

South Dakota Mountain Lion Management: 2024 Public Opinion Survey Results



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A public opinion survey was conducted by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks as part of an effort to update and revise the existing Mountain Lion Management Plan. The purpose of this study was to collect social science data from Black Hills residents and Big Game Hunters to help inform the mountain lion population objective in South Dakota. This report summarizes the information collected by the 2024 mountain lion management in South Dakota public opinion survey.

Executive Summary

Sampling Results

BH Residents

- The sample frame for the resident survey consisted of 62,213 mailing addresses for Black Hills (BH) residents (i.e., Custer County, Fall River County, Lawrence County, Meade County, Pennington County). Residents within and around the Black Hills, as well as residents outside of municipalities and residing within 15 miles of the Black Hill Fire Protection District (BHFPD), were included in the sample. Approximately 6,050 BH residents were surveyed.
- The adjusted response rate was 32% ($n = 1,644/5,131$) with a margin of error of $\pm 2.4\%$ at a 95% confidence interval

Hunters

- The hunter sample frame was comprised of 27,227 unique resident hunting applicants for the most recent seasons (i.e., 2022-2023) for mountain lion (i.e., statewide and Black Hills) and Black Hills big game (i.e., whitetail, mule deer, elk, pronghorn, big horn sheep, turkey, and mountain goat) hunting. A sample of 3,600 individuals was equally stratified across three types of hunters: 1) exclusive mountain lion hunters (i.e., "*Lion Only*"), 2) big game hunters who did not hunt mountain lions (i.e., "*Big Game Only*"), 3) mountain lion hunters who also hunted other big game species (i.e., "*Lion and Big Game*").
- The adjusted survey response rate was 48% ($n=1,698/3,534$) with a margin of error of $\pm 2.3\%$ at a 95% confidence interval.

Hunting Participation

General hunting participation

- Most BH residents did not hunt within the past five years (56.9%).
- Most hunters hunted both big and small game within the past five years (79.4%).

Mountain lion hunting participation

- Respondents who selected "big game" or "small and big game" to the previous general hunting participation question were then asked if they hunted mountain lions in the past five years. Most BH residents who hunted big game in the past five years did not hunt mountain lions (77.0%).
- Hunters received the same prompts as described above. Over half of hunters who hunted big game within the past five years hunted mountain lions (53.6%).

Social Tolerance

Attitudes

- The existence of mountain lions in South Dakota tends to be valued by hunters and BH residents alike.
- BH residents and hunters were highly supportive of mountain lion hunting as an appropriate tool for managing populations.
- Survey participants were generally neutral that mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to people, livestock, and pets. Although BH residents were also neutral on whether mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to ungulates, this was a concern for the hunting sample.

Population Objective

- Mean values indicated BH residents would like to see the mountain lion population stay about the same in CSP (M = 2.91), the BHFPD (M = 2.84), and Statewide, outside the BHFPD (M = 2.89).
- The average hunter reported they would like to see the mountain lion population stay the same in CSP (M = 2.50), the BHFPD (M = 2.50), and Statewide, outside the BHFPD (M = 2.62).

Trust in GFP to Manage Lions

- Residents agreed that they trusted information provided by GFP about mountain lion populations and distributions in SD (M = 3.52), and they agreed that they trusted GFP to manage lions for the health of the population within socially acceptable levels (M = 3.58).
- Hunters were neutral on their agreements with the two trust survey items (M = 3.23, M = 3.38).

Perceptions of Hunting Experience and Satisfaction

Satisfaction

- BH residents were neutral on their level of satisfaction with CSP (M = 3.18), BHFPD (M = 3.18), and Statewide, outside the BHFPD (M = 3.28).
- Hunters were neutral for CSP (M = 3.31) and BHFPD (M = 3.25). However, hunters reported they were “somewhat satisfied” with the Statewide season (M = 3.68).
- *Big Game Only* hunters were neutral about the statewide season compared to *Lion and Big Game* hunters and *Lion Only* hunters, who were both somewhat satisfied.

Crowding

- Both BH residents (M = 3.03) and hunters (M = 2.73) reported that the level of crowding was “about right.”

Harvest Strategies

- When comparing expanding boot hunting, expanding hound opportunity, or trapping and snaring, BH residents most favored “Expand boot hunting opportunities” (M = 3.67). They were neutral on “Expand hunting opportunities using dogs” (M = 2.94), and they were somewhat opposed to “Allow trapping/snaring” (M = 2.13). Hunters most favored “Expand boot hunting opportunities” (M = 3.99), followed by “Expand hunting opportunities using dogs” (M = 3.67). They were neutral on “Allow trapping/snaring” (M = 2.87).
- Of the remaining items describing harvest strategy regulations, “Allow mountain lions harvest during deer season” with the highest-rated item among residents (M = 3.17) and hunters (M = 3.92). Of note, allowing mountain lion harvest during deer season was rated higher by both residents and hunters compared to their scores for expanding opportunities using dogs.

Respondent Characteristics

- On average, BH residents lived in South Dakota for 40 years, and hunters lived in South Dakota for 42 years.
- Most BH residents (66%) and hunters (70%) indicated they lived in a rural community.
- The majority of BH residents (80%) and hunters (69%) did not own livestock.

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Introduction

The human dimensions of wildlife management is an integral component of effective wildlife agency decision-making. The field of human dimensions seeks to understand how people value wildlife, how they desire wildlife to be managed, and how they are affected by wildlife and wildlife management decision-making (Decker et al., 2012). Human dimensions can provide social science information to help state agencies understand the interests and needs of stakeholders (Manfredo, 2008). Along with biological data, public input is an important part of the development and implementation of the South Dakota Mountain Lion Action Plan, as the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) seeks to manage populations toward desired social and biological objectives (South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, 2024). GFP first began collecting public information related to mountain lion management in the early 2000s. GFP most recently conducted a public opinion survey in 2019 as part of the iterative effort to update and revise the mountain lion management plan (Longmire, 2019). The present study builds on previous mountain lion public opinion surveys and aims to inform the 2024-2028 Mountain Lion Action Plan. In 2024, (GFP) conducted a survey of Black Hills residents (BH) and hunters. The purpose of this survey was to collect social science data to help inform the mountain lion population objective in South Dakota. This survey was designed to obtain information regarding individuals' attitudes, perceptions, and opinions related to mountain lion hunting and management. Additional public involvement opportunities (e.g., stakeholder groups) were also implemented. Mixed-methods social science inquiries allow GFP to collect input and feedback through multiple avenues, providing transparency in public engagement and decision-making processes.

Methods

Sampling Design

The sample frame for the resident survey consisted of 62,213 mailing addresses for Black Hills (BH) residents (i.e., Custer County, Fall River County, Lawrence County, Meade County, Pennington County). Residents within and around the Black Hills, and residents outside of municipalities and within 15 miles of the Black Hill Fire Protection District (BHFPD), were included in the sample. Approximately 6,050 BH residents were surveyed regarding their perceptions of mountain lions in South Dakota (Appendix A: Survey Instrument). The sample frame did not include email addresses, so a single-mode mail study following the Tailored Design Method (Dillman et al., 2014) was used. Participants were mailed up to three survey invitations: 1) a cover letter with a paper copy of the survey, 2) a postcard with a QR code linked to the survey, and 3) a follow-up cover letter and paper copy of the survey.

The hunter sample frame was comprised of 27,227 unique resident hunting applicants for the most recent seasons (i.e., 2022-2023) of mountain lion (i.e., statewide and Black Hills) and Black Hills big game (i.e., whitetail, mule deer, elk, pronghorn, big horn sheep, turkey, and mountain goat) hunting. A sample of 3,600 individuals was equally stratified across three types of hunters: 1) exclusive mountain lion hunters, 2) big game hunters who did not hunt mountain lions, and 3) mountain lion hunters who also hunted other big game species. These potential survey respondents received the same survey instrument as the resident sample (Appendix A: Survey Instrument). The sample frame included both email addresses and mailing addresses and so a mixed-mode study was conducted using the Tailored Design Method (Dillman et al., 2014). Survey participants were contacted up to four times: 3 contacts were made via email, and a cover letter with a paper copy of the survey was mailed to email nonrespondents.

Analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 software package. Data cleaning commenced before analysis (i.e., removal of blank surveys that had been opened but not completed, correcting for undeliverable addresses, coding of missing data). Summary statistics were conducted to provide percentages, mean values, and standard deviations. One-way ANOVAs were used to evaluate the effect of hunter type (i.e., *Lion Only*, *Big Game Only*, or *Lion and Big Game* hunters) on survey responses. Bonferroni's post hoc tests were used to assess mean differences across groups. When conducting One-Way ANOVAs, partial eta squared can be used to determine how large of an effect the independent variable(s) (i.e., hunter type) had on the dependent variable (i.e., survey response) in the analyses ($\eta^2 = .01$ indicates a small effect, $\eta^2 = .06$ indicates a medium effect, $\eta^2 = .14$ indicates a large effect).

Results

Sampling Results

After correcting for undeliverable addresses in the resident survey, the adjusted sample size was 5,131. The adjusted response rate was 32% ($n = 1,644/5,131$) with a margin of error of $\pm 2.4\%$ at a 95% confidence interval following data cleaning.

In the hunter sample, after correcting for undeliverable addresses, the adjusted sample size was 3,534 hunters. Following data cleaning, the adjusted survey response rate was 48% ($n=1,698/3,534$) with a margin of error of $\pm 2.3\%$ at a 95% confidence interval.

Survey Descriptive Statistics

Hunting Participation

Survey participants were asked whether they had hunted in South Dakota within the past 5 years. Over half of residents (56.9%) had not hunted any type of game, while the majority of hunters (79.4%) indicated that they had hunted both big and small game (Table 1).

Table 1. *Hunting participation in the past 5 years*

	<u>BH Residents</u>		<u>Hunters</u>	
	N	%	N	%
No	883	56.9	69	4.1
Small game only	153	9.9	35	2.1
Big game only	168	10.8	242	14.4
Small & big game	348	22.4	1331	79.4
Total	1552	100.0	1677	100.0

Study participants who hunted big game in some capacity were asked whether they specifically hunted mountain lions in the past 5 years. Most residents who hunted big game did not hunt mountain lions (77.0%) (Table 2). Slightly over half of the hunter sample participants who participated in big game hunting indicated they specifically hunted for mountain lions (53.6%) (Table 2).

Table 2. Mountain lion hunting participation in the past 5 years

	<u>BH Residents</u>		<u>Hunters</u>	
	N	%	N	%
No	396	77.0	693	46.4
Yes	118	23.0	800	53.6
Total	514	100.0	1493	100.0

Social Tolerance

Attitudes towards mountain lions were assessed. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with 10 attitudinal statements related to mountain lions on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). Three items captured the existence value of mountain lions (Table 3). In general, BH residents and hunters indicated a high level of agreement with items related to the existence value of mountain lions. Mean values on the Likert scale responses showed BH residents ($M = 3.92$) agreed the presence of mountain lions is a sign of a healthy environment, while hunters were neutral ($M = 3.43$). BH residents ($M = 3.97$) and hunters ($M = 3.54$) agreed it is important to them that mountain lions persist in South Dakota for future generations. Finally, BH residents ($M = 4.09$) and hunters ($M = 3.69$) agreed it is important to them to know that mountain lions exist, whether they ever see one in the wild or not. One-way ANOVAs were used to assess differences across hunter types on attitudinal items (i.e., *Big Game Only*, *Lion Only*, and *Lion and Big Game* hunters) (Figure 1). There was no statistically significant difference between hunter ratings of the attitude item “The presence of mountain lions is a sign of a healthy environment” ($F(2, 1586) = 1.119, p = 0.327$). There was a difference in hunter ratings of the item “It is important to me that mountain lions persist in South Dakota for future generations” ($F(2, 1589) = 3.448, p < 0.05$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.004$). Bonferroni’s post hoc test revealed *Big Game Only* hunters were statistically different from *Lion and Big Game* hunters. However, given the small partial eta-squared value, the differences in these attitudinal ratings have limited practical application. There were statistically significant differences in hunter ratings for the item “It is important to me to know that mountain lions exist, whether I ever see one in the wild or not” ($F(2, 1588) = 3.524, p < 0.030$), despite there being a small effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.004$). No Bonferroni’s post hoc tests were statistically significant, and with the small effect size in mind, mean differences across hunter types have limited practical application.

Three items were used to assess attitudes toward mountain lion hunting (Table 3). Both BH residents ($M = 4.09$) and hunters ($M = 4.57$) had the highest level of agreement with “hunting is an acceptable way of managing mountain lion populations”; residents agreed with this statement, and hunters strongly agreed. The average resident reported they were neutral that mountain lion hunting is an important tradition in South Dakota ($M = 3.36$), while the average hunter agreed with this item ($M = 3.70$). When asked whether mountain lion hunting is important for South Dakota’s economy, BH residents ($M = 3.36$) and hunters ($M = 3.13$) were neutral. One-way ANOVAs were used to assess differences in ratings across hunter groups (Figure 2). There was a statistically significant difference in hunter ratings of the item “Mountain lion hunting is an important tradition in South Dakota” ($F(2, 1591) = 10.136, p < 0.001$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.013$). Bonferroni’s post hoc test revealed *Big Game Only* hunters were statistically different from *Lion Only* and *Lion and Big Game* hunters. There was a difference in hunter ratings of the item “Hunting is an acceptable way of managing mountain lion populations” ($F(2, 1590) = 14.735, p < 0.05$), but with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.018$). Again, Bonferroni’s post hoc test

indicated *Big Game Only* hunters were statistically different from *Lion Only* and *Lion and Big Game* hunters. Finally, groups of respondents differed on their ratings of “Mountain lion hunting is important for South Dakota’s economy” ($F(2, 1585) = 6.806, p < 0.01$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.009$). Bonferroni’s post hoc test showed *Big Game Only* hunters were different from *Lion Only* hunters on this item. Given the small effect sizes for each of the hunting-related attitudes, differences found between hunting groups have limited practical application when interpreting the results.

Finally, four items measured the risks and threats of living with mountain lions on the landscape (Table 3). BH residents and hunters were neutral on the majority of these items. For instance, BH residents ($M = 2.91$) and hunters ($M = 3.19$) were neutral on whether mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to livestock. Residents ($M = 2.94$) and hunters ($M = 3.17$) were also neutral on whether mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to pets. Additionally, BH residents ($M = 2.52$) and hunters ($M = 2.60$) felt neutral that mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to people. Of note, although BH residents ($M = 2.46$) were neutral that mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to ungulates, this was the one item that the average hunter agreed with ($M = 3.52$). One-way ANOVAs were conducted on hunter group responses to these items (Figure 3). There were statistically significant differences for ratings of the item “Mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to livestock”, ($F(2, 1584) = 5.463, p < 0.01$), but with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.007$). Bonferroni’s post hoc test showed *Lion and Big Game* hunters were statistically different from *Lion Only* hunters. There was also a difference between hunter responses to the item “Mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to pets” ($F(2, 1584) = 4.137, p < 0.05$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.005$). Post hoc tests revealed *Lion Only* hunters were statistically different from *Lion and Big Game* hunters. Next, groups were statistically different on the item “Mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to people” ($F(2, 1582) = 12.558, p < 0.001$), but the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.016$). *Lion and Big Game* hunters were statistically different from *Big Game Only* and *Lion Only* hunters. Lastly, there was no difference in ratings of the item “Mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to ungulates” ($F(2, 1581) = 2.917, p = 0.054$). Given the small effect sizes and the non-significant test for the final item, no item differences appear to have much practical value for these attitudinal items.

These results indicate that, on average, the existence of mountain lions in South Dakota tends to be valued by hunters and BH residents alike. Respondents were supportive of mountain lion hunting as an appropriate tool for managing populations. Furthermore, survey participants were generally neutral that mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to people, livestock, and pets; of note, although BH residents were also neutral on whether mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to ungulates, this was a concern for the hunting sample.

Table 3. Attitudes toward mountain lions

				Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
<u>BH Residents</u>	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
The presence of mountain lions is a sign of a healthy environment	1594	3.92	1.085	4.6	7.2	14.0	40.0	34.2
It is important to me that mountain lions	1601	3.97	1.117	5.1	7.1	11.9	37.5	38.4

persist in South Dakota for future generations								
It is important to me to know that mountain lions exist, whether I ever see one in the wild or not	1605	4.09	1.059	4.0	5.7	10.3	36.6	43.3
Mountain lion hunting is an important tradition in South Dakota	1587	3.36	1.183	9.0	12.3	31.3	28.4	19.0
Hunting is an acceptable way of managing mountain lion populations	1601	4.09	1.027	4.8	3.7	8.7	43.2	39.6
Mountain lion hunting is important for South Dakota's economy	1593	2.88	1.169	15.5	18.0	39.8	16.3	10.4
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to livestock	1601	2.91	1.202	12.4	28.0	27.0	20.9	11.6
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to pets	1605	2.94	1.243	12.9	28.8	22.2	23.4	12.7
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to people	1604	2.52	1.195	22.3	32.3	24.1	13.8	7.6
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to ungulates (e.g., deer, elk)	1605	2.64	1.285	21.4	31.3	21.0	14.6	11.7
				Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
<u>Hunters</u>	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
The presence of mountain lions is a sign of a healthy environment	1613	3.43	1.185	8.9	13.5	21.1	38.7	17.7
It is important to me that mountain lions persist in South Dakota for future generations	1616	3.54	1.205	8.8	11.4	19.1	38.5	22.1
It is important to me to know that mountain lions exist, whether I ever see one in the wild or not	1615	3.69	1.116	6.7	7.4	20.2	41.5	24.1

Mountain lion hunting is an important tradition in South Dakota	1618	3.70	1.114	5.1	9.3	22.7	35.8	27.0
Hunting is an acceptable way of managing mountain lion populations	1617	4.57	.738	1.9	.6	2.0	29.9	65.7
Mountain lion hunting is important for South Dakota's economy	1612	3.13	1.141	10.0	16.0	37.8	23.0	13.2
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to livestock	1611	3.19	1.164	7.0	24.0	27.0	26.9	15.1
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to pets	1611	3.17	1.186	8.4	22.8	26.8	26.9	15.0
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to people	1608	2.60	1.184	20.3	29.6	27.7	14.7	7.6
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to ungulates (e.g., deer, elk)	1608	3.52	1.265	7.0	16.9	22.8	23.6	29.7

