

MOUNTAIN LION

The 2019/20 Black Hills season opened on December 26, 2019 and ended on April 30, 2020. The harvest limit was 60 total or 40 female mountain lions. After the Black Hills season closed, anyone with a valid 2020 license who did not take a mountain lion could hunt the remainder of the calendar year on land that was located outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District.

There were 2,907 resident mountain lion licenses issued prior to the end of the 2019/20 Black Hills season. A total of 74 access permits were also issued for Custer State Park (CSP), 15 of those allowing the use of hounds. Hunters who purchased a license after the regular Black Hills season ended were not surveyed.

Surveys were emailed or mailed to all hunters who purchased a license before the Black Hills season ended and the survey response rate was 63%. Active hunters reported hunting an average of 8.3 days outside of CSP and 5.0 days inside CSP. Average hunter satisfaction outside CSP was 4.65 and 5.18 inside CSP. Satisfaction was based on a numerical scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 7 (very satisfied), 4 being neutral.

The overall Black Hills success rate was 4.46%, with a total of 51 mountain lions harvested, 27 of which were females. Hunter success for active mountain lion hunters in the Black Hills (excluding those with a CSP access permit) was 3.63%, whereas success for those with a hound access permit in CSP was 73.3%. Check station data for the Black Hills showed that 20 mountain lions were harvested in Custer County, 14 in Lawrence County, 12 in Pennington County, 3 in Meade County, and 2 in Fall River County. Eleven mountain lions were harvested within Custer State Park, all by hunters with access permits that allowed the use of hounds.

A total of 14 mountain lions were harvested on the prairie outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District from May 1, 2019 to April 30, 2020. The total included 10 subadult males, 1 adult male, and 3 subadult females.

Harvest statistics for 2010/11 - 2019/20 Black Hills Mountain Lion seasons (excluding CSP)

YEAR	Season Length (Days)	Licenses Sold	Active Hunters	Harvest		Average Days Hunted	Average Satisf
				Males	Females		
2010/11	52	2,325	1,790	19	26	6.6	5.11
2011/12	61	3,482	2,646	27	42	7.1	4.92
2012/13	96	4,351	2,872	23	31	7.3	4.71
2013/14	96	3,293	1,861	18	26	6.9	4.69
2014/15	96	3,211	1,689	18	20	7.1	4.58
2015/16	97	3,102	1,529	11	24	7.1	4.75
2016/17	96	2,561	1,153	10	13	6.9	4.51
2017/18	96	2,878	1,199	7	15	7.3	4.87
2018/19	96	2,818	1,132	8	6	6.9	4.81
2019/20	127	2,907	1,144	15	25	8.3	4.65

2019/20 Black Hills Mountain Lion Harvest Projections

Last Revised:
23-Aug-20

Unit/Type	Resident Licenses		Response Rate	Active Hunters		Active Hunter Success	Harvest Reports						Total Lion Harvest	Mean Satisfaction Rating		Average Days Hunted	
	Avail.	Sold		Black Hills	CSP		Males			Females				BHills	CSP	BHills	CSP
						Adult	Subadult	<1 year	Adult	Subadult	<1 year						
Black Hills (no CSP permit)	Unlimited	2,833	63%	1,103	----	3.63%	5	7	3	14	8	3	40	4.65	----	8.2	----
CSP Boot Access Permit	60	59	76%	35	24	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.53	4.77	13.0	3.6
CSP Hound Access Permit	15	15	80%	6	15	73.3%	5	4	0	1	1	0	11	4.27	5.83	3.2	7.1
Totals		2,907	63.3%	1,144	39	4.46%	10	11	3	15	9	3	51	4.65	5.18	8.3	5.0

Harvest statistics for 2011/12 - 2019/20 Custer State Park Mountain Lion seasons

YEAR	Season Length (Days)	Permits Issued	Active Hunters	Harvest		Average Days Hunted	Average Satisf
				Males	Females		
2011/12	61	74	57	0	4	4.4	5.03
2012/13	96	162	104	3	4	3.8	4.88
2013/14	96	136	92	4	5	3.6	4.99
2014/15	96	136	90	3	2	3.4	4.60
2015/16	97	57	30	5	1	5.6	5.44
2016/17	96	57	37	4	3	3.7	5.13
2017/18	96	57	41	5	4	4.0	5.26
2018/19	96	57	38	5	2	4.3	5.63
2019/20	127	74	39	9	2	5.0	5.18

Reported participation and mean days hunted by Custer State Park permit period

2019/2020 CSP Lion Season	Mean Days Hunted									
	Dec. 26 Jan 8 ^a	Jan 9 Jan 22	Jan 23 Feb 5 ^a	Feb 6 Feb 19	Feb 20 Mar 4 ^a	Mar 5 Mar 18	Mar 19 Apr 1 ^a	Apr 2 Mar 15	Apr 16 Apr 30 ^a	TOTAL
Permits Issued	3	15	3	14	3	15	3	15	3	74
Sample (n)	3	15	3	14	3	15	3	15	3	74
Responded (N)	3	12	1	11	2	13	3	9	3	57
Response Rate	100%	80%	33%	79%	67%	87%	100%	60%	100%	77.0%
Reported Did Not Hunt	0	7	0	4	0	8	0	8	0	27
Reported Hunted	3	5	1	7	2	5	3	1	3	30
Projected Hunted	3	6	3	9	3	6	3	2	3	38
Projected Days Hunted	12	24	12	34	23	13	28	13	26	185
Mean Days Hunted	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.9	7.5	2.2	9.3	8.0	8.7	4.9
Lions Harvested ^b	3	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	2	11

a. hunting with hounds allowed

b. total lions harvested based on mandatory check-in data, not returned surveys.

Lion hunters' preference for mountain lion population over the next 5 years

	All Licensed Lion Hunters	Inactive Lion Hunters	Active Lion Hunters	Harvested a Lion
Decrease A Lot	18.1	20.9	14.3	10.8
Decrease A Little	18.6	19.2	17.9	13.5
Stay About the Same	39.6	36.0	44.4	64.9
Increase A Little	11.1	9.2	13.5	10.8
Increase A Lot	4.1	3.6	4.8	—
Not Sure	8.49	11.09	5.1	—
N	1,673	947	726	37
Mean*	2.61	2.5	2.75	2.76

*Mean preference is based on a scale of 1-5, where "1" is decrease a lot, "3" is stay the same, and "5" is increase a lot.