!
- 2204 There are too many lions in the Black Hills. Continue to increase the amount of licenses.
- 2215 My hunting partner and I are disabled and can't walk long distances. The road to our area was blocked by a gate so our opportunity was gone. We don't damage the area we just setup and call.
- 2218 I would rather hunt deer and elk than mountain lions. From what I see, and others agree, we still have too many cats. The deer and elk herds are still on the decline. As a reminder to the fact that GF&P denied the mountain lion for too long and are still trying to get a handle on that situation -- get a handle on the "no breeding population" of wolves before you have the same problem with them. You know that we have a breeding population so admit it and take care to it before it's too late.
- 2221 Lots of lions
- 2237 My schedule did not allow me to do justice to my hunting this season. I personally would hate to see the quota increase and think it is pretty high at 70.
- 2251 Would love to see the quota of lions go up next year. It is discouraging to see the number of elk and deer permits going down yearly. My preference is to have other big game in the state and not just predators. I believe that the numbers game fish and parks are reporting for the number of lions in the hills is very low.
- 2257 Do not allow dogs.
- 2258 I am very concerned about the elk and deer numbers in the hills. I have harvested two bull elk in the hills in the past, now realizing how lucky I have been. I do feel mountain lions are the major problem why those numbers are down
- 2263 KILL MORE LIONS
- 2267 Keep it the same, no dogs.
- 2279 I hunt for the pure enjoyment of hunting not just the "kill", so I always enjoy my time spent in the hills.
- 2308 Still too many lions
- 2310 Please do not initiate mountain lion hunting with dogs. Mountain lions were here long before we were and should be welcomed into the Black Hills habitat. The current system is sufficient.
- 2313 If the population continues to increase would you consider adding a non-resident family member to hunt with the resident? My brother lives in MN and will never have the opportunity unless this could happen. He would cherish the opportunity.

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- 2330 During my mountain lion hunts I saw no shortage of fresh tracks from multiple different lions. Please continue to expand the number of lions allowed to be harvested. I am concerned about the reduced number of elk and deer I saw in the areas I hunted. I saw multiple herds of elk with very few calves, this was very concerning.
- 2333 I don't like paying for a bunch of surveys! And paying for an extravagant GF&P building I had no say in! Maybe we would have more hunters if license fees weren't so high! Wish my pay would go up as much as you guys raised the lion licenses. \$5.00 to \$25.00.
- 2337 I live north of Spearfish where I observed many deer until this year. The numbers are extremely low, quit shooting does. Good lion season how about 150 next year.
- 2350 I feel there are more lions than most people think! I saw a lot of signs in a very small area.
- 2383 Do not allow out of state hunters in the future. Do not allow the use of hunting dogs.
- 2385 Hunting east river
- 2401 Need to harvest more mountains lions.
- 2409 Seen a lot of tracks, both cat and deer hunting. Only made it out twice this year and only saw 1 cat but from the years I have spent living in the Hills and amount of tracks spotted, I was convinced that we have an issue, a very large population.
- 2411 Thanks to everyone at GF&P. It is hard to manage wildlife and try to keep everyone happy. I do think we need to continue to reduce the number of mountain lions in the Black Hills. Reducing the numbers will in effect help the mountain lions. The lions will eventually deplete their food source and "all" lions will suffer. We need to manage lions, just like we manage deer, elk, etc.
- 2428 Many road hunters are concerned about the road closures. Just ignore them. It's great to be able to hunt in peace without motorized vehicles zipping all around.
- 2447 We have way too many lions! They have practically ruined our elk population and are reducing all other desired species! Based on your own studies it is so obvious we need to drastically reduce the lion population or have no survival of calf elk and big horn lambs! Will you guys ever catch the clues before it is too late? Our Black Hills wildlife populations have been mismanaged and significant reduction in lions must be done!!!
- 2455 Should be able to use dogs
- 2462 Our group is seeing less deer, turkeys, and elk year after year. I don't believe that the mountain lion population is remotely close to what's been published. What about just having a mountain lion season January 1st - March 31st without any quota? I commend the GF&P for raising the quote this year, but would still like to see something else done to help bring their prey's population up.
- 2465 Ranch owners within the Black Hills should have the right to hunt 12 months on their property if one is chasing his livestock. He shouldn't have to wait for damages to happen.