Figure 1

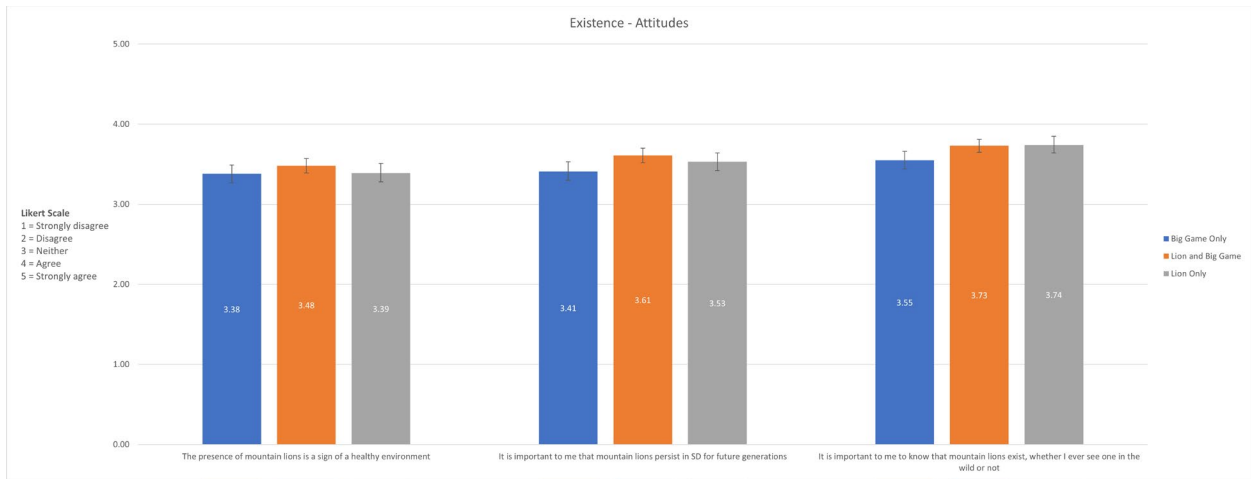


Figure 2

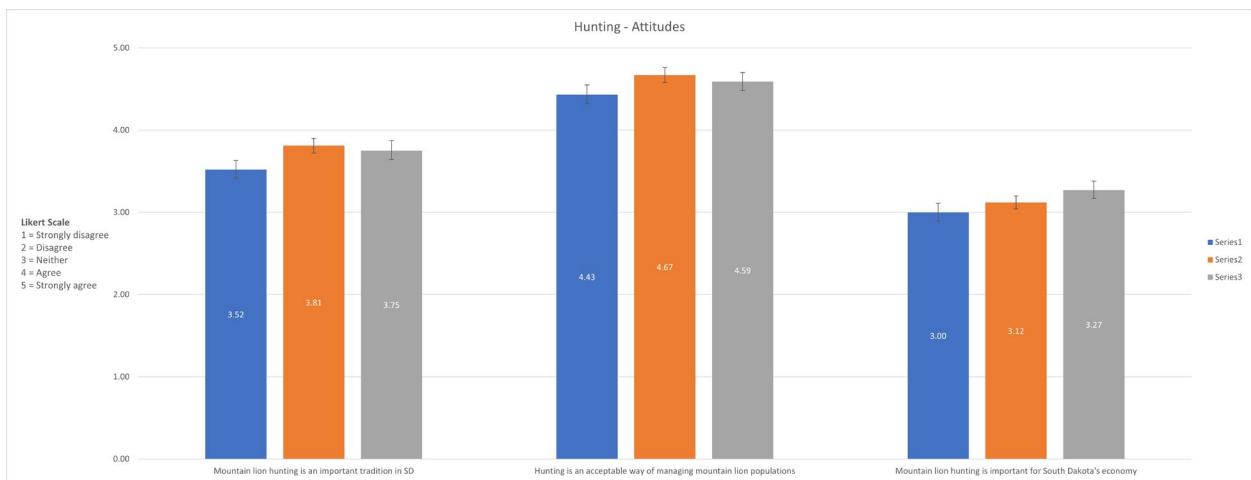
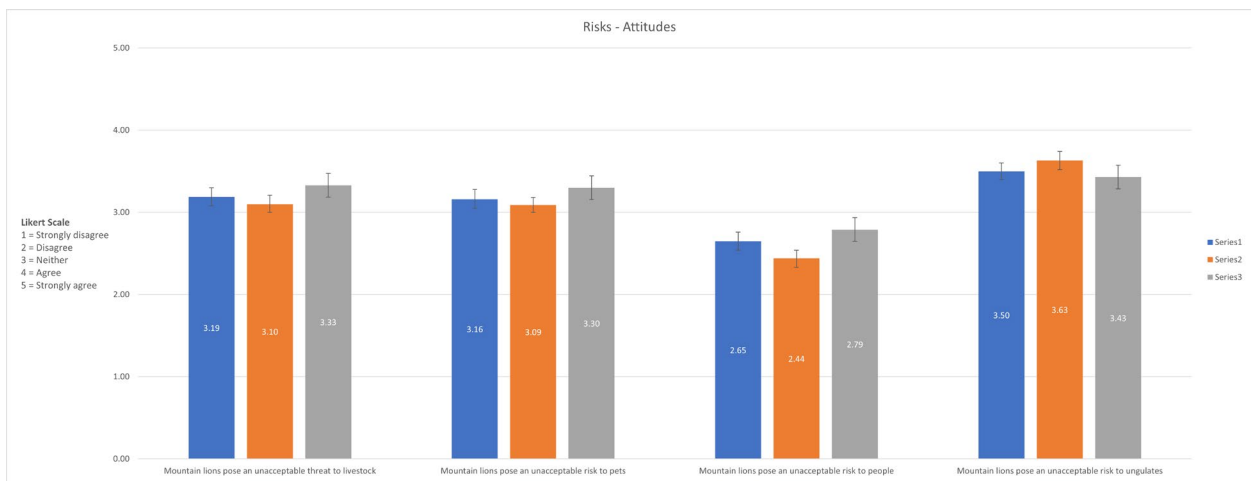


Figure 3



Respondents were asked whether they would prefer to see the mountain lion population in South Dakota decrease, stay the same, or increase over the next 5 years in three areas: Custer State Park (CSP), the Black Hills Fire Protection District, excluding CSP (BHFPD), and Statewide, outside the BHFPD. Survey participants provided their ratings on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Decrease a lot, 5 = Increase a lot) (Table 4). Mean values indicated BH residents would like to see the mountain lion population stay about the same in CSP ($M = 2.91$), the BHFPD ($M = 2.84$), and Statewide, outside the BHFPD ($M = 2.89$). Similarly, hunters reported they would like to see the mountain lion population stay the same in CSP ($M = 2.50$), the BHFPD ($M = 2.50$), and Statewide, outside the BHFPD ($M = 2.62$).

One-way ANOVAs were used to examine hunter responses across groups (Figure 4.). There was a statistically significant difference between hunter types on the mountain lion population objective for CSP ($F(2, 1534) = 13.925, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.018$), BHFPD ($F(2, 1533) = 12.092, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.016$), and Statewide ($F(2, 1531) = 10.161, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.013$). Bonferroni's post hoc tests for each of these items revealed *Lion Only* hunters were statistically higher than *Big Game Only* and *Lion and Big Game* hunters in their ratings of the population objective for each area. However, given the small partial eta-squared values, the effect of hunter type on perceptions of mountain lion population objective ratings has limited practical value.

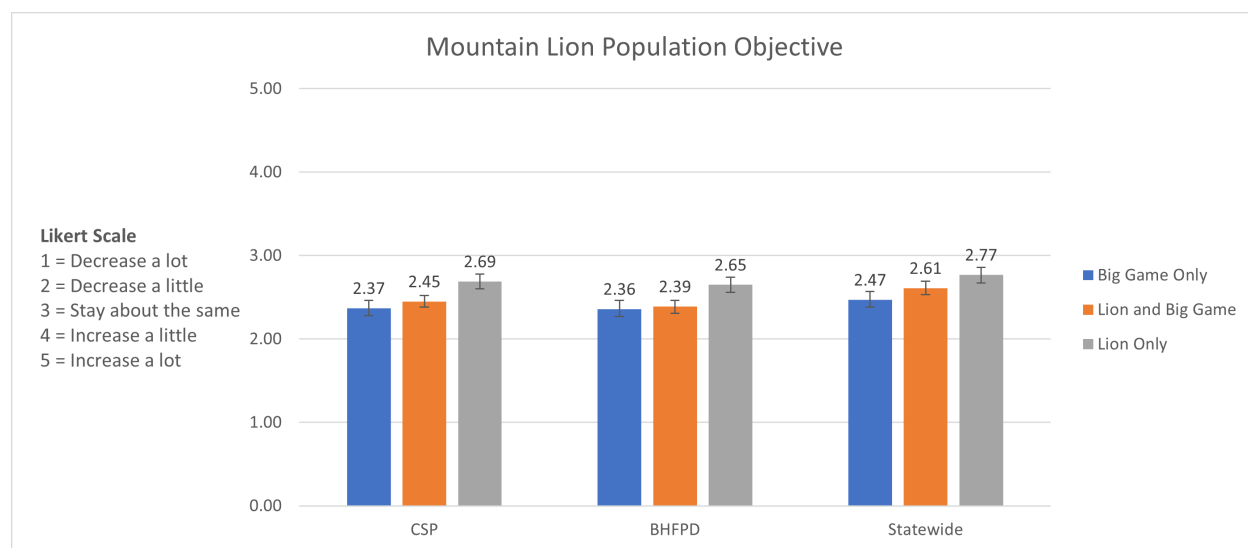
Furthermore, respondents were asked to describe the factor(s) that impacted their perception of the mountain lion population in the survey. Those qualitative, open-ended responses are provided in Appendix D: Resident Perceptions and Appendix E: Hunter Perceptions.

Table 4. Mountain lion population objective over the next 5 years

				Decrease a lot	Decrease a little	Stay about the same	Increase a little	Increase a lot
				(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<u>BH Residents</u>	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
CSP	1484	2.91	.922	9.4	15.0	55.5	16.4	4.2
BHFPD (excluding CSP)	1479	2.84	.975	12.1	16.2	51.9	15.4	4.4
Statewide, outside the BHFPD	1469	2.89	.939	10.6	14.0	55.8	15.2	4.4

				Decrease a lot	Decrease a little	Stay about the same	Increase a little	Increase a lot
				(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<u>Hunters</u>	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
CSP	1559	2.50	.959	19.5	23.3	46.3	9.4	1.5
BHFPD (excluding CSP)	1558	2.46	.995	21.4	24.4	42.9	9.1	2.2
Statewide, outside the BHFPD	1557	2.62	1.022	18.4	19.8	46.8	11.6	3.5

Figure 4



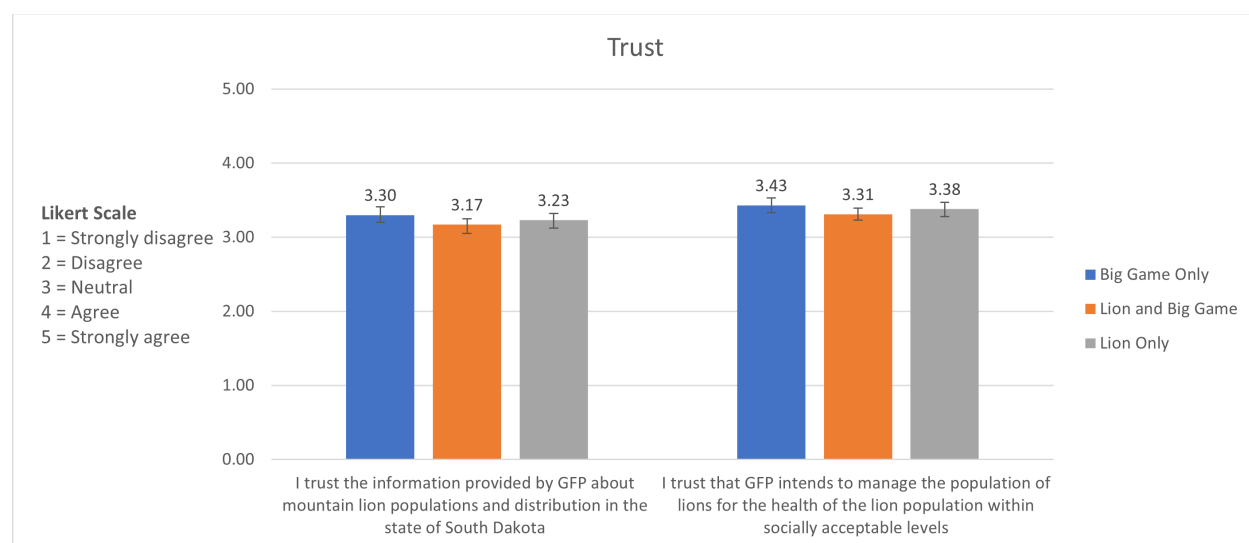
Two items in the survey measured participants' trust in South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks. Respondents rated their level of agreement or disagreement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5= Strongly agree) (Table 5). Mean values indicated that although BH residents agreed that they trusted the information provided by GFP about mountain lion populations and distribution across the state ($M = 3.52$), hunters were neutral on this ($M = 3.23$). Similarly, BH residents agreed that they trusted that GFP intends to manage the population of lions for the health of the lion population within socially acceptable levels ($M = 3.58$), while hunters were neutral in comparison ($M = 3.38$).

One-way ANOVAs were used to assess differences in hunter responses to the two trust items (Figure 5). There was no statistically significant difference between hunter types for trust in information that GFP provides about mountain lion populations and distribution ($F(2, 1577) = 0.1766, p = 0.171$). There was also no difference in trust that GFP intends to manage the population of lions for the health of the lion population within socially acceptable levels ($F(2, 1571) = 1.822, p = 0.162$).

Table 5. Trust in GFP

				Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
<u>BH Residents</u>	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
I trust the information provided by GFP about mountain lion populations and distribution in the state of South Dakota	1573	3.52	1.017	5.2	8.6	30.3	40.9	15.0
I trust that GFP intends to manage the population of lions for the health of the lion population within socially acceptable levels	1569	3.58	1.049	5.3	9.4	24.6	43.1	17.7
				Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
<u>Hunters</u>	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
I trust the information provided by GFP about mountain lion populations and distribution in the state of South Dakota	1604	3.23	1.102	9.0	13.6	33.8	32.4	11.2
I trust that GFP intends to manage the population of lions for the health of the lion population within socially acceptable levels	1598	3.38	1.054	6.1	13.0	30.5	37.8	12.6

Figure 5



Perceptions of Hunting Experiences and Satisfaction

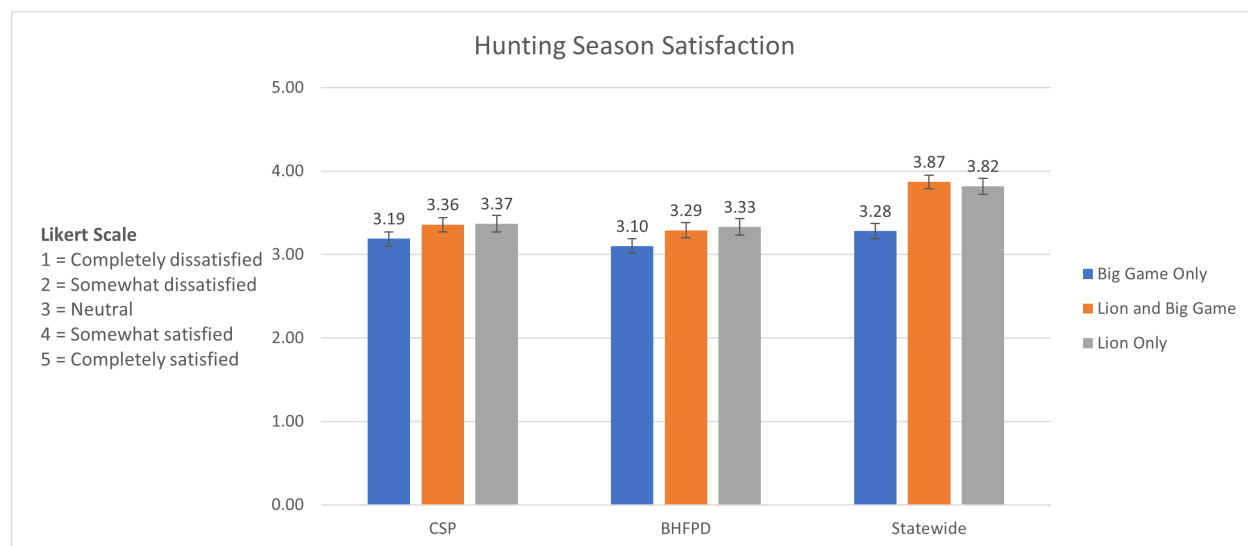
Respondents were provided a preamble outlining the Custer State Park (CSP), the Black Hills Fire Protection District (BHFPD), and Statewide (excluding BHFPD and CSP) mountain lion hunting seasons and details. Participants were asked to report their level of satisfaction with the structure of the mountain lion season in 2022-2023 in each location. Each survey item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Completely dissatisfied, 5 = Completely satisfied) (Table 6). Mean values showed that BH residents were neutral on their level of satisfaction with CSP ($M = 3.18$), BHFPD ($M = 3.18$), and Statewide, outside the BHFPD ($M = 3.28$). Hunters were neutral for CSP ($M = 3.31$) and BHFPD ($M = 3.25$). However, hunters reported they were “somewhat satisfied” with the Statewide season ($M = 3.68$).

When examining hunter responses to the satisfaction items, One-Way ANOVAs were used. There was a statistically significant difference between groups on satisfaction with the CSP 2022-2023 season ($F(2, 1536) = 4.714, p < 0.01$), although the effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.006$) was small. Although Bonferroni’s post hoc test indicated that *Big Game Only* hunters were statistically different from *Lion and Big Game* and *Lion Only* hunters, the averages for groups indicated each hunter type was neutral for CSP; although statistically significant, the differences in satisfaction ratings have limited practical application. Hunter groups were statistically significantly different on satisfaction levels with the BHFPD 2022-2023 season ($F(2, 1545) = 6.263, p < 0.01$), however, the effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.008$) was small. While Bonferroni’s post hoc test showed *Big Game Only* hunters were statistically different from *Lion and Big Game* and *Lion Only* hunters, mean values indicated all group types felt neutral about BHFPD. The partial eta-squared values indicate that minor differences across hunter satisfaction ratings do not have much practical significance. Of note, there was a statistically significant difference between groups on satisfaction with the Statewide 2022-2023 season ($F(2, 1536) = 50.825, p < 0.001$); the effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.062$) indicated a medium effect. Bonferroni’s post hoc test revealed *Big Game Only* hunters were neutral about the statewide season compared to *Lion and Big Game* hunters and *Lion Only* hunters, who were both somewhat satisfied. For the Statewide season, hunter type accounts for a moderate amount of the variation in satisfaction scores, and therefore these statistically significant differences do have practical applications when interpreting the results.

Table 6. Hunting season satisfaction

				Completely dissatisfied (1)	Somewhat dissatisfied (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat satisfied (4)	Completely satisfied (5)
	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
BH Residents								
CSP	1482	3.18	1.005	7.4	7.1	59.1	12.7	13.7
BHFPD (excluding CSP)	1480	3.18	1.004	7.7	9.4	54.9	13.4	14.7
Statewide, outside the BHFPD	1472	3.28	1.029	6.7	5.9	56.6	14.0	16.8
Hunters								
CSP	1563	3.31	1.012	4.6	10.2	50.8	18.0	16.4
BHFPD (excluding CSP)	1572	3.25	1.098	7.0	13.0	45.5	17.4	17.0
Statewide, outside the BHFPD	1563	3.68	1.058	2.9	6.0	41.7	19.3	30.1

Figure 6



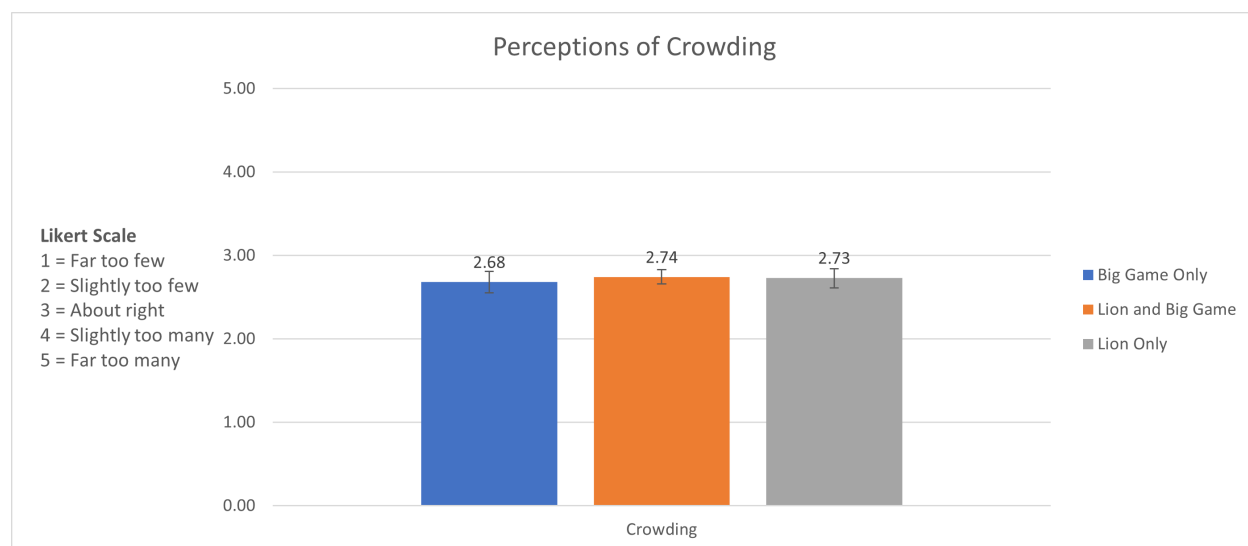
Both samples were asked about their perceptions of the number of mountain lion hunters in the Black Hills Fire Protection District during 2022-2023. This item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Far too few, 5 = Far too many) (Table 7). Both BH residents ($M = 3.03$) and hunters ($M = 2.73$) reported that the level of crowding was “about right.”

A One-Way ANOVA was used to analyze differences across *Lion Only*, *Big Game Only*, and *Lion and Big Game* hunters (Figure 7). There was no difference between groups on perceptions of crowding in the BHFPD during 2022-2023 ($F(2, 1034) = 0.328, p = 0.720, \eta^2 = 0.001$). Each group's mean indicated hunters felt crowding was about right.

Table 7. Crowding in BHFPD during 2022-2023

	N	Mean	SD	Far too few	Slightly too few	About right	Slightly too many	Far too many
				(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
BH Residents				%	%	%	%	%
	1065	3.03	1.034	9.1	13.4	53.7	12.7	11.1
Hunters				%	%	%	%	%
	1056	2.73	1.008	15.5	15.4	55.8	7.2	6.1

Figure 7



Harvest Strategies

GFP was interested in gathering perceptions of various mountain lion harvest strategies. Participants were asked if GFP needed to increase mountain lion harvest beyond current levels, what their support or opposition was for 8 different harvest strategies. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly oppose, 5 = Strongly favor) (Table 8). The highest favored item was “expand boot hunting opportunities” (Residents, $M = 3.67$; Hunters, 3.99). When comparing expanding boot hunting, expanding hound opportunity, or trapping and snaring, BH residents most favored “Expand boot hunting opportunities” ($M = 3.67$). They were neutral on “expanding hunting opportunities using dogs” ($M = 2.94$), and they were somewhat opposed to “Allow trapping/snaring” ($M = 2.13$). Hunters most favored “Expand boot hunting opportunities” ($M = 3.99$), followed by “Expand hunting opportunities using dogs” ($M = 3.67$). They were neutral on “Allow trapping/snaring” ($M = 2.87$). In short, the highest level of support was for expanding boot hunting opportunities. Of the remaining items describing harvest strategy regulations, “Allow mountain lions harvest during deer season” with the highest-rated item

among residents ($M = 3.17$) and hunters ($M = 3.92$). Of note, allowing mountain lion harvest during deer season was rated higher by both residents and hunters compared to their scores for expanding opportunities using dogs.