- 2478 Due to health problems I didn't get to hunt this year looking forward to next year
- 2491 Mountain lions are destroying the elk population. There should be year round hunting. They should be treated like the predator they are.
- 2492 Would be nice to hear about hunts from successful mountain lion hunters. What works or how they came about mountain lions. I hunted in a walk in area in Bennett County, that I had heard and seen a mountain lion last year.
- 2493 Season ended prior to 15 day permit.
- 2508 I hope the GF&P ups the quota for mountain lions, I feel more need to be taken out of the hills. Years ago I remember going to the gas station with my dad to get a BH deer tag. This year and previous years I know of a lot of people who apply for a tag and do not get one. It is unfortunate the kids miss out on hunting with their parents, hunting needs to be taught from generation to generation. If people can't get hunting tags good proper hunting conservation is being lost. I feel the GF&P needs to do something to bring back the quality of deer and elk herds in the Black Hills.
- 2509 I think we need to harvest more of them.
- 2523 One of my hunting areas was closed at end of year prior to season. If there is a season on, the gates should stay open. So either leave the gates open or move season early so the hunters have access.
- 2537 I did not hunt in the Black Hills. I watched for cat sign on my Bobcat line but seen none. I found cat tracks as I was working in a Prairie Rat town 600 yards from my house. That's the closest I came to a big cat.
- 2553 It is called hunting. Sometimes you get lucky, sometimes not.
- 2557 I am disheartened that so many young/small lions were taken this year. I have let several lions in the 60+ pound range walk away over the last few years. GF&P continues to do a great job managing the season; I just wish more people had personal ethics...
- 2568 I think the quota of 70 total mountain lions was a bit high. I feel 60 would have more reasonable, especially considering the history of total lions killed exceeding the established quota. If the quota was lower, perhaps the taking of a few "extra" lions wouldn't draw as much criticism from protectionists and the public in general. Overall I believe GF&P is doing a good job of managing the lion population. It is obvious our elk, deer, and sheep would appreciate fewer lions, not to mention us hunters, but to me it is important to know the Black Hills does have some large predators. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.
- 2582 This was my first year hunting cats so I have a lot to learn – to me we need snow, that's most important so we can track them. Well, you saw what happened the last two weeks this year.
- 2594 I did not hunt in Custer State Park.

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- 2609 I like my elk and turkeys and deer. I don't mind the cats but I do think they are a problem and think we need to keep them under control. You guys are doing a good job with that.
- 2612 You need to increase the number of kills. There were not enough lions shot. We and the neighbors have lost calves to lions and a \$400 for a newborn, which is a big hit. If the season is full before it is over it would have to be an indicator as to the number of lions in the hills.
- 2620 I felt that Custer State Park should have opened the park to more hunters that what was programed. If they are serious about their elk reduction due to lions then something should be done about it. There are many more lions in the Black Hills than GF&P are aware of. Ask the hunters like myself who are hunting these animals. It will be interesting to see what the future meetings to set lion limits will arrive at. THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOICE MY OPINION ON THIS SUBJECT!
- 2645 As I continue to comment on all surveys about what I have observed in the Black Hills in the last ten years about the number of lions and the lack of elk calves, I wonder what the point is. I continually read phony BS in the newspaper articles – playing down the numbers, not reporting the facts! Is it your master plan to remove the hunters from the equation? You issue the big game licenses and then say we kill too many elk cows...go figure! Thank God the commission listens to us, not you.
- 2648 I passed up a lot of coyotes holding out for a cat, what I did not see was elk, deer or turkeys in the numbers there should be, between the hunting pressure Mt Lions, coyotes, this year I'm eating Mt Lion not deer or elk. 72 + cats in 60 days and I know where there is at least 6 or 7 more. Please keep removing more MT Lions. (After 19 yrs. without an elk tag, I hope I can hunt elk one more time in SD before I die)
- 2649 I love the season. I hope it lasts.
- 2652 I think with as much sign that I saw at the end of the season and the declining elk herds (didn't see any calves out of 150 elk. Also the Big horns and goats seem to just feed them. And they disperse all over the US. Raise the quota I'd say.
- 2666 I mostly hunted in Pennington county where there was little or in most cases no snow for tracking. I was hoping to be successful with calling along Spring Creek near Rockerville which is where I live, but nothing came to the call. It was my first time hunting lions without dogs and it was not as easy as I was expecting it to be...