One-Way ANOVAs were used when analyzing hunter ratings for each harvest strategy item (Figure 8). There was a statistically significant difference between hunter types for expanding boot hunter opportunities ($F(2, 1565) = 4.669, p < 0.05$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.006$). Bonferroni's post hoc test showed *Lion and Big Game* hunters were statistically higher in their ratings than *Lion Only* hunters. However, the means for all groups indicate an average response of "somewhat favor" for this harvest strategy, so statistical differences across groups have limited practical applications.

There was no statistically significant difference between hunter types for expanding hunting opportunities using dogs ($F(2, 1563) = 0.481, p = 0.618$).

There was a statistically significant difference between hunter types for allowing non-resident harvest ($F(2, 1568) = 11.654, p < 0.001$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.015$). Bonferroni's post hoc test revealed *Lion and Big Game* hunters opposed this more than *Lion Only* and *Big Game Only* hunters. Given that the means for each group rounded to "somewhat oppose", and given the small effect size, post hoc differences do not have much practical value.

There was a statistically significant difference between hunter types for allowing mountain lion harvest during deer season ($F(2, 1573) = 10.677, p < 0.001$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.013$). *Lion and Big Game* hunters had statistically higher mean scores than *Big Game Only* and *Lion Only* hunters. Mean scores showed each group somewhat favored this strategy, and with such a small partial eta-squared, statistical differences between groups have limited practical value.

There was no statistically significant difference between hunter types for allowing the harvesting of multiple lions per hunter ($F(2, 1571) = 0.514, p = 0.598$).

There was a statistically significant difference between hunter types for allowing trapping/snaring ($F(2, 1566) = 3.880, p < 0.05$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.005$). Bonferroni's post hoc test showed *Big Game Only* hunters were statistically higher in their mean scores compared to *Lion and Big Game* hunters. However, all group scores indicated hunters somewhat favored this item, and the small effect size indicates statistical differences between hunter types have limited practical value when interpreting the results.

There was no statistically significant difference between hunter types for allowing pursuit where multiple tracks are present ($F(2, 1572) = 0.771, p = 0.463$).

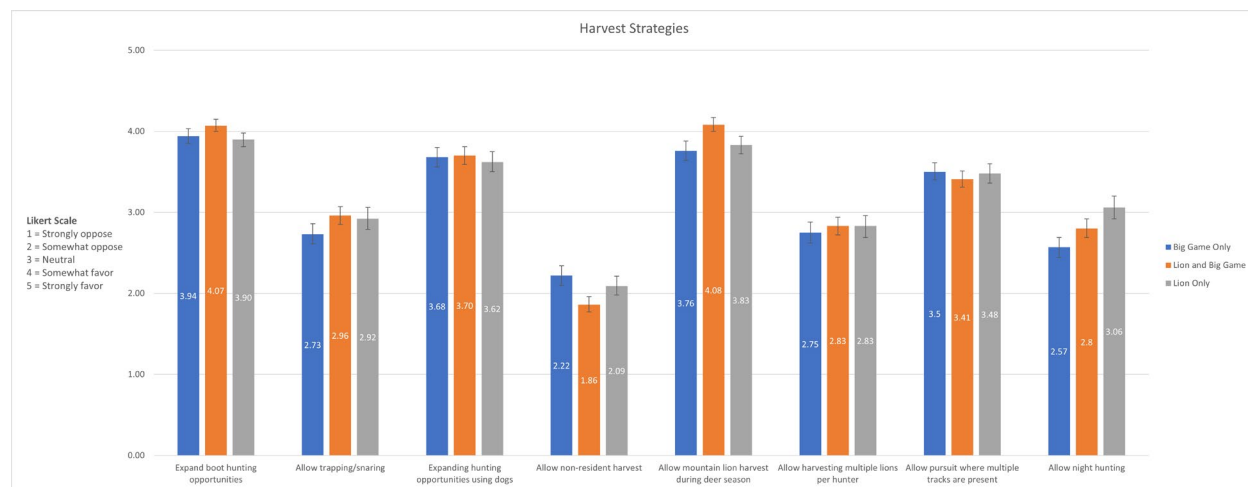
There was a statistically significant difference between hunter types for allowing night hunting ($F(2, 1566) = 12.651, p < 0.001$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = 0.016$). Every hunter type was statistically different in their ratings of allowing night hunting, despite all mean scores rounding to the neutral point on the scale. Therefore, the small effect size lends further evidence that these statistical differences have limited practical value.

Table 8. Harvest strategies

				Strongly oppose (1)	Somewhat oppose (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat favor (4)	Strongly favor (5)
<u>BH Residents</u>	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
Expand boot hunting opportunities	1516	3.67	1.122	7.4	4.1	28.4	34.5	25.6
Expand hunting opportunities using dogs	1556	2.94	1.444	24.4	15.6	20.6	20.8	18.8
Allow non-resident harvest	1540	2.34	1.285	36.4	20.5	22.9	12.8	7.3
Allow mountain lion harvest during deer season	1548	3.17	1.326	16.1	13.5	25.8	25.8	18.7
Allow harvesting multiple lions per hunter	1558	2.42	1.337	34.7	21.3	20.7	13.7	9.6
Allow trapping/snaring	1555	2.13	1.317	47.7	17.6	16.7	10.4	7.7
Allow pursuit where multiple tracks are present	1540	3.11	1.218	14.7	11.6	34.9	25.5	13.4
Allow night hunting	1558	2.25	1.306	41.7	18.1	20.2	13.0	7.0
<u>Hunters</u>	N	Mean	SD	%	%	%	%	%
Expand boot hunting opportunities	1592	3.99	.961	2.2	1.6	28.8	30.1	37.2
Expand hunting opportunities using dogs	1590	3.67	1.365	11.4	10.0	17.1	23.6	37.9
Allow non-resident harvest	1594	2.04	1.277	50.6	17.3	17.0	8.2	7.0
Allow mountain lion harvest during deer season	1600	3.91	1.223	7.6	6.6	14.4	30.4	41.1
Allow harvesting multiple lions per hunter	1598	2.81	1.432	26.4	17.5	22.3	16.6	17.2
Allow trapping/snaring	1593	2.87	1.443	25.9	15.1	23.6	16.9	18.6

Allow pursuit where multiple tracks are present	1599	3.46	1.258	10.8	9.7	27.1	27.8	24.5
Allow night hunting	1597	2.80	1.474	29.3	14.2	21.3	17.1	18.1

Figure 8



Respondent Characteristics

On average, BH residents lived in South Dakota for 40 years, and hunters lived in South Dakota for 42 years (Table 9). Most BH residents (66%) and hunters (70%) indicated they lived in a rural community (Table 10). The majority of BH residents (80%) and hunters did not (69%) own livestock (Table 11).

Table 9. Years lived in South Dakota

	BH Residents			Hunters		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
Years	1558	40.39	24.065	1599	42.11	19.595

Table 10. Type of community participants reside in

	BH Residents		Hunters	
	N	%	N	%
Urban	522	34.0	488	30.4
Rural	1012	66.0	1115	69.6
Total	1534	100.0	1603	100.0

Table 11. Livestock ownership

	<u>BH Residents</u>		<u>Hunters</u>	
	N	%	N	%
No	1228	80.4	1096	68.8
Yes	299	19.6	498	31.2
Total	1527	100.0	1594	100.0

Finally, respondents were provided with the opportunity to fill in an open-ended comment section at the end of the survey. Those comments are provided in Appendix B: Resident Open-Ended Comments and Appendix C: Hunter Open-Ended Comments.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

2024 Mountain Lion Survey

1. Have you hunted in South Dakota within the past 5 years? Select only one.

- No → Skip to #2
- Small game only
- Big game only
- Small & big game

1a. If you hunted big game in South Dakota within the past 5 years, did you hunt mountain lions?

- No
- Yes

2. People in South Dakota hold many different opinions about mountain lions. How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
The presence of mountain lions is a sign of a healthy environment	1	2	3	4	5
It is important to me that mountain lions persist in South Dakota for future generations	1	2	3	4	5
It is important to me to know that mountain lions exist, whether I ever see one in the wild or not	1	2	3	4	5
Mountain lion hunting is an important tradition in South Dakota	1	2	3	4	5
Hunting is an acceptable way of managing mountain lion populations	1	2	3	4	5
Mountain lion hunting is important for South Dakota's economy	1	2	3	4	5
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to livestock	1	2	3	4	5
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to pets	1	2	3	4	5
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable risk to people	1	2	3	4	5
Mountain lions pose an unacceptable threat to ungulates (e.g., deer, elk)	1	2	3	4	5

3. Statewide mountain lion hunting season [excluding the Black Hills Fire Protection District (BHFPD) and Custer State Park (CSP)] begins Dec. 26th and is open all year with one lion allotted per license holder. Hunting in the BHFPD starts Dec 26th and goes until April 30th or until 60 total lions or 40 females are harvested. Mountain lion hunting in CSP is by permit only for boot hunting (60 permits) or hunting with hound (15 permits) intervals from Dec. 26th to April 30th. If the BHFPD mountain lion hunting season closes before April 30th, CSP mountain lion hunting season will also close.

How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the structure of the mountain lion season in 2022-2023?

	Completely dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat satisfied	Completely satisfied
Custer State Park	1	2	3	4	5
Black Hills Fire Protection District (excluding Custer State Park)	1	2	3	4	5
Statewide, outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District	1	2	3	4	5

4. How did you feel about the number of mountain lion hunters in the Black Hills Fire Protection District during 2022-2023?

N/A	Far too few	Slightly too few	About right	Slightly too many	Far too many
0	1	2	3	4	5

5. Over the next 5 years, would you prefer to see the mountain lion population in South Dakota decrease, stay the same, or increase in each of the following locations?

	Decrease a lot	Decrease a little	Stay about the same	Increase a little	Increase a lot
Custer State Park	1	2	3	4	5
Black Hills Fire Protection District (excluding Custer State Park)	1	2	3	4	5
Statewide, outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please describe the factor(s) that impact your perception of the mountain lion population:

7. If South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) needed to increase mountain lion harvest beyond current levels, various types of strategies could be used. Please rate your level of support for the following types of mountain lion harvest strategies.

	Strongly oppose	Somewhat oppose	Neutral	Somewhat favor	Strongly favor
Expand boot hunting opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Expand hunting opportunities using dogs	1	2	3	4	5
Allow non-resident harvest	1	2	3	4	5
Allow mountain lion harvest during deer season	1	2	3	4	5
Allow harvesting multiple lions per hunter	1	2	3	4	5
Allow trapping/snaring	1	2	3	4	5
Allow pursuit where multiple tracks are present	1	2	3	4	5
Allow night hunting	1	2	3	4	5

8. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I trust the information provided by GFP about mountain lion populations and distribution in the state of South Dakota	1	2	3	4	5
I trust that GFP intends to manage the population of lions for the health of the lion population within socially acceptable levels	1	2	3	4	5

9. How many years have you lived in South Dakota?

_____ years

10. How would you describe the community in which you currently reside?

- Urban
 Rural

11. Do you have livestock?

- No – Skip to Q#13
- Yes

12. If YES, what type?

- Sheep
- Cattle
- Horses
- Pigs
- Poultry
- Other: _____

13. Comments:

Appendix B: Resident Open-Ended Comments

The arguments about too much deer predation by lions is ludicrous, owing to the auto insurance industry naming SD one of the worst places for car/deer collision and the multitude of complaints by locals hitting deer. Perhaps a campaign to increase ecotourism for lion spotting and better lion education of the local population would be in order?

#10- this is a stupid question since the community in which I reside in is on the bottom of this page
 #13- Why are you sending this to, I'm presuming anyone w/ a hunting license? Does the GFP have the kind of money to piss away on postage x2 for every survey sent out? Fraud waste & abuse of tax payer & sportsmans dollars. Good job. Why not survey those that have had or applied for lion tags? I hope we kill every cat in SD. This could have been a voluntary online survey. Those that didn't return a survey get it resent to them again? What a brilliant way to waste even more tax payer funds... idiotic...at its finest/

1. Lions are a sign of a healthy environment 2. Control deer populations

1) Not with current season 2) They are negatively impacting deer and elk where populations are too high 3) I feel populations are too high in the BH Fire Protection district and CSP. Control those populations and I believe the prairie areas will decrease 4) See #3 above 5) At a minimum allow archery elk, firearms elk BH deer, archery deer, and muzzleloader tag holder to harvest mt. lions spet 1 - dec 31 every year I think a broader geographic harvest would be a good thing. Especially within the BH 6) Allow dogs and trapping starting Jan 1 I don not wish to see them gone. Just aggressively managed. Could still maintain the quota system. Just allow more methods and expanded opportunities.

90 years old

A higher priority should be eradicating deer and turkeys within Rapid City. They pose an unacceptable infection risk to humans. Lawns are covered with deer and turkey poop.

A major flaw in the structure of this survey is not giving any information on the approximate # of lions in the Hills for the last 10 years or so, plus the data on hunting success. How many lions 10 yrs ago or so? How many years did the hunting quota get met vs. not met? What is the estimated lion population now? Etc. How many hunters had licenses? Without information, no one can answer questions #4 and #5 with any degree of accuracy.

A mountain lion recently killed a 17 y.o. boy in California. Why would you want them around?

Acceptable at present time about lion populations

According to GFP online info, GFP biologists rely partially on public reports of sightings. We've never reported a sighting. If GFP would like more reports, it seems like they should publicize that.

All for lion hunting, against hunting them with dogs, traps or at night! Make it fair. They will eat some pets. They will eat some livestock, that's just part of it. Everyday pets and people are taking up more & more wildlifes land.

All of my encounters w/ cats have been in the forest or wilderness. As long as they do not encroach on urban areas, I believe the pop. is healthy. You may contact me for furthered information.

Although I have not lived in SD for very long I feel the mountain lion is an important and enjoyable part of this area

Although I live in rural Hot Springs I do not feel qualified to give an informed opinion about your questions. I have lived here 35 years and have never seen a mountain lion in the wild.

Although I no longer hunt, I support hunting as a good way to manage wildlife population. SD has done a good job of this. However, I miss the days of over the counter Black Hills Buck.

Always get a license in case I run into a lion but don't actively hunt them. Have heard female looking for mate on a couple of occasions. Heard a cat screaming couple days ago 3-2-2024. Of course frequent tracks in the snow. Fall River (BHFPD) co is and my property contains steep (Hot Brook Canyon) canyons which make foot pursuit impractical and limited land to continue pursuit.

Apex predators must be "sensibly" managed*! *if at all!! Wildlife biologists & managers need - really need to have significant input in maintaining healthy predator populations. The current SD "nest predator" program is an example of poor mgmt; the only reason it exists is pressure from the governor's office. For every complex problem, there is a solution that is simple, NEAT and WRONG!

Apex predators should be an encouraged part of any healthy ecosystem and to include big cats and others, like wolves

As a newer resident. I appreciate the opportunity to hunt for mountain lion and will pursue in the future.

As a truck driver haling various products throughout the Black Hills for 45 years. I have seen only 3 mountain lions. One at the confluence of Spring & tender foot Creeks on 385 North of crazy horse, One west of Custer near hells Canyon & open on the New Underwood road near the Elm Springs turn off. A live just east of Skyline Drive & have seen tracks up on the hill south of dinosaur Park, While I was walking the Labradors. I've also seen numerous tracks up around Valley Spur and Ridge Road north west of Bench Mark SD while deer hunting in that area. I do think mountain lions nee to be managed, but I'm pretty sure they were here long before we were.

As I stated earlier, we chose to live in a national forest but we also respect their presence. We don't walk around at night. Our granddaughters are never outside by themselves at anytime...ever. I know they have traveled through our area... have seen prints in the snow. At the same time, we have an abundance of deer, turkey. Have also seen in our subdivision bobcats, coyote... Which supports the fact that the mountain lions population is sustaining itself at the present levels.

As long as people are aware of the presence of lions it is not now an issue. Take a minimum of caution with out at night.

As previously noted, I am 94, so remarks are of little interest to most. There are pros and cons to supporting lion population in SD... I trust GFP to manage the issue based upon year and year data which will include the impacts of SD's changing population mix

As previously stated GF&P either doesn't know how many mt lions are in the Black Hills or they intentionally under report

As stated prior, myself, my neighbor, are all seeing an increase in mtn lion traffic - I'm seeing prints all throughout my resort. When we call we get lip service. I want GFP to back what your receptionist states to each of us and that they won't harm anything. I want GFP to give me in writing that if heaven forbid a small child is killed or if one of my guests pet is taken by a mtn lion that GFP will take 100% responsibility of their actions on lack of actions towards the mtn lions we are reporting. I own Spokane Creek Cabins and Campground on Iron Mtn Rd and I am one of 3 campgrounds in the area.

As with all hunting, people should be allowed to take their quarry in the natural time and habitat (ie at night and feeding grounds) so long as bag limits are obeyed. This way all residents have a fair shot at game whether just for meat or more of a challenge for sport. Thanks for listening to my opinions and sending the survey!

Balance is the goal. Overpopulation of the mt lions could be much more dangerous for our tourists.

Because housing is taking over the Hills. They have no place to go! Slow down housing.

Because of health issues, both my husband & myself no longer hunt

Between my neighbors and I just outside of Rapid City, we get mtn lion footage about once a year. We had the cleghorn sheep pass through a couple weeks ago and see them often by the fish hatchery (W. hwy 44) and I worry about them & the mtn lion pop.

Cat population appears to high the deer numbers in my area are on a steady decline.

Comments. I spent many hours in the woods each year hunting and shed hunting and know for certain the doe/yearling populations are much lower than pre lion years. I have found lion kill sites caches for both elk and deer. Of course it's obvious that the return of lions would impact the deer elk, BH sheep, and mountain goat populations. But it seemed to most hunters that GFP was slow to permit line hunting at all and has been slow footed to reduce the population adequately to maintain quality numbers of deer, elk, etc. The perception that GFP is run by liberals who also pine for the return of wolves and bear to the hills is real. I do believe in the last few years the lion population has come down some, but not enough. I believe this to be in large part that not enough of hunters know how to effectively hunt lions without the use of dogs and so rely on luck, which when pursuing an animal who is nocturnal, reduces significantly the odds of success. GFP must increase the ability of hunters to more effectively pursue lions by permitting the use of dogs and perhaps nocturnal hunting to the extent that it will reduce the number to acceptable levels that don't deleteriously affect the ungulate populations. I believe most people support a lion population in the hills, but not at the expense of healthy populations of deer, elk, etc., which both residents and non residents alike rely on for recreational enjoyment. Please do the work for the people. Thank you for the consideration of input.

Continue to keep politicians out of such issues trapping is an examples of inappropriate political involvement (governor's office).

Deer and elk pay down - need more mountain lions shot for the population to decrease

Deer population is overwhelming. A few extra mountain lions (within reason) not a bad idea.

define "boot hunting"

Desire to keep hunting challenging and fair, for hunters and lions. I think there are more lions than are able to be tagged or counted. I know we have too many deer - so we need lions. o far so good SDGFP! Thanks for the survey.

Despise SDGF&P. They are only in it for the money and could care less about us land owners

Development is now growing exponentially into lion habitat. Means more human/lion encounters. If there is an epidemic of blue tongue or anything that decimates 10% or more of the deer population then should let experienced hunters immediately cull a proportionate amount of cats. Need more signage in areas of hiking, camping, and other recreational areas letting tourists know they exist and some information on safety and how to react to an encounter. It's inevitable that there will be encounters. Get rid of the bears.

Did not feel I had enough info to answer some questions. As a new resident, I would defer to live long residents who have a better understanding of social/community issues such as hunting. I am not a hunter but feel strongly about maintaining SD traditions and culture!

Do away with lion and GFP people who brought them back!!!

Dog hunting should be allowed in the Black Hills. Trapping lions would be great as well.

Dog hunting should be allowed in the fire protection district with quota.

Dogs are being used in the Black Hills Fire Protection District. I have reported hearing and seeing dogs being used with no response from Game Fish!

Dogs should never be allowed. Make hunting MLs hunting - not dog chasing. If out of state hunters would be allowed - make the price on the high end. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment.

Doing a good job with our wildlife keep up to work. Thank you.

Doing a great job keep it up

Don't know why you send these out as have yet to take the sportsman's word for anything as you have your mind's made up as to what your going to do.

Don't let the liberals in from the coasts!

Don't let wolves in SD!

Don't trust GFP

edge of spearfish

Eliminate the nest predator program

Excellent management.

Excellent survey. For healthy diversity, SD must do everything possible to keep our environment healthy for people and our animal population. We must protect our land, water, air and natural resources. Nothing should be taken for granted. Thank you!

Exception for trapping, if GFP contacted with animal in trap, if determined animal will die some consideration to allow trapper to keep animal!

far too many incompetent hunters!

Fewer lions = more deer. Maybe I can draw a deer tag once in awhile.

Fewer lions around would not be a bad thing.

For future please give your harvest numbers so we can be better informed

For questions 4 and 5, I don't have any idea what the current hunters numbers or lion population are. In general I like to see stable numbers of top predators with higher numbers preferred if the habitat and prey can support increases. I have more concerns over habitat fragmentation than I do about human-wildlife conflict.

Game & Fish - you know whats best - that is your job - just do your job

GF&P had done a good job thus far as much as I gather. Keep up the good work!

GFP - could put adds on tv telling people not to provoke cats, if they come in contact with one.

GFP appears to be a fine organization sorry for the felt pen on the first page

GFP basically does a good job

GFP could easily reduce staff by 10%

GFP does a great job with lions and needs to not change a thing.

GFP let them get out of hand the season is to short elk and deer are your money makers and the lions have decimated the herds about 8 year ago now starting to come back.

GFP should include mountain lion static for the past year or two, To help with the "statewide" servey.

GFP should increase mountain lion populations in Pierre and Sioux Falls and see how much support you get.

GFP- thank you for all that you do to maintain healthy wildlife, fish & fowl populations in South Dakota!

Glad to help

Glad you are doing this survey.

Going forward will hope GFP helps to keep people and livestock safe from lions, while at the same time realizing they are important to mother natures balance of populations of its wild life creatures. Lion in proximity or within community of people is not safe and GFP will hopefully act to deal with concerns expressed by people where lions are known to be sighted. We hope to be able to hike and enjoy the out of doors without having to arm ourselves for any interactions of threats by lions or other wild creatures within our Black Hills. GFP must be open, truthful, and informative to the public regarding mountain lions. They must be able to respond and act in real time, not after months and years of "studies" and "data collection." No delays even if unintentional while allowing lions to live in nature as they always have.

Good luck!

Good luck! Thanks for asking.

Great work!

Grew up in rural SD, Black Hills. My only concern on a large population is the effect on deer/elk populations.

had a lion on our deck a year

Have a cabin in the Black Hills area between Spearfish and Central City (Mateland Road) and see ML once in a while - think they are plentiful there

Have encourage hunters, landowners to send in and reposts sighting in general areas to assist in population est.

Have enough hunters / careless shooting in the hills don't need more out here! Don't need their dogs out here. Leave them alone unless a rancher has a problem.

Have livestock on national forest in summer lost one calf to mt lions

Have never seen mountain lion - have trapper - hunted for many years.

Have pets - so am very careful at night although cats have walked through my neighbors during the day and there are kill sites behind my house.

Have seen a few mt lions near my house. So far none have posed any threat to me, my wife or our pets. However, they will be delt with if they do pose a threat! So far, I think So Dak is doing a good job of managing the population.

Have seen mt lions in my yard and close to my house! Don't care for them being in my yard but like having them in the black hills.

Having lions is important. Not having them dramatically impact ranching is too.

Hope to see increase in population Allow to hunt during deer season

Hound hunting is cruel, as is trapping and snaring Night hunting seems unfair.

Hound hunting with discretion, should be allowed. I would help with selective harvest.

Hounds and trapping should be allowed

how about doing something to get all these deer out of hot springs,sd

How many tag's are given out totally, need this information to answer survey. How many lions are taken each year.

Hunters and irresponsible shooters are a much greater threat to humans than lions. There is no mandate to keep the National Forest State for livestock. The Game, Fish and Parks needs to rely on biology and not politics or private interests when addressing our states wildlife!

Hunters are not responsible and not regulated enough.

Hunters are shooting too close to houses in Nemo Rd area!

Hunting at night could be very dangerous on per hunter is fair interesting conversation!

Hunting lions is a good way to demand fear and respect of people, livestock and pets.

Hunting lions season should be longer. Ajust amount to harvest per number of lions in South Dakota.

Hunting with dogs in CSP should not be allowed. Several years ago I was hiking in the park and several dogs approached me aggressively. Their owners arrived several minutes later, but an encounter should not happen with unsupervised dogs.

I also have dogs. I do worry when they go outside at night. I have never had a problem with mtn lions although they are visible on the game cameras behind my house. We live in the black hills so we are fine with the mtn lions helping with the deer population.

I am 1 mile from the forest service boundary/ I have not had any loss from lions, but they do travel through my yard and intimidate the livestock.

I am a ranch caretaker part-time and frequently see mtn lions. They do not worry the dogs, horses, or livestock.

I am concerned about the mountain lion populations we do see them in Black Hawk and the Rapid City area

I am favor or a trapping and snaring season without dog hunting during that time. I support trapper education with recommended methods and equipment like some states are doing with wolf trapping.

I am more concerned about the elk damage to my fences and I have no fall pasture do to the elk - perhaps increase the number of elk licenses - I lose about \$1,000 potential pasture rent per year dur to elk

I am new to western SD and have no comment on this survey at this time. Please remove me from mailing list! Thank you!

I am not a hunter and never will be. For the most part I have perceive hunters and hunting as a cruel sport. Not many (none) of the hunters I know hunt for sustenance. They hunt to kill things and for trophies. That being said, the mountain lion problem is one situation where I would have to acquiesce that hunting is necessary. The sheer volume and fearlessness of the mountain lions around humans and their habitat is frightening. And yes, I know that humans have encroached upon the lions' territory. But I ask, what is the territory of humans and livestock and pets? This survey come to me the very week that my own pet was snatched by a mountain lion - she had gone outside simply to use the litterbox and was nabbed. Within the same week a friend sent me a video of a mountain lion walking right up to their door and peering in. It prowled around for almost 40 minutes, all while her toddler and baby slept a few feet away. The risk to humans and pets and livestock cannot be ignored. The numbers are clearly such that they are being forced into residential neighborhoods. The numbers need to decrease.

I am not convinced that lions play a positive role in maintaining a healthy ungulate population. People should not have to abony about their puts being killed or people being attacked (rare but it does happen) convince me, educate me, that lions are beneficial and I will "sing a different tune".

I am not qualified to take this survey basically homebound the last 10 years

I am not willing to lose and livestock to predators including mountain lions

I am retired WCO from the hill city district. I would like to see the use of registered dogs (ppl, ?) from March 1 to the end of the season or quota, I would also like to see the mt lion season open on Nov 1 with the BHS deer season to residents and a limited number of non-res lics that would be good until the quota is filled or Apr 30. Thanks

I am retired. I grew up on a sheep and cattle ranch. I saw the lack of cyote control destroy the sheep industry in the Black Hills area. If lions are controled and monitored they should be a needed part of the wildlife envirement.

I am very against using dogs. I people need to hunt they should be on foot way not out of a vehicle. I am female and used to trap for many years. People get in a rush to kill mountain lions the minute one is sighted. If people bring in sheep on 9 acres then they should expect losses. But it seems like the lions always lose. Sad but true.

I am very concerned about harvesting female lions that have kittens that are teaching them how to survive and be cautious of humans. They need to be taught to be cautious of humans and stay clear of areas and times they are present.

I am very supportive of founds and trapping

I appreciate GFP, asking for my opinion. Thank you.

I appreciate the work you do!

I believe dog hunting could be expanded and would help target specific category or trophy animals. Lions already end up in traps I believe would be smart to allow the harvest of these animals as well being a targeted group. I am open to one of couple non resident tags. I would recommend about on the ground and say 1 dog permit one at a larger cost bring the money into the state. I believe GFP needs to protect the basic game more from lions because the money in elk/deer/big horn sheep/goats is for greater than lions and more people enjoy seeing or having more opportunities to hunt these animals. Thank you.

I believe Game Fish & Parks are a professional group and will manage the population as needed.

I believe GFP does what GFP wants and doesn't really care about anyone else

I believe GFP has their finger on the situation - proper harvest to keep population in check

I believe GFP is doing a great job.

I believe GFP will do the right thing to manage animals.

I believe hunting is a good method of maintaining the balance of nature-predators and prey. Mountain lions are part of the overall food chain in nature.

I believe if a mountain lion has been spotted in your area then it should be taken out. Shot, not relocated.

I believe in letting boot hunters are needed and should have the chance to take a lion! I think houndsmen do take only the mature males and let a lot of other cats go free!

I believe more Mt Lions are killed than realized due to fear. Although I have never come upon a lion on foot, I believe you need to respect all wildlife as they react to fear and are protective as well. A species should not be eliminated due to fear. As stated previously, there needs to be more education and less misleading information.

I believe mt lions are part of our "natural" state and belong here to help control deer and other populations.

I believe ranching and farming community hold too much sway in decision making that relates to wildlife population of the Black Hills.

I believe SD Need more mountain lions to help control white tail deer populations. SD GFP Need to give more white tail doe hunting tags.

I believe that DFG&P do an outstanding task in managing SD wild animal population.

I believe that hunting is fine if used for food. Don't just kill animals because you don't want them around. Animals have a way of taking care of themselves and it's worked for years.

I believe that numbers will increase and level off. Early on people hunted them for a trophy or a rug. Those hunters are done - very few would go for multiple hunters, I believe. This point would make an argument to allow dogs to allow others desiring a trophy w/o the real hard work & effort. Dogs & guides is an area where I don't know how to look at it. Under strict guidelines allowing dogs w/ guides could work to control the numbers from increasing to dramatically.

I believe that residents should have more access to all big game tags. And people who get landowner preferences that don't live in South Dakota should not get cheap tags and should have to allow legal hunting on their property by SD residents to help keep populations in check.

I believe that the mountain lion population could be managed better by harvesting more mature lions and houndsman.

I believe the GFP consistently minimizes the threat that mountain lions pose to pets and humans

I believe the number of mountain lions harvested each year is about correct; however, there is a clear issue with mountain lions encroaching on centers of population. Here in Deadwood there has been a noticeable increase in the number of mountain lions sightings, the number caught on home cameras, and the number seen during the day. Following the trendline of what folks have observed (i.e., not hard data), the situation will soon be intractable.

I believe the SDGFP is doing a Good!! Job!!

I believe there are less lions.

I believe there is no need for a mountain lion population in So Dak.

I believe with the information I have, that the system is being properly managed.

I bet you all get sick of talking about mountain lions.

I did not answer some of the questions on the first page because I think those questions depend on population. Too many lions in one area such as around ? orca have resulted in pets and livestock being targeted by lions. I do not believe this would be as prevalent if population density was lower. I believe a good approach would be to take half of the quota and make them limited issue tags which would allow the use of dogs. Then at least even in the years that the weather is not favorable for our current hunting practices we would still have a good chance to manage the population. Thanks!

I do a lot of hunting on the prairie and have only ever seen 1 lion = so population isn't out of line in my opinion for areas other than the hills but ranchers see it different when they start to lose livestock. I feel to be able to shoot a cat year round anywhere would keep things in line.

I do not fear mountain lions. I am very aware they are present. I believe the influx of people population is far more ruinous to wildlife and wild lands.

I do not hunt. I am a widow.

I don't believe there are too many

I don't hunt

I don't know enough about mtn lions or their habits to render an opinion. I'm aware they live here but have never encountered one. I do think they are beautiful however.

I don't know historically the background of mtn lions in the hills. Did I not see them when I was growing up because they were over hunted? Or are there way more now than historically and it is not a healthy number?

I don't know much about M. L. hunting I've never done it

I don't know, its shed hunting time here in the black hills. I sometimes feel as if I should be packing a hand gun because of mountain lions but after giving it some thought don't. I have seen mountain lions while poking around on the BHNF but have never felt threatened. Lastly, I feel GF&P should allow lion hunting with dogs.

I don't like the idea of using dogs.

I don't see a benefit of mountain lions

I don't see this as a problematic issue and would trust the professionals at F&W to do their job

I don't trust the GFP Commission to follow the science or honor public opinion.

I don't want mountain lions to become extinct; however I don't want them walking into towns to be a threat to humans and pets

I doubt that my opinion would be helpful because I do not have any knowledge about the animals in the country. However, we must to pay attention to protecting the ecosystem, include the mountain lions.

I fear that human encroachment into mountain lion habitat will cause unnecessary harvesting of mountain lions, which would be a tragedy in my opinion.

I feel the population is too high, based on the numbers of DNA tested lions killed 100's of miles away from the hills, and also those now going in to the towns. Appears they have run out of wild space to live. SO they need to be better controlled. Hunting is conservation!

I feel we have to many lions in South Dakota. We need to let the biologist manage our resources and not the game commission.

I feel we people are interfering on new property wild life used to be moving wild animals into areas now cats and bear are being seen more.

I feel you are doing a great job with the lion management program. I have not hunted in is years.

I find that the typical great lion hunter in the black hills determines how many miles it takes on the truck to bag a lion. They hunt by driving every road possible after a snow to cut a fresh track. It has resulted in a much higher level of winter Backcountry overall.

I greatly enjoy hunting 4-wheeling and being in the outdoors. The black hills are my home. I'll do whatever I can to keep hunting in SD tradition!

I grew up on a ranch in Butte County and spent many years hiking in the northern hills. Overall, I feel the culling in the northern hills has been less than adequate and the culling in the southern hills has been slightly better. My opposition to non-residents hunting lions is due to the multiple out-of-state hunters I've met who do not respect the land boundary lines and other hunters. I am also the most frustrated I've ever been in my history of draws. I don't understand how I, a resident and taxpayer in Custer County, cannot draw a white tail, any whitetail, tag in the county, nor can I draw a mule deer tag for the northern hills. But I met several very pleasant hunters from Colorado who drew Custer County, any whitetail tags. I was unable to fill my 5th pick draw, which was any antlerless whitetail in Harding County. There are no more than 10 whitetail deer in Harding County. Someone should have paid more attention in junior high before applying to set regs for tags.

I grew up on a sheep ranch/farm in SD, never had a problem with lions taking sheep

I grew up with a great respect and passion for nature and conservation. My dad retired as the chief of the MN DNR so conservation has always been important to my family. I also understand how incredibly hard it is to get accurate population numbers on an animal as reclusive as mountain lions in a terrane as rugged as the Black Hills. I know multiple people in the BHFPD last year alone that lost livestock to cats that the state trappers were not able to capture. SD GFP told us that hunting with dogs is the most effective way to hunt cats so I think this form of hunting should be expanded into the BHFPD. I also think that if the quota is not met by the end of April, then the season should be expanded. Or maybe that is when dogs should be used to help harvest the target number of cats in that area. There were so many cats in town in Spearfish last year that something has to be adjusted before it's someone's kid that gets hurt. The habitat for cats is shrinking so the population needs to be managed differently.

I have 6 1/2 acres and help other people with horses, that need grazing in the summer

I have a comment about the bounty program. No one I know thinks it is a good idea. We need our small animals as there should be a balance in nature. Just saying!

I have chickens , horses, cattle. I have lions in my yard often. They are passing through. They have killed several deer under my bedroom window. If they pose a threat we contact GFP.

I have documented cougar concerns throughout the U.S. and Mexico. As an award-winning international environmental journalist, I am providing you with a well-informed perspective. My handwriting is bad due to cervical spine nerve damage. Fortunately, it does not affect my IQ. I respect and appreciate all honest efforts of state agency employees on the public payroll to establish protocols that provide equal protection under the law to our relatives who have no human voice in matters. Thank you for conducting this survey. I look forward to seeing the results and their professional analysis. Remember it is not the governor, rather normal citizens like me, who support you.

I have had lions walk in fresh tracks I made. I have seen 8 fresh lion tracks in the same area. The Black Hill is a small area and has a large population moving into the hill

I have hunted lions for 16 years. Never saw a lion just tracks in the snow.

I have in the past seen hunters on the Piedmont Fire trail carry dogs out in the morning and night scopes on their firearms.

I have lived in rural Lawrence County for over twenty years, a lion has killed a turkey on my property and carried off harvested deer hears but posed no threat to our cats. Having one close also helped keep the deer away which are destroying the national forest by over browsing

I have lived in this housing development for 48 years and until a few years ago, we have NEVER had problems with mountain lions! In the last 2 or 3 years several have had mountain lions ON their decks, in their driveways and in their yards. (even in the daylight!!) Several have lost pets to mountain lions. There have also been many sightings in residential neighborhoods in town and within city limits! This is ridiculous, unnecessary, unsafe, and unacceptable! There are simply way to many mountain lions.

I have lost colts due to mountain lions

I have met three people who have had encounters with mountain lions. The first was in his car on a narrow road. The cat didn't move, even when the horn was used. His comment left little doubt that the cat was unafraid. the second was a friend walking his tow young daughters on a trail. The cat was appk 40 yards up the trail. They made themselves look large and made a lot of noise; to no effect. The lion finally lost interest and walked away. "The longest 5 minutes of my life." he now carries a handgun when they are hiking, and is careful in the areas they choose to go. Incidentally, he stands 6'2" tall and weighs 245lbs. The third was a friend of mine who is a nurse. She was walking her two black labs and came across a lion on the Mickelson trail. She screamed and made herself look large. The dogs acted erratically, but barked at the cat "almost non-stop". The cat just looked at them, and after several minutes, walked away. The cast are not afraid of people. I do not wish to see them exterminated; but we could instill some caution in them if we were allowed to hunt them with dogs. After treeing a cat, you have an opportunity to see if the cat meets your criteria (Tom, female, etc). If not, the cat is released with a healthy fear of people and dogs. Out of room; but still on my soapbox!

I have never hunted and I have never owned a firearm. I don't feel qualified to express an opinion.

I have never seen a mountain lion in the wild, but I think they are the most magnificent animal God created. That is why I strongly oppose the season just for the sport of killing one.

I have no need for coyotes, lions, wolf. I also will not allow night hunting of any kind with my cattle and water tanks and windmill get shot up enough in the daylight seasons.

i have no problem mt lion hunting or population control through hunting

I have no problem with the hunting of mt lions as a management tool or to manage the depredation of live stock. But using dogs to run them to treed is a barbaric practice. If a hunter is to lazy to hunt them then he doesn't deserve a license. Shooting them after being treed or cornered by dogs is cowardly. I have hunted in SD for many years. Deer, ducks, turkey, pheasants, etc and have never used or agreed with using dogs.

I have not heard or seen livestock kills in this area.

I have not noticed any lions or lions prints since moving to Hot Springs. There are too many town deer. There were prints by my storage unit out toward Wind Cave Park.

I have only seen one lion in the wild in 28 years, it didn't harm the livestock at all. Strongly oppose traps, snaring and use of dogs.

I have pets, family, and hike often. And do not feel threatened by mountain lions.

I have seen them on and near my property, never had any problems.

I have several lions on hunting cams, once captured 3 lions in one photo. Too few white tail deer around now in the Black Hills, may quit archery hunting until population gets better. More lion tags need to be issued in the hills for our local hunters, allow to use dogs in the Hills & allow some night hunting until population gets reduced.

I have to trust you guys. I have lived here all my life and have seen a total of 2 mountain lions in all that time. Now I do know & agree that they are here but I have not seen them. I lived for 25 years at Hart Ranch and walked 2 miles every day - early in the morning but never did see a mountain lion. Maybe I was just lucky!

I have worked with farmers, ranchers and rural town residents some of ranchers say the lion population has gotten to high in their area. I have been a loan supervisor and am now a realtor. I enjoy big game hunting but never have gotten any big trophy deer or antelope and missed by chance for an elk after 18 years of preference.

I herd mt lion chirp's so of my house one morning and mt lion tracks in fresh show going north on staff road, one set of tracks was big and 2nd set was a little smaller. They weren't dog tracks either.

I hope G and P significantly reduces lion population by sportsman hunting so ungulates can increase. If would be great to buy elk or deer licenses over the counter versus by lottery.

I hope that GFP takes this matter seriously. If member of GFP would like to discuss this with me, I would happily oblige.

I hope to see hunting in the future for my kids & grandkids management of predators allows this should continue to be matched with the carrying capacity of the land!

I just have a inside cat (kitty)

I know my comments will not have much influence on your decisions of how to manage the lion population in the Black Hills. I am going to share my ideas. I have lived and hunted in the BH for over 50 years before the lions became established. We enjoyed a casual hunt and would see many deer during the day. We often pass several nice bucks before taking a large buck. Now we see fewer deer and after several days of hunting, harvest any buck. During the summer people enjoy seeing the does and fawns. Now we see fewer fawns. The lions get many fawns. We find the remains when checking fence and salt licks. Before the lions, there were porcupines throughout the hills. We have not seen a porcupine in recent years. Also there are fewer rabbits. Everyone enjoys seeing wildlife in the hills. Since the lions have been established, we see fewer animals. Seldom or if ever do we see a lion. I think the lions have reduced the overall population of wildlife in the BH. There was a healthier and better balance of wildlife before the lions. I realize that the lions are here to stay. It is reported that it takes a deer a week to maintain a lion. If there are the reported population of 300 lions in the BH, then it takes about 1500 deer a year to feed the lions. That means that there are that many less for the people to see and for hunters to harvest. I remember when we could buy a deer hunting license at the local store. Now we have to apply in the middle of the summer, hoping we will be lucky enough to draw A tag because a lion have reduced the deer population. I know there are more hunters now, but there would be more tags available if there were more deer. I hope the SD GFP will manage the number of lines to minimize their impact on the other wildlife in the forest. Possible allowing the use of dogs during a special season could be a tool to reduce their numbers. So far, they have not been a major problem for livestock producers and other domestic animals. I appreciate the opportunity

I know that lions can be a nuisance for farmers. I just don't want unnecessary killing of this animal. I know they are in my neighborhood; I have cameras in hopes of seeing one. I don't want to see them killed.