- 2689 Open up some of the closed areas to hunters with lion tags only
- 2700 I am not sure that mountain lions need to have a place in the Black Hills or any place else for that matter. But to let them over populate to the point that it affects the deer and elk herds in the Black Hills is disturbing. Double or triple the lion tags in the future until they are in check, or extinct would be fine too. I would like to know if the biologist who got fired from his job did anything else wrong other than not checking his cat in on time, allowing a couple more cats to be killed.
- 2710 UNSUCCESSFUL FOR THE CUSTER LIMITED ACCESS PERMIT (I UNDERSTAND) WISH THERE WAS MORE SNOW BOTH OUT OF ANYONE'S CONTROL

- 2721 Let's get down to business, it's time GF&P allows hunters to use dogs and add an archery season with dogs.
- 2731 8 different sets of tracks in 2.5 days of hunting, most sign within short distance of housing developments in the Custer area, including a pet poodle kill. It appears to me that there is a large cat problem in the hills, with the severe reduction in deer and elk numbers and calf recruitment. Why was the biologist who killed the 70th cat fired? Apparently he violated no regulations, I certainly hope he was not fired to appease the mountain lion advocacy group. I would certainly hope the department has more integrity than that! I emailed an inquiry to the GFP the next day and have not received a reply nor seen a public explanation. Still awaiting a reply
- 2745 Let the elk hunters harvest them, change the season dates.
- 2751 Believe there needs to be a high limit. When it comes down to it they're killing all other forms of our black hills wildlife. Mt lions need to be treated more like a predator, hunted year round no limit.
- 2772 All in all it was a good season, but we just needed more snow
- 2774 In the central hills area we saw very few fawns and calf elk this past fall/winter. The small game is depleted, too. I would like to see the mountain lion season continued until everything is balanced again. A few lions are okay but they have over run the Hills similar to the 1930's.
- 2784 Even though success was minimal, I still enjoyed it. Gave a chance to see the hills in a different time of the year.
- 2796 The season went well, Lions are hard to hunt and very clever animal had one on my trail camera just before the season started and my wife saw him in a tree right behind the house during the season. We know it was there but they are very smart animals, great season looking forward to next year.
- 2799 To explain my answer to the question involving Custer State Park, I personally think more people need to be allowed in the park at one time. The cat numbers in the park are ridiculous. I've walked on the trails and drove the roads in the park quite a few times sporting cats or coming across kill sights. The elk and deer herd numbers show it more than any other number could. I honestly would like to see the tag numbers for lions increased, the use of dogs legalized and number of hunters allowed in the park increased. Me being a hunter that lives only a few miles from the park, I've seen the numbers of deer and elk not only in the park, but the Hills in general go down dramatically. And mountain lions sighting have almost become normal.
- 2821 While hunting this year lions, I observed a herd of approximately 85 elk. They were in a large park so I was able to get a fairly accurate count and note that there were 2 spike bulls, many cows [several were collared], and 5 or 6 yearlings. I'm not a wildlife expert, but with the time I have spent in the woods I could say that the mountain lions favorite meal might just be calf elk. 85 head of elk in one herd sounds like a lot, but no young ones means the herd will definitely disappear. I hope this comment helps to mandate regulations that will benefit all of our wildlife.

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- 2828 I feel you did a huge injustice to the big game biologist (Lowell Schmidt). A lesser punishment should have been imposed. The State is losing a very dedicated valuable asset to the GF&P. Our elected officials rarely get this sort of punishment for similar offenses!
- 2857 The opportunity to hunt the Mountain Lion is awesome. Being in the Black Hills is great. Promote the management of the trees if you can so the beetle/disease does not decimate the sanctuary.
- 2867 I'm unhappy with the explanations given on the firing of Lowell.
- 2877 I would like to see the Mountain Lion wiped out. Very few people get to enjoy viewing them. I enjoy seeing Elk and hunting them, and permits have been cut badly- Because??? Also Deer are down Badly Why??? Because of damn poor management, or is there a better reason?? Thank you for hearing from me Bob Graham Sioux Falls SD 212 N French Ave 57103
- 2882 Great hunt, hope it continues.
- 2886 Need to harvest more cats to help increase elk & deer populations.
- 2891 I think we are headed in the right direction concerning the number of mountain lions we are taking each year. Hopefully the progress continues with this. Something I would like to see at least discussed is the use of dogs to hunt. There are several advantages to this in that only mature cats could be shot because identification could be confirmed once they are treed. Also, it would help the hunters who are not local to the Black Hills to tree and shoot a cat.
- 2893 I was not able to hunt work got in my way
- 2915 I think it should be increased by about double and try to keep them in check. Deer and elk numbers are down and I think lions are playing a role in that.
- 2936 For the little hunting I did I found lots of sign (every day I went out) that was decently fresh (within 2 days at the oldest) which tells me there are plenty of lions in the hills. I hunted everywhere from Hot Springs to Custer to Hill City to Sturgis. That's my 2 cents that's not worth a dime.
- 2937 There are plenty of lions in the Hills. Maybe too many. Deer and Elk number are going down! Though, I did not see a Lion this year, I was very close many times. During the Elk season, I got an Elk. Had to leave the Elk for a few hours, and when I returned over 1/3 of the Elk had been eaten by Mountain Lions. Pretty sad! Didn't want to share Elk.
- 2940 Increase the number if lions that can be killed.
- 2941 1st year hunting for mountain lion and I believe we learned enough to try again. Was interesting.
- 2964 Seen two separate herds of eighty or more elk and no calves in either.
- 2967 I only had a few weekends to hunt and was not able to get out after a fresh snow.

- 2973 I believe that more lion permits need to be issued. In my opinion, the decline of the elk population in the Black Hills is a direct result of the over population of mountain lions in the Black Hills. I think there are a lot more lions out there than people like to think. I also think that Lowell Schmitz was unfairly fired as he did not break any laws and should be reinstated immediately!
- 2974 The limit of 70 is a joke, it needs to be upped, doubled even. Everywhere we went there were signs of lions but they were too old to track either from an old kill or tracks that were a few days old due to lack of snow. As soon as it snowed and they were able to be tracked the limit was reached quickly. I also think baiting and tracking with dogs should be allowed but I imagine the liberal hippies would have issues with that, and although I think that should be the game fish and parks goal to get to that, we should at least start with increasing the limit. I did have a good time hunting this winter though but would just like to see the limit increased.
- 2990 Let the hunters use dogs to hunt lions in Custer State Park.
- 2991 I was hoping to spot a lion while drive 7 miles between the ranch at Med. Mt. and Reno Gulch.
- 3011 For various reasons I was not able to spend as much time hunting as I would have liked... I am looking forward to getting out more next year. Also, want to get my app. in earlier for Custer State park... I think it would be fun to hunt the park. Lot of controversy surrounding the season... but in retrospect, I feel the season and the process was pretty well thought out and conducted properly and fairly. Thanks
- 3052 I really enjoyed my first year hunting Cats in SD. However, I really feel that baiting should be legal. Also, the poor Biologist you folks fired for being within the regulations of the law deserves a second shot at his job. If you didn't want more than 70 cats killed, then lower the limit. Otherwise, I loved the hunts and the whole season! Thank you!
- 3074 There's a need for more licenses. Every landowner who I spoke to let me hunt. The GFP is killing the elk, in my opinion.
- 3082 I agree with the increased harvest quota. It's obvious the lions have had a serious and what I feel detrimental role in the CSP elk population as well as the Black Hills region in general. Instead of the CSP elk season going to the dogs, it went to the lions.
- 3110 I was surprised we did not see more sign while hunting, but we did not have any snow cover. When deer hunting in the hills we always see cat sign, but while hunting cats we show little or no signs. I think we need to control cat numbers, I would prefer to hunt deer and elk, not cats.
- 3131 We should increase the kill quota to at least 150.
- 3156 Had a good time trying to find a lion. Saw numerous day old tracks.
- 3163 You need more mountain lion tags! There's not very many deer or elk like there used to be. If it's not the mountain lions then you need to figure out why the elk and deer numbers are down so bad.

- 3176 I think mountain lions should be treated as coyotes are. I truly believe if they were hunted year around as varmints it would hold the population in check without too many lions killed. In most areas I frequent I see more lion tracks than coyote tracks and I don't believe hunters could decimate the lion population hunting them year around. Most hunters would most likely get fed up trying to hunt them over time and just shoot them if they saw them while doing other activities as most do with coyotes.