I lease land for cattle use.

I like knowing that historically present animals are finding niches in the Black Hills to reestablish populations.

I like mountain lion's they are beautiful creatures... in the wild missing cats, have bothered the home I think they should be tranquilize and move back into the Hills, sick be destroyed, babbies if any and found, rescue and released into the wild, raise them in their environment very important. Thankx for letting me speak.

I live .5 miles from an elementary school. Lions that target cats (easy kill) will move on to small children - we have many children in our neighborhood! My neighbors & myself would gladly let GF&P onto our property to remove the lion(s) from our area. (Corral Dr, RC)

I live in a town and my security cameras have recorded 3 lions within the last 5 months

I live in Chapel Valley. I have heard them howl at night. Under/of my spruce trees I found a carcass of a deer with his hind quarter eaten. I have no small pets. All in all they are beautiful creatures and I would like to see one.

I live in Custer city but enjoy hunting, hiking and camping in the mountains. I do not feel threatened by mt. lions. I also enjoyed mtn lions hunting in Colorado until the DOW ruined it by bad policies and lies.

I live in South Canyon Country Estates (off of Nemo) in the last month there has been 2 or 3 sightings of mountain lion(s) in our neighborhood. Prior to these sightings it has been 16 years since I seen a mountain lion in our neighborhood.

I live in the heart of lion country close to WY I feel our deer and sheep and turkey suffer greatly and dogs would help mange them on years with little snow. We had to release one 125# out of a trap this year is it very dangerous if we could despacht them would be great also.

I live in town, but have had multiple kills in my neighborhood over the last 12 years. Actually have seen just as many in town as I have in the woods. We have way too many lions in SD!

I live on property surrounded by BH national forest. I see lion tracks but have never seen one. This suggests that there are not too many of them around.

I live outside Rapid City limits. I have seen cat tracks out here. People who have livestock threatened by big cats should have the opportunity to remove the threat whenever it is necessary.

I lived by the river for many year never seen a m lion- now in the hills -seen tracks-

I lived in Washington State for 30+ years and see enough, hope you guys don't repeat what they're doing, and retired and moved home to SD and been here for 14 years. P.S. wolves are worse than the cats, in todays world there is no room for them, sad but its still true, the money that has been spent on them, could go somewhere better and get our future (kids) out enjoying and experiencing the great outdoors, there's enough changes out there without adding to it. My humble honest opinion. Thank you.

I love having the mountain lions but believe that they need to be managed. There is really any other predator to aid in population control. Thanks for sending out this survey. I will be hunting lions next year.

I love my mt lion who hangs around my house. As long as he doesn't bother me, I don't bother him. He is beautiful.

I love you folks, you do great work! Keep it up!

I need more info on population trends before I can feel comfortable answering some questions.

I own the cutest dog on the planet!!

I prefer to protect their habitat and therefore population - we live in their territory! Now - if lion are present near schools - a danger to pets, children, then they need to be removed.

I purchase a tag just to have in case of sighting a cat I help protect neighbors livestock - very seldom will I take the time to hunt lions

I ranch in Perkins Co & business in Lawrence. Pets and guests with children & pets we care for. We maintain minimum cover.

I realize that mountain lions are difficult to manage and harvest numbers in part or gauged by health of deer and elk herds. I would be in favor of more live trapping and slightly less hunting.

I really enjoy hunting predators. There is becoming more and more restrictions on where we can get to with more private land close off roads/trails and the lack of access to the large snowmobile trail system that really restricts access.

I run through the hills.

I see a need to control the population of lions, and a need to have CSP land. BHNF and National Parks land allow hunting.

I see no reason to have mountain lions in the BH.

I see no reason to promote and allow trophy hunting. I do support managing lion population for seasons of human safety and management of lions that prey on livestock and pets.

I sometimes hunt big game, I come from a long line of ranchers, hunters, farmers. Dogs do more damage to livestock, wildlife than lions do and we do not hunt them (dogs). Unless mountain lions overpopulate, let them live.

I spend a lot of time outdoors and have only been lucky enough to see 3 lions. I have a healthy respect for their presence. They belong here.

I spent a lot of time in the Black Hills Forest and see lots of wildlife. I've only seen mountain lion scat. There doesn't appear to be too many lions in the Hills.

I strongly oppose hunting lions with dogs. I don't consider this ethical hunting.

I strongly oppose use of hounds. As a property own, I do not want hounds crossing onto my property and do not see a need for hounds.

I strongly trust people to trust and enforcement of rules and laws that are to be by our trusted park located people as much as any enforcement by officers who are needed sometimes when getting help of any law enforcement and people that are capable.

I strongly urge to keep the hunting away from populated areas

I support all hunting. Hunting keeps mtn lions from being to bold!

I support farmers & ranchers to protect their livestock when needed

I support hunting/fishing fully but I do view some hunting methods as irresponsible ie night hunting, but that is my opinion.

I think GF&P trys to do a good job within their budget while putting up with tree huggers & political!
Thank you

I think GFP does a great job but not many fill their tags so they should have more opportunity to do so and to harvest more than one at a time

I think it is sad people are taking over all the habitat and leaving no room for animals that are just doing what nature intended them to do.

I think more hunter would purchase lion tags if they were able to hunt during deer season. I also think we can fill the quota.

I think overall the GFP is doing a good job managing lions.

I think people that want fewer mountain lions should move somewhere without mountain lions.

I think S Dakota does a good job of management. I'd like to see changes in the application process, for various big game species.

I think that the GFP are doing a good job of managing the lions

I think the cost of a license should increase for those who want to hunt mountain lions.

I think the SD GFP staff are doing a good job.

I think there is more lions in our area then before.

I think they are beautiful creatures and would hate to see them disappear from the Hills! We must understand that we are encroaching on their territory.

I think this survey is a good thing to do.

I think using dogs would help manage the population.

I think we need to keep our mountain lions around, but to control them in needed areas.

I think you need more input from us oldtimers! I've been there, done that!

I think you should spend more time working with urban areas to control the wildlife populations within city limits. For instance Hot Springs has way too many turkeys in town and at the golf course which is in the city limits. There are a hundred or more turkeys on the golf course and as far as I'm concerned it is a health hazard. Just wait till all those hens hatch out 8-12 chicks this spring. Do your job.

I trust the forest service knows best how to handle mountain lion population.

I trust the state of GFP. They are professionals and should be left to make the decisions about wildlife in SD.

I understand that I am encroaching on the lions habitat and they are a necessary part of this ecosystem.

I view mt lions as any other varmint like coyotes that needs to be eliminated

I want the mountain lion to survive, but the presence of "man" has changed the balance of nature. Other species, elk, need to be preserved and balanced also as much as possible.

I wish that only boot hunting should be allowed and believe our numbers are way less than your reporting.

I work for GFP. And I disagree with the checkin process for lions. It's the reason why I quit hunting them. Hunters should be able to skin and gut the cat immediately after harvest. The meat is delicious and I feel it's a tremendous waste of life and protein when hunters have to spoil the meat to allow US (GFP) to get an accurate weight on it. What are we doing with that data to make it worth the waste of meat? I think a tooth checking like we do with elk, with a small questioner would be more appropriate for this season. If you have any questions for me, my office is 20 feet from Dr. Buckley's in Rapid City. Fisheries biologist.

I would have liked to know some baseline population and mountain lion health information prior to answering.

I would like to hunt more deer and elk

I would like to keep the harvest as a minimum in a work troubled area. I also feel GFP has done a good job on this prey run.

I would like to see a limited season to where you could use dogs- but if a night hunt is included I think that should be limited and a different license for it with a high fee to do it allowed to out of state folks with a higher fee. \$75-150.00 more limited amount or may behave a fund raiser tag once a year for auction or etc. I think some state put ap x-amount of ceratain type lic for elk or sheep or bears for example sold to highest bider, etc or for a youth or VA or handicap permit

I would like to see the use of hounds expanded because I feel it is much easier to filed judge a lion that has been treed.

I would only question the use of hounds or traps but also question my opinions because of my uneducated guess on the population numbers of lions. The success rate of harvest in the beginning of lion hunting was a bit alarming. Good management of hunting seasons have seemed to work well. Thanks for asking!

I'd like to see boot hunt in CSP be a little longer per tag and 4 days?

I'd like to see lion season open for deer season also. No need for out of state hunters No need for dogs all season maybe last week or 2.

I'd prefer hunting in South Dakota stay guarded to the revenue driven decisions. I'd prefer to manage the population of lions as required by incidents of public issues - pet deaths, lions in dense population areas and also managed for the health of other big game. In my hunting, the main issue is hunting lions when you find multiple tracks. I don't think taking an animal with young dependents is ethical but I have disengaged when finding multiple mature tracks. Also allowing hunting in a larger season (earlier start) would allow ethical hunters a greater chance to manage the population. If revenue is an issue, maybe create a 2nd season with additional fee. I believe out of state hunting will create more of a management mess than anything. Yes could be create huge revenue but not worth it in my opinion. Thank you for including me in your survey.

I'm 94 yrs old and never did hunt.

I'm less concerned about the publics perception than the health of the ecosystem and mountain lion populations. I believe that there are too few mountain lions because they help control other predators such as coyotes, etc. healthy mountain lion populations are best for the environment & for hunters alike.

I'm not a hunter but I think hunting is probably the best way of managing wildlife population

I'm not a hunter lions have always been a concern when they come in city limits (Rapid City). I trust SD GFP to do the responsible , sustainable, and human thing.

I'm not a hunter so my answers are so me what unqualified to answer. Hope this helps.

I'm not sure, but I suspect that turkey population, deer population, and elk population have suffered because of mt. lions. I love turkey hunting!

I'm sorry I'm not much help with this. I have no experience with hunting and know nothing about it. The status quo seems to be working.

I've been an outdoorsman most of my life. I loved it when I would cross their trail or back track and find one had been following me but some years not seeing one I've never had the urge to shoot one.

I've never seen a mountain lion in the wild, although I have seen physical evidence including tracks and deer kill remains on our RC property

I've heard enough stories from reliable sources as to what dogs can do to mountain lions. It is not Sportman like. I am not in favor of using dogs at all. My concern... If you would allow pursuit where multiple tracks are present, you could kill the mother of cubs, and the cubs would therefore not learn proper hunting skills from mother and might be more inclined to kill livestock. Also, Lions have been doing a pretty good job of removing CWD diseased cervids. If you remove too many lions, we could have an increase in the disease. I do trust that the SDGFP Biologists have done their research to set up a fair hunting season

If GFP wants to change and add out of state licenses then change them a lot and lower residents costs

If lion populations have become an issue allowing individuals the use of dogs would be extremely beneficial.

If mountain lions are, or get to be, a threat than relocate or reduce the numbers

If people are worried about their pets then they need to keep them inside at night and protected during the day like I do. They can't blame a wild animal if they are an irresponsible pet owner. I wish we had a lot more bears and other wild animals such as moose too. Mountain lions are beautiful animals and I hate to see them murdered for sport. If there is a dangerous lion killing a lot of livestock then I understand killing it but not for sport.

If they need to be hunted - on foot - no dogs

If you have not met your quota there is no need to increase hunters - or #s. There is no clear and definitive way to measure numbers - and unless it isn't being reported - mountain lions are not a threat to people. If you are willing to let pets free roam in a wilderness area - that is not a threat to pets That is either lack of education or stupidity the GFP cannot flex. We own cabins to tourists and have educational materials available with regards to mountain lions and other wild animals.

If you increase hunting maybe every other year

If you lose livestock to cats, ranchers should legally be able to kill the cats

If you want to control elk and or deer population just issue more licenses you don't need lions to do that

In hiking extensively the Black Hills in over 20 years I honesty have never scene a mountain lion. Their numbers are over hyped. Thank you.

In my opinion, GFP manages wildlife for the purpose of revenue. Many regulations do not appear to benefit sportsmen, wildlife, or the general public. These changes appear to have been implemented in the last 20 years and decisions appear to have been influenced by lobbyists. The more GFP regulates, which usually means attempting to influence numbers of animals, populations decrease. Pheasant and deer numbers are down. Walleye numbers are down. There are likely many factors that contribute to it, but GFP regulation doesn't seem to improve it.

In the 1950s the cattleman's association paid \$100.00 to \$1000.00 for mountain lions because they got a taste for cattle & sheep.

In the 2023 mountain lion report there was 525 lions in 2018 and in 2019 there is 275 estimated. They harvested 61 lions and removed another 20. 169 unaccounted for.

In troubled areas cats should be hunted more aggressively. We sold our house on Crook City road in 2018. We were aware mt. lions were in our area, but were surprised to see a video of 2 cats walking up the steps to our old home in broad daylight. That's a little to close! We are interested in the practice of using dogs to push the cats back out of residential areas.

Interesting opinion survey. I do believe SDGFP does a good job in managing such an exclusive species of mountain lions. Populations and population dynamics is tough. Thank you for your efforts!

Introduce more predators back to the area like wolves & bears, we need to maintain the deer better which benefits vegetation and other animals thriving

It is my belief that the mountain lion population was introduced into the Black Hills of SD years ago in an effort to mitigate high whitetail deer numbers. As a result, the number of deer tags has consistently been reduced year after year, and the sighting/interactions with lions in more urban areas across our state (as well as others) has grown prolific. Most recently, a 21 year old man was killed by a lion in California. While I am well aware that this lion is most assuredly not from South Dakota, it cannot be said that mountain lion and other predators (wolves, bears, etc...) do not pose a serious risk to human life and flourishing. As the number of both people and lions increase so shall the number of fatal encounters.

It seems the management of the lion population is in a downward trajectory. The use of dogs should be terminated in hunting lions. That to me isn't hunting.

It would be desirable to prohibit all hunting in CSP

It would be nice to have data on estimated population number of cub/year, and primary food source - deer population # of Deer killed by cars to compare hunting number with.

Item #2 Parents of young children and owners of pets are responsible for their charges well-being. Unacceptable threat to humans when drink drivers are busy smashing up themselves and others? What are you talking about:? Lions are supposed to kill and eat wild ungulates. They are carnivores. Item #8 I'm suspicious of "social acceptable levels". Your decisions should not be swayed by political whines or anti-hunting notions from other parts of the counting.

just as important are any house pets

Just keep a healthy population of the mountain lion - a good count on how many is so important. so they don't all get killed off.

Just leaves the lions alone. But when there's too many, allow hunters to cull. NO DOGS NO TRAPS NO SNARES.

Just remember, this is South Dakota and we live here for a reason. Managing the mountain lion population is important, so is hunting, livestock and pets. Mountain Lions in the past were fairly elusive, which isn't the case anymore.

Keep any population control as humane as possible! No traps, no dogs!

Keep the mountain lion population under control but also keep the human interference under control. Keep dogs out of it.

Keep up the good work

Keep up the good work!

Keep up the good work! Thanks!

Keep up the good work! Yay science!

Keep up the work!!

Keeping the public aware of lion population in specific areas being managed helps people to understand the actual impact of the population and whether the harvest need to be increased or decreased.

Land in same family since 1900. No known mt lion problem. Leave our dominant cats alone. They teach their young to kill wildlife and stay away from farmstead and domestic animals. The same for the coyotes.

Large dog breed

Lease land to a local rancher

Leave South Dakota alone.

Leave the hunting season the same

Legalize trapping. More dog hunts. I don't want mountain lion hunting to mess up deer/elk hunts. I get if your out in your stand/blind or stalking and you see one you want to shoot it but I'd rather keep the deer/elk hunt more pristine manage lions through dog hunt/trapping

Less lions for a safe community

Let them hunt them.

Licenses should be more available to resents first

Lion hunting should be allowed year round in Black Hills fire protection district and land owners with livestock should be given a licence for half price

Lion in my yard this morning. Re-open Custer State Park airport!

Lions are a extreme threat to deer and elk - should be treated as pests for control

Lions belong in the ecosystem.

Lions only pose an unacceptable risk to stock pets, game animals when population of lions is too high.

Lions preform an important ecological function in the ecosystem by removing sick deer on a year-round basis

Listen to livestock landowners, they know the land & environment best

Live in urban, work in rural with a large number of livestock. Have not seen anything to bring mountain lion concern in our area. 15,000 acres observed, mountain and canyon like terrain.

Live stock on the ranch we own, but not where I currently live.

Lived in the Black Hills for 25+ years in very rural area and have only seen 1 lion in our area! I don't trust GFP numbers for harvest as to an overpopulated mountain lion problem.

Lived on a ranch for a good portion of my life mt lions never bothered the cattle (coyotes didn't either)

Livestock is a big consideration

Livestock owners should be allowed to protect their stock on their own land.

Living most of my life in western SD, I have never seen a mountain lion while hiking, bicycling, or walking, but I'm sure they have seen me as our neighbors had a young mountain lion on their back patio. As a kid, hiking all over the hills and Sturgis, we never worried about mountain lions. It seems to have become more of an issue since the last 1990s/early 2000s. Why? Were they always here, just housing/development forced them to be more visible? Were they introduced/re-introduced in the area? We also have deer and turkey in our neighborhood, when they aren't visiting the neighborhood, I wonder if a mountain lion in in our area.

Long survey

Loss of habitat due to development in future may be a concern?

M lion move around alot hard to say!

Maintaining a healthy populations of mountain lions helps the economy and environment of the Black Hills a like.

Make some time slots to use dogs through out season in BHFPD by draw like CSP seasons

Manage cats - whatever it takes

Manage lions more aggressively in high population areas. Let them flourish in more remote locations of Black Hills and/or prairies.

Maybe increase public awareness of mtn lions nearer population centers as people population increases. Folks new to the Black Hills may be ignorant of the mtn lion population and need to understand our impact to the mtn lion's home.

Migration of lions out of the Black Hills is a good indicator of carrying capacity. Game cams should be distributed to private property on the fringes for detection.

More concerned about lions population expanding.

More information is needed on how much mortality to livestock occurs. Also, what about compensation to ranchers for losses that don't involve hunting.

More tags should be given to residents rather than nonresidents

Mountain lion are part of the animal ecosystem live with them.

Mountain lion killing should not be a source of state revenue.

Mountain lion population is over populated around our neighborhood in the Black Hills.

Mountain lion population needs to be controlled - hunting with dogs is the best method for control - It works!

Mountain lions are a keystone species and thus crucial to our ecosystem here. However, the proper management of them is also important to control their population. With no natural predator, hunting by humans is the best option and preserves the hunting tradition in SD.

Mountain lions are a threate to California people

Mountain lions are beautiful animals. Rarely seen by most people. They should not be hunted for sport.

Mountain lions are beautiful but equally dangerous - we need the habitat to keep them which also keeps them and us safe

Mountain lions are beautiful creatures that should not be over hunted.

Mountain lions are important part of our environment. Humans are the threat to our environment. Humans ruin it we are the monsters.

Mountain lions are part of the chain, we need to keep the population balanced and in syn with the other animals that we hunt in South Dakota.

Mountain lions DO NOT pose unacceptable risks to ungulates, livestock, pets, or people who adequately protect them. Yeah, I'm one who believes people should protect their livelihoods instead of killing magnificent predators. West River residents are always about the hordes of deer, and ranchers need to stop believing they're guaranteed a living in the Bill of Rights.

Mountain lions have a right to exist. without being hunted.

Mountain lions have NO PLACE acceptable in the Black Hills or SD.

mountain lions help keep the deer population under control. Not enough information given in this survey to answer some questions.

Mountain lions were here before people I would imagine. Enough control to maintain safety should suffice.

Moved to outskirts of Hermosa. New comers wanted chickens. Don't blame the lions for coming in for chicken dinner.

Mt lion walks through our yard and around our house. We are worried about our safety. Can mt lions be relocated?

Mt. lions are an important part of the natural ecosystem. I do agree that they can pose a threat to humans/livestock/pets - they have an important role.

Mtn lions are a part of a healthy functioning ecosystem. As we have removed most other apex predators (bear, wolves) lions perform a crucial role in keeping our ? herds healthy.

Mtn lions are an absolute threat to deer and elk populations. Hunting should be the same as coyote requirements. Open the season up the same as we do for coyotes.

Mtn lions scare me more than grizzlies, moose and my mother - but they have a place in the ecosystem. Education is probably the way to remind people of how to be respectful and not set up mtn lions for trouble by their own habits/ignorance.

My comments in part 6 cover my opinion. These mountain lions were well within the city limits of the town of Custer. But thank you for taking the time to put this survey together to get our feedback.

My concerns is for pets. Every year we see signs of lion taking deer. We don't want hunters or lions near our pets.

My husband and I retired in 1999 and moved from Lincoln County to a home just east of Custer. At first, we heard that a lioness had had cubs at the rough terrain at Sylvan Lake. We didn't believe it. They are secretive and night creatures. More and more people started seeing them. I have only seen three lions in 25 years. Vehicles kill them occasionally. The last several years, we Custer people have seen almost NO lions because of your too many lion hunt licenses out there. The custer "hunters" love their guns and love killing animals. When your first hunts were allowed, the gleam in every Custer hunter's eyes were glittering and eager. Please allow diversity!

My husband works for the USFS and is walking to tower sites often in the Black Hills He has never encountered a mountain lion.

My job keeps me from actively hunting lions but someday I think I would enjoy it

My trust of the GFP is low because we were told years ago (before the mountain lion season began) that there were no mountain lions when we knew there were. The same thing is happening with bears and wolves now. Just be honest about it.

N/A - Just keep the cats!

NA

Need more information on the current population of lions in the hills. Where are they concentrated more. If populations are high around the urban interface, consideration should be given for a larger harvest in those areas.

Need to allow dog hunting

need to have more deer harvest in urban areas

Need to increase hunter safety/firearms courses for folks and have a type of firearms report course for folks. Encountered a few that cannot shoot/aim/safety handle a firearm and have no business hunting. People think by watching the Outdoor Channel they know all there is to know about hunting. I stopped hunting due to all the non-shooting types that pull the trigger and don't take the time to ID the target and processed. Have a Nice Day!!

Need to keep pressure on cats so they stay wild not like cal. and co. I'm more concerned with the possibility of wolves moving in. They would do sever damage to wildlife and stock as they have in other states?

Never had any problems with domestic animals have seen a deer or two over the years that was suspect

No

No blood, no foul.

No Dogs!! Keep lion hunting ethical for those creatures. The season should start in Oct, Nov, Dec. That extra few months would help reach a set quota. December season start would be a good start.

No hound hunting No outside/out of state don't want to see it commercialized No trapping

No hunting with dogs. Let the men and women be real hunters.

No livestock here. Our lots are two acers in size and the canyon is narrow. I was a principle of a school in Sioux City Iowa. I was there for 25 years.

No mountain lions at all, so no hunting licenses would be needed at all!

No trapping please! It is in humane. I live here to new the beauty of wildlife and nature.

Non-Resident hunters should not be allowed to hunt lions we have enough resident hunters with want to hunt.

none

None

Not a hunter

Not knowing the numbers i feel im unable to answer alot of these questions

Not sure how valid a survey like this will be helpful. Most of us do not have the valid resource to make an educated, unbiased decision.

Not sure if it is already a program however I believe a mentoring program to recruit and educate new hunters into the world of lion hunting would be a benefit to expand knowledge as well as economic benefit

Now when you go out walking you have to carry a weapon guns in the Black Hills

Now why would we have mountain lions here we can't have chickens and the wild turkeys and deer want to bring them in

obeying wildlife and hunting to maintain proper populations. food and enjoyment need to be a part of SD

Ok ? my efforts. I am getting older.

Oops - didn't see this area - put any comments on previous page - to reiterate: I think the people in charge of keeping track of the lion population are professionals and/or area residents in those areas. Unless you have a valid reason for not wanting them (losing lots of your livestock, for example) I believe mountain lions serve a purpose in the ecosystem and help keep a balance in nature. I don't know about hurting people. Most of the time, I think some people probably but not always, visitors who don't listen to warnings that mt lions are "wild" animals and get too close to them and/or their babies.

Optimal lion population would prevent decrease/loss in other game animals

Overall GFP does a good job but there are too many lions and they are too used to people. Hunting them with dogs will cut the numbers and make them respect or fear people.

People move to the forest knowing wild animals live there and things happen then they complain

People move to the woods and expect to make it into a suburbia type environment. I have had one lion and one black bear in my yard in all my years and consider that a gift that I was able to observe them. Amazing animals. This is their home first - I keep track of my dog and cat! I am respectful.

people need to be aware of their surroundings when living in the country not only for lions, snakes skunks ect. watch where you walk and pay attention.

Pets are our thing

Please allow hunting with hounds in all districts with strict harvest quotas.

Please continue to manage the mountain lion and all game populations here in SD so that we as SD residents can continue to hunt and enjoy them.

Please do not allow snares or traps. That is incredibly cruel. Its also dangerous to recreationists thinkers that hike w/their dogs. I do not want my dog to die in my arms, in a trap or share only so a hunter can say the got a lion. He happened to a friend. How devastating. I also don't know what the BH Fire District includes, all of the BH? and I have no idea how may lion hunter there were in 22-23. Thank you for asking the public for their opinions.

Please do not cancel our majestic cats! I'm tired of cancel culture!

Please do not let over population occur or persist.

Please do not snare - trap - hunt with dogs or hunt at night. Inhuman!

Please don't allow night hunting! Also, it should be limited to SD residents only.

Please HELP educate the public that feeding game (deer) within city limits promote a safety hazard as the deer stop naturally foraging and congregate in large groups depending on corn, hay and high protien cattle feed provided by mis-guided residents for their personal enjoyment not thinking about health welfare of the wild game or safety of their community in cars, walking on sidewalks and ultimately attract lions.

Please protect this beautiful animal.

Population control important in all animals. Thanks for doing the survey and I think, good animal management.

Prairie dogs are a bigger problem than lions

protect the big cat

Providing current and previous annual mountain lion numbers would be useful. When we are in the Black Hills which we are frequently I am always concerned about a mountain lion encounter yet I've never seen one. I have walked over fresh tracks from a lion in the early morning snow - once since 2006.

Quotas are to be reached, get dogs out there. Rip the bandage off and harvest cats with dogs. Hardly any cats get killed in rhe southern hills due to lack of snow. When we get snow dogs would harvest them. Get units to reach quotas.

raise dogs

Ranchers should be able to protect their livestock. People should be cognizant and responsible for their pets. State should be managing prey for the predators - people should be responsible for their own safety and respectful of nature. Please keep me on your list.

Regardless of location (I live in Hot Springs) I have seen Mountain lion(s) movements (tracks & scat). There can and should be peaceful co-existence with mtn lions - ranchers, livestock owners, and more rural SD residents should have 1st or higher priority for culling or diminishing lion numbers - as being most negatively impacted and most likely knowledgeable of their movements and habitats.

Remove me from mailings please

retired rancher

Right now its the coyotes that seem to be a problem.

satisfied

Satisfied game fish and parks work with lions

SD Game Fish Parks seems intent on eliminating mountain lions in the Black Hills. The thrill of the kill is winning. I worry more about the 2 legged predators when hiking the hills than the 4 legged variety.

SDGFP does a fantastic job managing fish & wildlife due to their professional conservation officers and biologists. Keep up the good work.

Seam to be doing good job, a thought 1 Or 2 draws where youth guide hunt with dogs with GFP offer around or in a certain area, a special deer for fund raiser like some states, big horn sheep, fund raiser do for

See comment on #6

See item #6.

See mt lions but never a problem. Use common sense when hiking on having livestock.

See mt lions often on my property in the Black Hills (Hanna Road)

Seems like there are more sightings of ML's in our development areas. And I've used a game camera in central hills for 30 years and only captured ML's last 2 years.

seems that our turkey population cycles with deer population which suggests lion presence rather than coyote pressure or CWD. Ranch along Battle Creek east of Hermosa

Since the 2015/2016 season the kill limit has been 100 animals. The number of animals killed has been half of that or less even though, since the 2019/2020 season, the actual hunting season has been longer. This leads me to suspect that the estimate of the lion population is inaccurate and that the actual number may be lower. According to the Wildlife Informer the "population (BH lion population of 277 animals) is stable for now, but if mortality rates stay the same it will be difficult for the population to remain stable." The implication here is that if the actual number of kills reached the set limit the population of lions would crash. From the questionnaire I gather that GFP is considering expanding the hunt by using dogs, trapping, etc. If the Wildlife Informer is correct the GFP should be looking to reduce the number of animals killed. I do not believe dogs, traps, and night hunting should be allowed for "recreational" hunting. However, if there is a problem animal then use the most efficient means to deal with it safely. My overall impression is that the GFP bows to the politics of the hunting lobby and economic wishes of politicians rather than utilizing management policies which would achieve a healthy sustainable population of lions.

Since the quota you set is never reached, maybe put a bounty back on the lions.

Something need to keep deer herds smaller

Sometime there will be a tragedy with the lions

South Dakota needs to stop the youth doe tags under 11 years old. It is completely depleting the deer population on public land. Now people blame the mountain lions for low deer numbers. Mountain lions have not changed. The way GFP manages deer populations have. The deer numbers are the lowest I have ever seen in 32 years. Now private land owners are locking out hunters. Public land has become horrible to hunt. I stopped recommending friends to hunt South Dakota.

Spotted one single lion: May 2008 during commute to work. The cat came out of the Hill City cemetery, ran across Deerfield Rd, passed in front of a row of townhouses, and proceeded south west uphill.

Still new to the area. I'm not sure if I have a opinion on lion hunting yet

Stop buying up private land and taking off the tax rolls

Stop hunting in general

Stop hunting mountain lions

Stop the killing!

Stop trophy hunting.

Strongly agree that trapping/snaring and hunting with hounds should be outlawed

Strongly oppose using dogs to hunt mountain lions and strongly oppose multiple tags

Survey question #4 - I strongly disagreed because of the question's lead word. There is no "tradition." In the past the hunting predators was an effort to exterminate (hence no wolves). If that is the "way of life" in question, I strongly oppose it. Mountain lion hunting should not be a state industry. The lions were here first, people need to learn to respect. As for risk: there is always a risk, but it is not unacceptable. In fact, the real problem is fragmentation as the results of land development. Perhaps the state should consider a program in cooperation with other agencies and organizations that would prevent the loss of forest acreage to luxury homes and commercial.

Take all info into consideration. In low population years for the lion, permit #'s should decrease. If lion numbers are high and animals become weak or unhealthy due to overcompetition then permits could increase. I appreciate you sending this survey. It is important to include residents' opinions. Thank you.

Take economy out of the equation we must all be stewards of these resources for the future. Put a couple of "regular" sportsmen on the commission instead of having all self serving wealthy landowners.

Thank you

Thank you for considering all opinions and wildlife in your plans

Thank you for sending out this survey

Thank you for taking public comment from the lion hunting community.

Thank you for this opportunity

Thank you for this survey. Need more control of excess ? lions coming into housing & city areas

Thank you for your efforts at managing wildlife in the Black Hills N. F. The lion harvest is an important part of managing lion populations.

Thank you, for allowing me to express my opinion.

Thank you, for sending out this survey. I plan to go to your website to learn more about how we are managing mountain lions populations.

Thank you, for the opportunity to voice my thoughts.

Thank you, it is nice that you care what residents think.

Thank you!

Thank you.

Thank you. Hope you are having a great day.

Thanks for all of your hard work! It is appreciated!

Thanks for all that you do!

Thanks for all your efforts over the years to manage and control all our wildlife so hunting opportunities exists for all our residents.

Thanks for asking our opinion, Dr. Buckley. I hope you and your experts decide these things, using your education and experience - and not the influence of hunters - as many of them want to shoot a lion simply for a trophy and with no regard for the species.

Thanks for asking!

Thanks for asking.

Thanks for digging into this and potentially looming at other options in hunting mt lions.

Thanks for the chance to comment.

Thanks for the opportunity

Thanks for the opportunity for the input

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the mt lions survey mt. lions should remain a part of our wildlife spectrum in SD if we can maintain it at an acceptable population!

Thanks for the survey

Thanks for this questionnaire & this chance for me to voice my feelings on this subject!

Thanks for this survey.

The cats belong here

The do good people that only think for there cause do none of us good

The GFP cannot be trusted. How many more shooting ranges are they going to try to sneak thru the legislation and a bunch of gun nuts!

The mt lion population needs to be reduced in the BH.

The mt lion population should never impact livestock or our humane populations. These predators need to be managed by giving hunters opportunities to do it. It can have a positive economic impact statewide.

The mt. lion population seemed to go down a lot with the mt. lion season.

The only reason I buy a license is so I could shoot one on my private land and be able to keep it. I don't hunt in the BHFPD

The reason history repeats itself is humans don't learn. Lions were obliterated because they killed people, livestock, poultry, and pets

The remote areas of the Rocky Mountain Range is a wonderful place to be concerned about the thriving of mountain lions and other dangerous predators. In densely populated areas, like the Black Hills of South Dakota, the safety of human and livestock life is vastly more important than high minded ideals upon what healthy lion population management may or may not look like.

The rules regarding hunting and our general interactions with wild animals seem thoughtful and correct. However, the enforcement of the rules from the National Forest, the state and the county is totally 'hick' lax. We complained for years, since our arrival, about a neighbor having a salt lick right off the road, in this yard. Not only did his habit draw in all manner of wild life & cause a driving hazard, it was only at the point that our cameras caught a pride of 4 lions together that our neighbor got spooked and removed the salt. We have complained about the same neighbor night hunting the lions he draws in, and no one neighbor night hunting the lions he draws in, and no one ever cares to lay down the law. There is also lax enforcement over legal boundaries for all hunters and their shooting close to our house concerns us much more than any mountain lion. The threads of civility are made of law and order. If we fail to enforce the laws we've written, civility will certainly reflect that. let's be civil and follow laws.

The situation needs to be continuously monitored

The turkey deer and elk in my area are disappearing ... hard to blame that on just the coyotes.

The whole goal to managing a healthy and substable population starts with proper management! The best way to accomplish this is to use all tools and methods to best of those abilities. Using boot hunters, hounds are both need to insure a manageable population of cats.

There are enough deer to support both human and lion hunting them

There are no natural predators of the mountain lion. Thus they to constantly be controlled or population will explode if food sources is good.

There are too many coyotes in the Black Hills. you need to deal with them as well.

There are too many deer. More mtn lions might thin the deer down. There's not a lot of car wrecks because of mtn lions.

There are too many lions near populated areas, mostly due to the fact that that is where the deer are.

There are way to many lions in the Hills region. When you have to go outside with a gun while your pets are out side because there have been multiple sightings of lions in town mean's there are way to many and not afraid of humans or dogs! Dogs need to be allowed to hunt lion's to keep them under control and harvest adult lions when using dogs.

There is a reason nature works the way it works. There is a balance. Upset the balance and problems occur. "Mans" solutions are rarely best.

There is more than you will ever know. You don't even see a deer in AZ anymore!

There is too many lions in S Dak. They need to be managed better. This is 2024 not 1824 fewer.

There should be some kind of compensation for livestock losses to lions.

There's always public pressure to increase the take of large predators especially wolves and cougar. I don't know if this influences SDFGP cougar policies. Also, I am not an advocate for or against hunting cougar in the Black Hills, since it's part of my job.

They don't bother us on this ranch so far but I know there are a few around. We don't want an overpopulation but we don't want them all killed.

They need to be in the hills with us. Just manage the population as you are.

They will kill livestock if hungry.

Think what you are doing in fair - don't want too many does for use unless the population increases.

This person does not live at this address. I have lived here since 2022. Please update your records. Thank you!

Though I understand the need to protect information at times I generally am suspicious of what statistics and the government publishes for ? for nature. I believe in collective conservation efforts & want to trust those in leadership are working for the betterment of our wildlife populations.

Thy ar a lot of cats in my area. Fall River county. Lived here 3 years and have seen seventh cats and cats kill. I think they should be controled a little better.

To GFP I live on the edge of Deadwood. We have a cat come through once in a while, walk around the yard and leave. We also have deer and turkeys that hang around. We appreciate their company. But now people are moving in and building mansions in the mountains destroying their habitat. Destroying what they come here to see and soon they will want to get rid of the wildlife because it will be leaving a mess in their grass and trimming their trees and shrubs. Pretty sad but it will happen. People let their house cats roam wild. I haven't seen a jack rabbit in Deadwood or Lead in three years, our cotton tails are gone also "SAD". We need to keep our natural habitat and bring back our wild life world wide - we need to preserve our ECO system "SERIOUSLY" I drive through the Spearfish canyon at 5AM going to work. I have had cars pass me going at least 60 miles per hour. trust me, they are not thinking about deer or any wild life bring on the road But yet our wild life gets the blame "Pretty sad again" I believe Rapid again killed 200 deer because they hurt private property and getting hit by cars from people driving too fast and not paying attention there again killing the deer is the easy way out Maybe insurance should give a yearly bonus to people who don't hit any deer - I don't know. Any way thank you for your time

To respect the animals we must thin thin the animals

Too many big cats are moving to urban areas and becoming a nuisance to pets.

too many cougars here and too many deer also

Too many in Spearfish

Too many lion lovers in the Black Hills - personally feel that puts pressure on GFP to limit the # of cats taken. Deer and coyotes are destroying the deer and elk population. Their management (deer and elk) should be a priority over mtn lions.

Too many lion lovers that moved here and we personally feel influence the decisions GFP makes on the management of the lions. They should be more concerned about our deer and elk population than keeping transients happy!!

Trap coyotes

Trapping is cruel. Dogs are cruel. Mountain lion hunting is sick! Humans are morbid - killing mountain lions is a mental illness not a necessary way to exist.

Trapping, using dogs and night hunting are/or should be/ repugnant to any self respecting hunter. WE need mountain lions to keep our deer & elk populations healthy

Treat them like any other predator

Trust experts that manage wildlife to do so with all tools and means appropriate i.e. hunting and allowing farmers and ranchers to protect their livestock

Trying to balance mountain lion/deer and elk populations along with encroaching human habituation is difficult! Good luck in your efforts!

Turkey population is out of control in hot springs. Bring in the lions and wolves! The city is too dumb to figure it out!

Turn out the Hounds!

Two years ago, I saw a young mountain lion outside my kitchen window before work. It was annoying to see. I yelled and it was gone in a flash. I live in city limits of Custer. I don't feel that they pose a threat at this time. I just worry about little kids, my pets, and rabbits but the lions seem very scared of us humans. I'm not too worried about them.

Undesirable, Lions roaming streets of a city. Desirable, Lions part of nature's beauty outside of city.

Unfortunately after government agencies have lied to us they can no longer be trusted. Tell the truth! Then people can make informed decisions!

Unless a lion becomes a problem or danger to humans they should be allowed to survive. If they predate livestock - reimburse the owners. We are encroaching on their land and have to live with it and some livestock loss.

Until the number of lions that are killed by autos? or as "problem cats" or are orphaned by the harrasing ? of their mothers are counted AGAINST the "quota", South Dakota will continue to destroy its cougar population.

Until you can get the tourism dollars out of the true members the lion population reported will always be squared.

Use dogs to reach the quota.

Walks like a duck quacks like a duck and been my pleasure to add him to my plate!!

Way to many mountain lions. Hunting season should coincide with deer season and beyond.

Way too many people on ATV's getting into the back country where many different animal species have lived since the beginning of time. They are pushing the mountain lions food source into area where they would not normally hunt. It is in these areas where they are coming into contact humans and pets and this has caused part of the problem. The other issue is people being allowed to build homes in wilderness areas. This is destroying natural habitat and its eco system. Open pit mining is an issue and so is logging. I live in Lead most of the life spent the majority of the free time in the woods. I've seen tracks and scat but I've never spotted one in the woods. I'm sure they have seen me over the years. I've seen probably 12 or more in town.

We appreciate how the mtn lion population has been controlled with the hunting season. Before that there were too many cats and we feared for the smaller children. We saw way too many cats back then.

We can hunt these cats pretty liberally and the population will always come back. I see not threat to humans unless we let them get of hand like before there was a season. It was not a "tradition" until then either. The only "attack" documented was one they could neither confirm nor deny. The guy probably was too embarrassed to admit a woman tore him up. I want the doe season back and for the youth and mentored seasons to be pulled in the Hills if no one else can hunt them. The low deer numbers in the BHFPD in the to be addressed.

We continue to build into their territory. Why should they be killed for something that we do?

We cure in the mountains in Keystone and have a lion visit concessionary. We have never fort throughout because we protect its space.

We do not hunt at all and never have.

We do not need mountain lion or wolves in the black hills.

We don't hunt and no nothing about SD mountain lions to contribute to this.

We had a mountain lion on the neighbors ring camera cross their drive way heading for my side yard this past fall. I've lived there for 29 years, it was a little concerning.

We had a ranch in Colorado and each year I would loose several head of sheep to mountain lion and bear. There has to be an environmental balance.

We have a cabin in BHFPD and we're concerned when we walk or hike the hills, about coming in contact with a lion

we have a cabin in the hills, never seen one but have seen tracks of all shapes and sizes. the young hungry or injured are the ones you find in town

We have a foal coming it has been a rather large investment. Don't need it to be killed for a lion.

We have been seeing lots of mountain lions around our property

We have lost calves to mountain lions in the past.