- 3177 Need to issue more tags to reduce the number of lions in the Hills. Implement the use of dogs to help with the increased number of tags that should be issued.
- 3268 I had a great time although I didn't get a kill or see any cats. I found plenty of fresh sign and even found cats tracks inside of my tracks where I walked in the snow that morning. There is definitely NO shortage of cats in the Black Hills. Keep the season going!!
- 3315 Overall I like the season and I am eager to learn and hopefully be successful. I believe this is an excellent opportunity for residents to have the hunt of a lifetime at our front door. With the success the hunters are having I would sure hope that hounds are never let to trample the woods just for the fulfillment of lazy hunters.
- 3327 I have hunted in the Hills all my life and I have never saw as many lion tracks as the last three years.
- 3329 We saw several cats we were just never close enough to get a clean shot. It was always across a canyon or way down below us.
- 3349 Due to decreasing elk populations, I hope that the lion quota is increased this next year. The number of lion tracks and sign that I saw was simply unbelievable. We need to get a grip on this population NOW. Look at what they have done in 5 short years.
- 3362 I think there could be more tags next year. And that might help are elk problem
- 3363 We need to harvest more mountain lions to help reestablish the elk herd in the hills.
- 3380 Mountain Lion season should be opened up statewide except for the Black Hills beginning November 1st. Typically the lions found outside the Black Hills are "problem" lions and by opening up the rest of the state, it would give an opportunity for anyone to kill a lion if they were lucky enough to see one. Doing this would not affect the "managed" lion population in the Black Hills, plus it would be a huge revenue maker for the SD GF&P, because most deer hunters would purchase a tag just in the off chance they had an opportunity to kill a lion. I know I would. The Black hills season could be run as normal, with those holding a statewide permit able to hunt in the Black Hills starting January 1st. Thanks.
- 3381 I did not hunt in the Black Hills I hunted in Mellette County.
- 3385 No snow made it hard to track.
- 3394 Landowner outside the Black Hills only. Plan to still hunt.
- 3412 We own land in Pennington County, and I buy the permit just in case a lion should cause problems on our land.

- 3418 I would have been very satisfied if I would have gotten a mountain lion.
- 3427 It seems that the deer population is more concentrated this spring than the last 2 springs. From what I've heard, there were 2 cats killed the area which is good. Maybe it just coincidence but there are more deer. I'm a landowner and the abundance of cats isn't good for anybody or wildlife (deer, elk, turkey.)
- 3429 DID NOT HAVE THE TIME TO HUNT
- 3435 I hunted south of White Wood. I harvest a mountain lion. The part that I was bothered about was that the trails that we hunted on were supposed to be closed to all vehicle access. There were trucks that went around the gates and had been traveling up in that area. I think it needs to be patrolled a little better. If a couple guys get caught up in them areas it would put a stop to it.
- 3444 You need to issue more lion tags than you do. There are too many lions.
- 3449 I just moved to SD & this was my first time mountain lion hunting. My roommate was successful but I was not with him when he got his lion.
- 3451 It's hunting and it's what you put into it. It's always fun to be in the woods. I will do it again. Thanks
- 3461 My hunting opportunities are probably different from many others, my cousin and boyfriend own Cold Springs Ranch, and my brother owns land just over the hill from there by Cold Springs Cemetery, lots of lions and lots of lion sign, found 2 dens and both had female lions with almost full grown cubs, my problem was not finding lions, but finding lions alone, was great experience, will definitely be back next year. I feel Mt. Lion population is greatly under estimated, heard from the people who count elk herds that the Buffalo Gap herd is almost gone, and deer numbers are not anywhere near where they used to be, saw only 1 set of deer tracks in the snow while I was there. I walked all over the area described and saw little wildlife in the area, I know Cold Springs Ranch used to be a wildlife paradise, and it no longer is anywhere near where it was, Peter Norbeck area was loaded with Lion sign and is where I found 1 of the dens overlooking the valley above CSR. I also got to watch a game cam video of a Mt. Lion and her cub eating a Mule deer right in the yard at CSR, was very interesting. Overall was GREAT
- 3479 I would like to see the number of tags expanded. Thanks