We have outdoor cats and dogs; some cats have disappeared. We have seen mt lions tracks on our 5 ac. lot only once.

We have pets

We have seen mountain lions and there have been no issues until hunters pushed them out of the hills into our neighborhood. So called ethical hunters I used to consider friends admitted they purposely did not apply for big game tags to prevent any pressure or harvesting game for the mountain lions. Pathetic. Night hunting is absolutely wrong. You are allowing idiots to hit them when they are only able to forage for food. The increase in people in the hills forces them to stay inactive and only come out at night. If you don't want them, just end it now and save the suffering. I have trapped and harvested furs growing up. Unfortunately, there are too many people with no ethics. I am against trapping for any type of species.

We live in the Black Hills near hwy 44 west. While we have not encountered lions on our property we have had reports from neighbors. that they have so we understand we could be impacted by the presence of these animals. Just the same we feel it is important that we preserve these animals in the wild to promote an accurate and healthy eco-system.

We live in the forest & co-exist mountain wild life. We love seeing & would like to see it, including mountain lions thrive for years to come.

We live in the Hermosa foothills and have had numerous lions on our property and in our area. One killed our neighbor's cat, another killed a stray (awesome) but left its remains in our yard as scat. I grew up in central Nevada and worked as a ranch hand for a number of years where lions are hunted constantly with dogs. In all my time riding in the mountains I only saw one lion running at a great distance. Since I have moved here I have seen five, two in one night and one in broad daylight. My good friend got pictures of 7 different lions on his trail cameras on 40 acres in the same season! I like lions but we have way too many here. They are overcrowded and acting against their normal patterns because of it. Worry lions are good lions and avoid people!

We need apex predators

We need dogs to hunt cats.... go count the mule deer in the BH read Utah's deer plan. If you want more deer, kill cats...

We need more research to determine the health of population and impacts on other species

We need the cats, not only for the balance of nature, but for the fact that the mountain lions need them, as they do, to know god's wild are there, long before we were. The hills will be lonesome without them as they would the elk and deer. They have killed no person and enhance our lives - they are beautiful creatures and until they do harm, need to be allowed to live in this land as we do. Thank you for letting me have a voice!

We need them

We need to be realistic about a balance in nature - MAN is the biggest problem!

WE need wolves too!

We see a mountain lion about every 6 months along Fall River about 50 ft from our house. Always in the winter.

We see the lions occasionally on the security camera - I know they are out there. We accept that. Be smart be safe - but don't try to eliminate the natural component.

We see too many of them

We the people have encroached on their habitat, therefore they should not have to suffer consequences because of our demand for land

We understand that lions have to be managed to assure healthy elk populations, deer probably less so. Our area is over-run with deer, but our resident lions have been taken by hunter we personally know and the population is so small no new lions have moved in. GF&P is in our opinion, markedly over-estimating populations and certainly allowing over- harvesting!

We understand the need for a healthy population but we would like to know what GFP are doing about the lions that are coming into town and pose a risk to people and pets. Especially in the valley where some people have chickens and there is a few pastures with cattle. Whether this information is useful or not, we appreciate you asking the public's opinion about this

We were just talking about m.l. here at home and why people in Hill City FB page are asking about them b/c of feeding their deer. They thought having reg deer was a bad thing b/c m.l. would come. But m.l. are not bad. Just don't let your pets out at night. If a m.l. kills livestock I do think that type of kill is something that requires attention! You can't have a m.l.. Keep killing your \$ livelihood. You should be able to kill it after informing GFP. Thanks.

We're impressed you're doing this work! We understand people are hard to please. and are probably pulling in different directions. waiting for wolves and grizzlies to come back!

We've lived in an area in Colorado with over populations of mt lions. We've seen many many of them in person. We've safely raised small livestock in that environment. We've also seen what happens when out-of-state permits generate enough revenue that those hunters are given preference over locals - and that's a HUGE disservice to locals.

we've lost pets that we loved to lions but believe that is part of natural selection. we are the intruders.

When lion season first opened it up it was published in the paper. I realize you can go to website and see how many have been harvested, but that is not easy sometimes. Would like to see a better system.

When will we see the results of this survey? Will the GF&P actually follow these recommendations?

While I'm not opposed to hunting, there needs to be a fair game between animal & man and a humane game at that i.e. guns & bows as opposed to snares & traps. And while I'd prefer not to cross paths with a mountain lion, I don't believe they have overpopulated to the point where they pose a threat to humans or are causing unbalance to the ecosystem. From what I understand, they err on the side of shying away from human contact and prefer to remain elusive. Thank you!

Will apply for a license next year. What is the status of bobcat hunting which I'm interested in.

With as many people that like to use the Black Hills we don't need to worry about our kids and pets of ourselves while enjoying the hills. I've had a large male in my yard - scary - they have no fear.

With more people moving to SD it's pushing all wildlife out of their habitat. Balance and understanding of us vs. wildlife through education is key, we can all exist in harmony. Thank you!

With so many people moving more into the hills, out of city limits, they need to be aware to manage their animals - pets. The natural animals, such as mt lions, can be present and are searching for food. We need to respect the wild animals in their environment.

Wolves are more of a concern to me. There is no reason to allow wolves in SD. Our elk population is so low I have not been able to draw a tag in 35 years of applying.

Would appreciate CSP & BHF to help with tax structure in surrounding areas that provide fire, EMT, ambulance and sheriff services.

Would it be possible to promote or increase hunting in areas where mountain lions are coming into towns and threatening pets and becoming an issue? Seems the northern hills have more trouble.

Would like to hunt mountain lions in the future.

Would like to see alot less coyotes - maybe a bounty like nest robbers

Would like to see mountain lions never become less in our state then now

Would like to see the season open during deer season as I usually go south Jan 1 thru April 1.

You are an agency responsible for keeping part of our nature in balance. We all need to trust your research and guidance. I believe if a lion poses a risk to livestock, people or pets, one should be allowed to shoot the lion out of protection and should let GFP know.

You do a good job on all wild life.

You folks no more than I

You had better keep your lions off my property where my kids play or they will be in grave danger

You need urban, suburban, rural, and very rural at the very least to be in touch with the current population and growth of SD. This applies to all thoughts on how property in SD is best used.

Your expertise is essential to answer these confidently

Your job is not easy, and over all I think you do a good job.

Appendix C: Hunter Open-Ended Comments

I think an Archery hunt with the use of Dogs and a special draw tag for that would be a useful management tool. The hunter being able to sex the animal before shooting.

Thank you for caring about our opinions.

"Keep up the good work" Have lottery for 5-10 guided hunts with dogs in the Black Hills. No more than 5-10 Charge more for the lottery \$1,000-\$1500. Apply proceeds to youth hunting training. Let's bring archery classes back in our school systems

A lion killed one of our pigs. We killed the lion. Have had no other signs of lions around. You guys are doing a great job. I think you should make changes where it makes your job easier not harder. Dog hunting would bring on a bunch of headaches for you guys. We live outside of Whitewood and have quite a few lions around.

A lion pushed one of our horses through a cross-fence, severely injuring it.

a mountain lion killed deer and drug into a green house in broad day light. I have pictures in can show you.

Again I like and agree with the current rules in place to protect the animal. As someone that rarely hunt deer with a rifle because I believe it is to easy. I believe mountain lions have a far better chance of survival. I believe the amount of deer tags that are issued in the hills is insane and hunting in the hills poses a greater threat to the hunter rather than the animal. Hunters are not being held accountable for their continued stupidity while considering other hunters.

Again, I really enjoy my Elk Hunt in and feel mountain lions. Do not balance nature the way they used to in today's environment. I am also concerned of my safety during very early morning hours in the woods with mountain lions running around and possibility of attack. My daughter lives in Wyoming and I'd like to go Elk Hunt in with her out there but because they have let the grizzly bears get out of control And mountain lions etc. oh I actually care for my safety out there and do not go. So I would like to see elk permits, double or triple availability in South Dakota and if mountain lions are one of the factors, then they should be put at the bottom of the protection list . This is because of what the grizzly bears have done to elk hunting in Wyoming. It is very dangerous. My daughter says the Bears have become smart about rifle shots and actually head towards them to steal away big game and endanger people. So for the people who do not hunt, why don't you get up early in the morning and go walking around in the woods where there are known mountain lions and go by yourself. Have a good time.

All good

Allow dogs in the black hills year round until quota met

Allow hounds in the hills

Allow hunters to use dogs in the black hills.

Allow more tags for people to use dogs to control the population. This strategy has the highest success rate to better manage the population. Mountain lions are hard on other wildlife populations. More elk tags could be given out if the mountain lion population was decreased within the state.

Allow the use of dogs. Way better selective harvest. Make it a lottery draw just like CSP. Open regular season October 1 when elk season opens and you get people in the woods more frequently. Also gives you more of a chance to catch a snow event.

Allowing dogs in the black hills fire protection district to pursue cats would be a huge win! So would being able to hunt during deer season since that is when the most people are in the woods hunting.

Allowing dogs to be used would cut the cat population. People do not feel safe walking the Black Hills. Many vacationers have mentioned this.

Allowing hunting during deer season would be great, especially if you need to decrease overall lion numbers.

And cattle

Anytime I see "socially acceptable" in a question that is a red flag. Allowing the general population to make decisions about hunting and fishing is a huge concern. Look at Colorado, introducing even more wolves with an elk population already declining. The general public non hunters made that decision for Colorado DNR.

As a boot hunter I feel restricted in some capacities. I would like to see Trapping added but no lethal Trapping unless GFP felt the population was way out of hand. I would love to use mountain lion lures and urines to help create opportunities for cam traps to aid in the pursuit of lions. I also feel extremely limited by the closing of the trails in SD. For example I hunt custer peak and some of the best and fastest access to that area are "closed". I also have a lion that passes once a month between 8:30-9:30pm exactly 28-30 days apart. Because night hunting is not permitted my chances of securing that lion without snow is significantly lower. I think the system in place now is a well balanced system and changes should be heavily considered and carefully evaluated. Even opening up the things that help me do better when there is lack of snow could be abused by another. I'd also like to see a quota since everyone thinks the limit is the quota. I'd like to be emailed about areas experiencing mountain lion troubles. Ranchers and their location where they have problems with mountain lions. And I would definitely like to be updated about mountain lion attacks. If this information is available I would like to have access to it as I currently do not.

As a Hunter of deer, elk, antelope and turkeys for over 60yrs I view Mt. Lions as competitors, Not another hunting opportunity. Thank you.

As a resident I've been trying to draw a Black Hills any deer tag, can't wen draw this license, due to all deer being killed by mountain lions unlimited lions should be killed every year 365 days under the deer population has increased where a resident can apply and get any deer tag in Black Hills you would make more income on deer tag's. Then you do on lion tag years ago all you had to due to purchase a tag over the counter, this is so mess up also I probably will never draw a any deer tag in the black hills again the system is so mess up Have to bye preference points to hunt that is bull crap, go back to the old days of drawing tags kill all the lions also this would help the elk population.

As I mentioned Elk and Deer generate more income for state and local business. So we need to keep lions in check cuz they can wreck deer and elk populations (mostly the younger ones) contrary to popular belief they don't just feed on cripples and the sick.

As someone who enjoys cutting trucks I think bringing hounds in would ruin the intense nature of truly hunting. Anyone can kill a tree'd lion. Leaving hounds out of it make it more of a sport. I've hunted nearly everything in SD. Lion hunting is still my favorite & I have yet to shoot one. Thank you

Black Hills Quota is not enough and does not get filled. After boots on the ground season use dogs to fill quota. Let us kill cats year round in the hills. They are killing our critters every day and we should be able to kill them year round. There are WAY more cats in our Black Hills Than what the GFP says.

Boot hunters are not keeping up/meeting the quote. Thank you

Boot hunting is acceptable to me, dogs not so much. Do not favor nonresident lion hunters, particularly with dogs.

Cat season is already open during deer hunting season except for the black hills. I feel it should stay that way.

Cats are to populated.

Cattle horses and several pets

Cattle and Horses

Cattle and horses and have confirmed losses in baby calves.

Completely satisfied with the current management. If there's livestock depredation would like to see the use of hounds & state license hunter remove the problem animal if the depredation is excessive.

Concerns for the future of South Dakota Hunting & Fishing. • Reinstate brood count for the pheasant population. Follow science not tourism. • Remove nonresidents from free fishing weekend in South Dakota. Depleting our resources without anything in return. • Reinstate Deer license drawing prior to 2018 changes. The deer hunting public never accepted or approve this proposal it was rejected by 81% from public comments. • Lions are not the control method for CWD, follow the same format for coyotes, no season, no limit. • Add amendment to the South Dakota constitution, make Hunting and fishing a constitutional right for South Dakota. 21 states already guarantee this right, we do not. GF&P opposed this amendment. Why? • Make the secretary of the GF&P elected position. The world and people are changing, so it is more important that the conservation groups stick together. We have more people moving from other states to South Dakota that do not hold our tradition and values, it is important that we protect those rights as well as our heritage.

Cow calf operation

Csp model should be used to black hills, limited number of hound hunters for short periods of time. Lions are a public resource mostly on public land boot hunters can share without having much negative impact on their experience.

Deer numbers are way too low due to disease and over hunting and that is what needs attention urgently not a change to mtn lion season.

Deer population has been dropping significantly for the past 5+ years. Everyone has pictures of mountain lions on their game cameras but they are too elusive to hunt during the day. More aggressive methods of controlling the mountain lion population must be taken - trap, poison, dogs, night hunting, etc. I own 270 acres of tree covered Missouri River breaks that use to be excellent habitat for deer but has been reduced by 80% in the past few years. I am willing to allow hunters with dogs or whatever on my property to control lions.

did not go

Do a draw system for tags in BHFPD

Do not allow dogs anywhere near private property. Change the season to allow hunting lions during deer season. Thanks.

Do not allow dogs, snares, night hunting. Out of state hunting. It is cruel to the animals. If you call yourself a hunter and you cannot get a lion with boots on the ground, day time then you're not worthy of to hunt them

Do not let wolves into this state :)

Do not open the hills to hounds! There are enough dedicated boot hunters that maintain areas well. I have boot hunted since the season started and can say with 100% confidence hound hunters would completely disrupt opportunities for people who either can't/won't pay. And opens the door for a flood of non-resident hunters even if they are filling "outfitter" tags or an equivalent. Hound hunting the park on the lottery is great. I am happy for those people that draw, but do not open public land to hound hunting. What you would see is a very small number of people completely take over the game and boot hunters would stand little to no chance. The line is already being blurred with the private to public pursuit.

Do not want to see lion populations increase outside of the Black Hills. Black Hills population should be controlled so deer, elk, and livestock populations do not suffer.

Dog use in greater BH area later in season would be acceptable. Allow boot hunters first access, then open it.

dogs

Dogs are the best way to hunt lions and that should be allowed on a much wider scale. The way the system is currently set up seems to be just a money maker on license fees. I buy one every year but don't hunt every year as the timing of snow in the Hills and work doesn't usually coincide.

Don't see the cat tracks that we use to in the early years of the season. I don't know if this of interest to you lots of coyotes and birds of prey (to many in my mind).

Don't trust much of what gfp is doing lately. Especially with the deer draw structure and removing pheasant brood counts. The only thing used to make management decisions for gfp is the almighty dollar and Kristi Noem. Coming from a long time republican that will no longer vote for anyone even remotely involved with her!

don't want my cats and dogs to be harmed or killed

Don't always trust the bureaucracy within the gf&p.

Don't commercialize lion hunting like we have everything else.

Don't let dog come into the hunt, do other things before it comes to dogs doing the hunting

Don't like the idea of hunting lions with dogs, snow mobiles, and would be open to allowing some lines to be shot during the deer season with a limit like there is in the early season.

Don't turn hunting mountain lions profitable for either individuals or the government. Keep it strictly managing the population utilizing hunters who find the challenge the primary reason for the hunt... not for profit.

Dont like dog hunting

East river (outside of the black hills)

eliminate the restriction for harvesting lion. 1. can't shoot one with spots 2. can't shoot one when paired up

Eradicate mountain lions from SD using any means necessary

expand the lion season to so it starts when deer season opens and make the number of allowed lion kills unlimited. Also allow the use of dogs statewide.

First of all our gfp doesn't manage any wildlife in South Dakota just money Just look at our deer numbers across the entire state especially east river where our numbers have been plummeting since 2019 and our gfp continues to sell antlerless deer tags why don't we shoot hen pheasants because there's too much money for the state of South Dakota GFP to lose from killing the baby factories. In all reality lions are probably the toughest of all the wildlife to manage when you really don't know the the total population of lions in the entire state or the Black Hills

fix the above question so more than one can be selected.

Get rid of the lions

Get things figured out game populations have decreased so bad for deer,elk,turkeys and antelope but you keep issuing tags for them but do nothing for decreasing predators

GF&P has lost credibility because of their handling of the mt lion population and lying to the public about the numbers!

GF&P is in a tough position. Lions represent the wild aspect of nature and that is in itself invigorating, but like waiting to put a traffic light up at a dangerous intersection until someone is severely injured or killed, we don't want to wait for a tragic person / lion encounter to realize we had a problem brewing. Good luck on your survey and I hope it helps to make some important decisions.

GF&P need to listen to people that do not benefit from decisions they make.

GFP do a good job in South Dakota

GFP has estimates on population but has no way of telling the full population. If there are problem cats in certain areas yes they should be targeted but not the population in a whole.

GFP has little respect for the land owner.

GFP is doing a good job and I appreciate all the efforts you put in to balance the many competing interests that exist when it comes to the management of wild game and predators. Thank you

GFP need to manage the lion populations and hunting like coyotes. and absolutely need to start allowing the use of dogs statewide. Most people cannot stalk (walk) and kill a lion, hills too ruff. Lions don't respond to e-calls like coyotes, rarely come to a call. If GFP allows the use of dogs, hunters could selectively harvest none nature cats, better reduce number in certain areas and generate better hunting opportunities. I hear a pretty good number of lions are killed by the same hunters every year. That a few hunters kill lions almost every year (8 to 10) in the past 15-20 years. I don't have an issue with this. But you almost have to be human mountain goat to walk lions down in the Black Hills. Which makes it too damn hard for us old hunters!

GFP needs to focus more on what most hunters are capable of harvesting or desire to hunt - elk & deer in the BHFPD. No introduction of any more predators and aim to increase elk and deer population.

Good season as is! Don't increase dog hunting.

good survey

Good survey

Grew up in SD hunting. Love west river hunting and would like a chance to get back to it.

had a mountain lion run my horse through a fence & had a large vet bill.

has sheep and cattle

Have no problems with cats so far.

Haven't kept up with mountain lion hunting much, so may not know all that I need to. Lived in a larger city for the past ten years, so haven't hunted much, but have moved back to a rural area so hope to hunt more.

Having the season open in the fall, during deer and elk season would help boot hunters fill the quota easily. I hunted deer in the hills for 20 days in November and could have shot two different mountain lions had the season been open. My suggestion has, and always will be to open it up to hound hunters in the spring, to fill the quota if necessary. This would give everybody a fair chance at harvesting a mountain lion every year, while also making sure we fill the quota.

Help me get one Thanks

Hound hunting needs to be opened up.

Hound hunting would allow a more selective harvest. It is really no different than using dogs for pheasants.

Hounds is a must for a healthy harvest! We may be at a healthy population but we do not have a healthy harvest at all. I strongly agree with the harvest of females but not lactating or immature cats. The way it is now the majority of the cats are harvested in areas they can reach in 30 minutes of the main towns. Units need to be established as well

Hounds man are the scrooge of the earth. They are vile and break the law constantly. Hound hunting should be outlawed in the BHFPD.

HOW MANY ELK AND DEER THEY KILL. HARD TO DRAW A HILLS DEER TAG. AND WE ALL KNOW THE YEARS IT TAKES FOR AN ELK TAG. USED TO HUNT HILLS DEER WHEN YOU BOUGHT THE TAGS ACROSS THE COUNTER. WHAT HAPPENED?

Hunting keeps mountain lions from becoming brazen!!

Hunting lions should be the same as hunting coyote. They kill too much game deer, elk & bobcats.

Hunting lions with hounds is certainly not as easy as society makes it seem. That's a long many faceted journey. I think you should strongly watch the harvest total and allow dog permits for people.

Hunting with dogs and being able to harvest additional cats would be beneficial.

Hunting with dogs is not fair Chase

Hunting with dogs would increase likelihood of success. but for most hunters they would have to rent dogs id "get a guide." I'm not ready to do this?

I agree that we need to control mountain lions. Even if we leave it at 1 lion per hunter I don't see what it matters how they harvest it. If a person like myself is better at trapping then hunting then why not let them harvest it that way. One nice thing about a trap is that we could release a young one or a female or just one that's not mature enough. Given no foot damage etc. Why allow everyone else to harvest them anyway they want but discriminate against the trapper for doing what he loves to do. And chances are that if harvested with a trap they will be dispatched ethically and humanely.

I agree with the current strategy and if the time comes where additional numbers are required to maintain levels then simply allow harvest during deer season. This will achieve goals with minimal negative impact or bad public relations

I agreed that gfp is trying to manage mountain lions for their healthy existence. Problem I see is deer and other big game are declining in a lot of areas and are not being managed well. With current management strategy and tag sale strategy I don't see populations rebounding anytime soon

I am a life long hunter but I don't agree with sport hunting.

I am a life long resident of South Dakota who has a real passion for the outdoors and the future generations of residents to enjoy our outdoors and quite frankly I see our SDGFP grossly mismanaging our wildlife and its resources to favor economic impact versus preserving our traditions and rights and opportunities that MANY South Dakota residents grow to love and reasons they choose to continue to reside here. Don't make SD a commercial only hunting opportunity (of which is the direction its moving) in the event to gain the all mighty dollar while killing the awesome opportunity we used all enjoy. There have been many bills and laws passed recently to indicate it is going that way.

I am a rancher just outside of the bhfpd, we have never had issues with livestock and lions. I have never killed a mountain lion, although I have seen a few on the ranch. I do support a healthy population inside the hills and out. We boarder Wyoming and they seem to do a fantastic job managing lions with hounds and quotas. Hounds are the only way to manage and maintain a healthy population of mountain lions. Hounds give hunters the opportunity to pass on a small lion or a lactating female. Boot hunters kill the first lion they see which is typically a young naive cat. Often a female. That is not the case with hounds. Hounds also keep lions in check, study's show that lions that have been hazed with dogs are less likely to have encounters with humans and pets. Look at the science, hounds it the only way to do this.

I am a retired WCD (Hill City ?) I advocated for limited hound hunting when I was still working. Open the season on Dec 1 every year for boot hunters. Then on March 1 let the hound hunters who should be registered with GFP fill the quota. March is our snow month normally every year anyway. Andi see no reason why non-residents shouldn't be able to hunt lions. At least if we have a March hound season.

I am I pretty avid hunter I do walk 90 percent more than most. Have seen only one lion in SD. Have seen a lot in WYO. I do believe they take out a lot of deer and elk but they have to eat just like us please do not let out of staters hunt. These animals are not here for ECONOMIC REASONS this includes all game animals and I believe all residents should have an equal chance of hunting no depending on the Dollars in there bank account they will spend. Thank you.

I am strongly opposed to opening lion hunting in the Black Hills to hound hunting. According to gfp the boot hunting has maintained the population to acceptable levels. Why are we discussing changing something that works. Hound hunting is under attack nation wide. Opening lion hunting to hounds is inviting unwanted negative publicity from across the country.

I appreciate the ability to hunt in the state

I believe a draw system similar to the CSP system for hound hunting would expand the opportunities and help meet harvest management goals better. If it was still a limited draw system that would help curb the concerns of it turning into a pay to play hunt. The boot hunters could still have their exclusive times to hunt as well. Snow ends up being the key to either style of hunting and boot hunters seem to only hunt hard during fresh snow events. I also think that it would increase statewide participation do to the exclusory of drawing the permit. One of the issues with the CSP hound hunt is the lions knowing and racing to the park boundary when the hounds are chasing them. I had 4 lions run off park this December/January during my hunt. The ability to keep hunting beyond the fence would increase take and success.

I believe better management would occur with the use of hounds through a draw system. Too many females being harvested as it's structured currently.

I believe fewer people hunt cats every year because its to hard for them and they lose interest. Too many trails have been shut down or put to 60" or less. I'm all about hunting with hounds. But I don't want to see everybody going to get their own hands and thinking they know how to run dogs.

I believe GFP is doing a great job.

I believe that a few more lions need to be harvested each year to help with the deer and elk population. In winters where we don't receive that much snow it makes it hard for us boot hunters to achieve the harvest limit set by the game and fish which then effects the deer and elk.

I believe that allowing the use of dogs creates an opportunity to use selective harvest methods. Most hounds men I know tree numerous cat a season but rarely harvest any. With the use of dogs the absurd numbers of cats around towns like deadwood could be harvested or persuaded to live elsewhere after multiple chases. I do appreciate that you take the time to do the surveys and try to make the right choices in regards to cat hunting. Can't please everyone and in my opinion the life of ungulates far out weighs the importance of the predator

I believe that not allowing hound hunters is just flat being prejudiced against a type of hunter. I believe people really don't understand what hound hunters do. And allowing snaring on public ground is harmful to people that use it with bird dogs - hounds - pets.

I believe that the Mountain Lion population is healthy and could probably even be increased. The quota is rarely met, which I believe speaks to the population to some degree, but also more greatly to the skill and natural abilities of the amazing animal. One fear I do have is that at the correct population or slightly above the cats will become aversive to human conflict with such a population and SD, one thing you rarely hear is human conflict, whether genetics or surplus of prey, or maybe sheer instinct/genetics, among other factors, I can say they truly want to avoid humans. This is certainly not the case in many other states with even smaller populations in some cases. One thing I do believe could help that favorable behavior continue is a limited season, perhaps at the end of the season in the Fire Protection district where quote is not yet met, a limited amount of hunters limited draw. For a high price, revenue generating tag are able to run dogs until the season ends or quota is met. Overall, I am pleased with where the population is at and thank you all for doing your part and managing the population of such a cool animal to hunt. There's nothing quite like calling in a lion!

I believe the boot hunters should have until March 31 to hunt lions. After March 31st, have a tag system that would allow hounds until the 15th of April

I believe the lion population in CSP needs to be a lot less! Maybe the elk herd would grow. I believe mountain lions eat a lot of deer and elk.

I believe we could increase the take of mountain lions if you started the season by mid October. If that is the goal, to lower the population?

I buy a lion permit every year. If I see one I can shoot it. So far I don't go out to hunt one.

I buy a tag every year so if an deer hunting and see a lion i can shoot in in eastern SD. I have a cabin by Rochford SD have seen one walk by 10' from my glass door. Seen 5 lions alltogether on bike trail all at the same time. I think they are over running in the Black hills. I also don't go out and hunt mountain lions.

I can't believe you would ask if we wanted to let non residents lion hunt. How tone def is SDGFP??? Quit selling our resources to non residents for peanuts. Pretty decent survey until I read that.

I didn't hunt this year thanks

I do believe the lion population is slightly overpopulated. I've seen 3 lions in the last 6 months on my commute to work crossing the road but all very near neighborhood communities and difficult to hunt them in those areas. Has there been any discussion about opening the BHFPD to dogs in a similar way to Custer state park? Do 15-20 tags but not limited to certain weekly timeframes? Could go as far as limiting them to units similar to cow elk units. You know where there is a more condensed area of lions in parts of the hills, make that area a unit open to dogs to lessen the population and then in a couple years, reassess the population and see if we made a conservative dent in controlling the population. The boot hunters are out there (myself included) but it's tough when we aren't meeting the quota year after year. The weather makes a huge difference especially this year. We need to find a solution to meeting the quota or getting close to , to really get a handle on them. Need to get more people out there and engaged in chasing them around. Slight side note, have you spoke with the forest service to discuss reevaluating the seasonal gate closures to actually benefit wildlife on winter range? There are areas that could seasonally close and other areas that could be opened that would allow lion hunters access to pursue them. And discuss rerouting snowmobile trails that don't go right through wildlife winter ranges. Whats the point of closing areas to wheeled vehicles if snow machines can ride off trail and illegally chase elk? The snowmobile trail program receives so much \$\$\$, either use that money to work with the FS to alleviate user issues or figure out a way to transfer some of that money to the FS so they can make an effort to help since their trail/road program is under staffed and under funded.

I do not believe the GFP is honest and correct on the # of lions in the state, or the # of deer - elk - or any other game or fish. As a taxpayer and a landowner and land renter I think the GFP will say or do whatever they want for monetary gain. I strongly believe GFP think these animals are thours. Be honest! With you #'s.

I do not have livestock, but have a lot of friends west and east River that do. Livestock is a important part of SD, and there lives.

I do not know the actual numbers of lions killed outside of the BH and Custer, but I do not feel it can be many. Between comparing trail camera data in the Yankton area with fellow hunters, I know we have a good population here. But I can say I have only heard of maybe 3-4 lions killed in a 5 year span. This may be because people don't take it too serious nor try very hard to hunt them. I myself just carry a tag for the off chance I see one while hunting. I would like to see the opportunity to harvest lions through trapping and snaring, even if that is limited to one per person. The trapping community is very small and I really wouldn't see if being much of a harvest in general, but another opportunity for those of us that do. Especially in this area, if we have a lion coming around every week or two, this gives us an opportunity. Running dogs is a great opportunity, but with how chopped up the landscape is in this area, it is very difficult to do without having a lot of permission.

I do not owe a dog for Lion hunting nor would I purchase one to hunt Lions if you could use them in the hills. However, I don't see how the GFP can deny those who enjoy hunting with dogs the opportunity to harvest Lions with dogs. There has to be a way to allow for both styles of hunters. To me it's like saying you can only fish Walleyes on the Missouri from shore and not with a boat because it is an unfair advantage for those with a boat. If you don't come up with a means to start reducing the Loin and Coyote population in the hills your Deer and Elk populations continue to drop.

I do not think SD has a mountain lion issue. I favor hunting with an increase in population to allow for more opportunity for harvest.

I do plan to own live stock & live amongst farm/ranches where live stock is prevalent. I believe coyote populations must also be addressed. I have & hold a mtn lion license to defend myself & property in the chance that I may see one and have the opportunity to harvest one. I do not actively set out to look/hunt for one.

I do strongly feel dogs should be allowed and have never seen the hills and prairie deer populations so low

I don't actively hunt lions but always get a tag in case I encounter one on my property

I don't want lions to exist (?) - don't like loosing calves each year two were shot within two miles of our house. Three calves are worth $1800 \times 3 = \$5400$ that I lost. I am sure the lions are a predator & not big game animal

I don't blindly trust SDGF &P at all. To many times I see decisions they make are based on what will bring the most dollars in to the states coffers.

I don't like the idea of using hounds to kill mountain lions in the Black Hills Fire Protection Unit. The fact that it would have potential to commercialize mountain lion hunting in South Dakota. I wouldn't want that. I am pro hound but it's unique how in most areas you can't use hounds to hunt mountain lions. I would love to have an extended mountain lion season that begins during deer season in the Black Hills.

I dread the day when a human is attacked. It will happen I feel.

I enjoy my hunting and being in the outdoors. Thank you.

I feel anymore its all about money with the SDGF Department

I feel hunting with dogs would also allow better management of what cats are harvested allowing younger cats to mature. Also allowing hunters to better assess what they are harvesting

I feel mountain lion season should be like coyote season . Simple deal ! There killers and should be kept a mystery and not be seen by most . Also I believe there are to many in csp.

I feel mountain lions are here to keep the balance, if your going to have wolves your going to NEED mountain lions!!!

I feel South Dakota deer and elk populations should be protected!

I feel that GFP is doing a good job of managing the balance of mountain lions. However, I feel there are more lions than most believe and they have a devastating impact on deer, elk and Turkey population as well as their appetite for small pets. I personally get a Mountain Lion tag. Annually, but have not hunted them much. I'm limited to calling them as I can't handle long hikes and snow through rocks etc. I have a personal opinion that if GFP truly believes in the quota that we should allow the use of dogs in the BHFPD after the end of the regular season. Until the quota is reached, those tags could be on an additional draw basis.

I feel we need to curb tge use of ATV/UTV in the Hills. Whether I am elk, deer, or coyote calling it is invariably ruined or interrupted by some one going cross country/ off any marked trail. While I have walked a good distance to access the area in an attempt to not scare game.

I fill out these surveys because I trust you to use DATA and resident hunters wishes to help manage populations. Thank you for the tough job you all do. Sincerely, data-loving-resident-big-game-hunting-research-scientist-for-25+-years-person

I get a license to be legal to shoot one if I see it on my property. I don't actively hunt for them.

I get a mt lion lic every year because we have mt lions near where I live North of Mitchell. There have been lions sighted within 500 yards of my house on 1 ocasions. The first time I was the Davison co. sherriff and I was patrolling in Mt. Vernon when I got a call that there was a lion after a deer not more than 100 yards from my house. By the time I got there it was gone. A neighbor lady saw it go through their yard the next day. Last Nove 1923 there was a lion on a trail cam. Just about 450 yards a set of 2 lion tracks over there. I also hunt in the Badlands and have seen a lion out there in 2022 while Deer hunting. I also saw a wolf that year.

I have a lion license.as a means of protection. I intend to fill the tag only in a circumstance where my safety may be challenged while I am deer hunting or hiking in the Missouri River hills. I am not an active lion hunter as such.

I have been getting a license just in case I see one in my area.

I have been hunting the same area in the Black Hills for 3 years. Never had much time to hunt there. Called it in one time. Saw the slght movement of my hand with the mouth call (fawn distress) . I heard a hiss,snarl, game over. Never saw the lion. Thick juniper, ponderosa. Perfect ambush terrain. Hunting there this season also. Optimistic. Enjoying the challenge.

I have experienced calf loss that we attributed to a lion. A state trapper was called and completed an on site inspection. I believe lions are an acceptable part of our environment but I also believe that producers should be compensated for their losses.

I have friends in the Black Hills that has had problems with lions - I trust GFP will continue to help with these problems and continue to manage the population of lions

I have hunted in the hill for over 40 years never have I seen fewer deer in the hills I talk to friends in the hills that used to see 100 deer a day now see a hand full season needs to be open during deer season or year around I have had lion tags for a lot of years and have one this year but live 400 miles to the hills not going out this to for go to try to find a lion. you could sell more tags if it was open during deer and elk season. Why not allow dogs get ride of the lions. The GFP should have never introduce to SD.

I have hunted lions every year since 2005. Absolute rush and I'm totally addicted to lion hunting. I just hunt in boot season & have never hunted with dogs. My recommendation is not to change anything.

I have hunted mountain lion since 2005, it has been the most challenging, exciting & rewarding hunting yet. But at my age it is slowing down. too fast.

I have hunted mt lion multiple years on foot and have never been successful. Yet, I have seen 1 cat. I currently do not know anyone who has been successful in the last few years. This is a different way to hunt them and I do think dogs would be more preductive. However I do not like the idea of dog taking over the mt lion hunting in the state. Some tags would be good but limited possibly to finish off the quot aby x date. So like if the state wants 25 cats dead by feb 15th if that's not met dogs could get it there. Then back to boot or something like that. All at the end would be fine as well.

I have killed 3 mountain lion boot hunting it is very doable and very rewarding keep it the way it is

I have lions very close to me and actually had a mother and two cubs break into my chicken coop and killed most of my chickens. Also have a large male in the area. I wish we could use dogs to hunt them. They are very stealthy and hard to track down.

I have lots of experience with lions. I trapped (and released) 7 lions on my land in 2 year period. I would like to see the ability to harvest lions via trapping and open the season in October. I am concerned with them being around with grandkids visiting. Fortunately the female who had cubs here multiple times moved after being trapped and released and now am not seeing as many males come thru.

I have not drawn a deer tag in four years. Fewer lions = more deer and a better chance to draw a tag. The new deer tag draw system is a joke, I may give up hunting.

I have pets and grandkids - manage well!

i have sheep, cattle, pigs, horses, poultry, goats

I have wooded pasture and I feel unsafe for my grand kids knowing mountain lions are in our area

I hope that SD never allows hunting with dogs.

I jus want to be ready for the event if given the opportunity

I know it's hard to please everyone and I think the does a pretty good job with our resources.

I know land owners that have lost livestock in the BHFPD and the all ask me for help but the season isn't open. Lion season should run year round.

I like everything about the mtn lions and the structure of the seasons. I don't think it would hurt thin a few more out. I think lions are exceptionally hard on deer elk and turkey populations. I understand that lions aren't the sole reason that those populations are lower, however I think they are about as proficient apex predator as they come. And I personally feel as though the other big game species in the hills are feeling the effects. I wouldn't be opposed to allowing hunters to get a second lion tags if they harvested the first tag. Or even allowing a small quota of tags(10-15)for during black hills deer season. I think there are plenty of answers. I'm not so sure that the system that's in place isn't just fine the way it is. I'll leave my last thought as this, is rather see GFP not alter the deer tag system anymore before I would change the lion season. Thanks,

I like mountain lions to hunt but not necessary to get one but for the spirit of the wild

I like the season as it is! Some people say the hills are overrun with lions. I don't see that. The area I go is mostly inaccessible by vehicle in the winter. I've had 4 game cameras out every fall and winter for several years. I check them weekly. I usually have 1 male and 1 female every week to 10 days; never traveling together. I have wonderful videos of lions in their natural habitat; usually at night, but on occasion during the day. I've walked and tracked many miles every season since 2005! I've seen 1 during the season and 1 out of season. I've never harvested a lion, or, even taken a shot. So far, I haven't helped control the population, but my observation is the population is controlled by the lions themselves in the area I hunt.

I like to hunt the hi country north of Trails Head but snow shuts that down. I got the 5th lion 2005 during deer season around Fought Lock Falls. I know lion hunting messes up hunting for deer guys & elk. But that area has many lion travlen through there. thats my opinion but! Thanks

I like what's going on with mountain lion hunting in South Dakota. Might consider extending season into May in years like this year when snow is sparse. Great job SDGame and Fish. We need more Walleye stocking in lake Oahe!!

i live in eastern sd and get moutain lion licence for here but have yet to see one but have sighting arond my area

I live in NE S. Dak. I have never seen a mountain lion there but others have. I only buy a license so I could harvest a mountain lion if I do see one. I live on an acreage with a lot of trees and would not like having a mountain lion in the area where my grandkids are playing outside. Therefore I buy a license just in case one does start to hang out around my property.

I live in Western Custer County. The last several years I get to many cats on trail cameras to often

I lived in CA when it was outlawed (1997) now the deer are gone and the grasses become fire hazards

I love how proud active GFP is with managing our wildlife/game. I would like to say that I am disappointed with the application process for a tag bc I applied for the 2024 season and got issued a tag for 2023 in December. I would like to be restitute my money or get a tag for the rest of this season that I for for and planned on using. I'm a huge fan of SD GFP but I got issued a wrong tag. Thank you for all that you guy's do!

I LOVE HUNTING

I make one or two lion calling trips to the hills each winter. I was successful 2 years ago. I still enjoy this challenge every winter. I also stay in motels and eat in the restaurants. I help support the economy during a slow time of year. If hound hunting was allowed in all the hills I would probably not continue coming out and try calling cats.

I moved to Rapid City in SD in June 1962. After the introduction of the MT. Lion, along with the Deer Dease, the Deer Hurd has been reduced to almost nothing in many areas of the Black Hills. There were area's where the Deer Hurd would congregate between Rapid City and Sturgis. People would drive up the Interstate and watch and photograph the Deer and Elk. That is no more. The Coyote population has just about been wiped out by the Mt. Lion. Mt. Lion do not only eat sick or injured Deer. They eat what ever they can catch. The only thing that the introduction of the MT lion to the Black Hills has done is destroy the Deer and Elk Hurds. We no longer hear the music from the Coyote's like we used to. I miss that.

I only get a mountain lion license in case I do see one on my agricultural land I own.

I only purchase a license for the off chance I came across are in the field, more for protection than anything. I don't actively pursue mountain lions.

I oppose the hunting with dogs - not fair.

I own 40 acres in the Black Hills. 1 1/2 mi South of Moon on Boles Canyon Road. Mt. Lions are common in my area. Have had a lion killed by traffic in Boles canyon rd right at my gate. Dept. said it was a 6 month old female weight 35lbs. Have had mt. lion kills of w.t. deer on my property.

I plan to purchase a tag again next year, in case I have the opportunity to hunt next year.

I purchase a license almost every year even though I don't get to the hills cause of having young sons. But I hope that when they are old enough we will still have lion hunting so I can take them. I hope that it doesn't turn into something that is commercialized.

I purchase a mountain lion tag every year just in case I come across one. Then I am able to hunt the mountain lion. I don't plan and hunt for mountain lions. I think it is very important to have a mountain lion season in the state. I believe mountain lions have an impact on the deer population.

I purchased a tag to be legal if I had the opportunity to harvest on. I never actually went hunting for a lion

I realize managing wildlife and humans is difficult. Lions seem to be a love/hate with people/opinions. I think South Dakota overall does a good job managing the lion population. There are certain years I think we could certainly harvest more lines in the hills. I know there are people pushing for hounds in the hills and certainly think it is an extremely effective way to harvest cats. The dynamic of the hills is different with public/private lands. Lots of cats eye track are in and out of private parcels of land. I think there are places that would work to allow hounds. I hear a lot of hound hunters saying we need to shoot more lions, yet they don't want to shoot females. So if hound hunting was allowed, where is the fine line between Houndsmen running all the big Toms versus the boot hunter that gets harassed for shooting a 70 LB female? If the population is getting out of control, we need management on both ends of male/female cats. What does allowing during deer season mean? September is archery lion/deer or just November rifle. Maybe November/December 1st late opener. You would catch a few more snows. All in all, I think it is a great opportunity for. Any S Dakotan to harvest a trophy? Thanks for all the opportunity. PS I think for every South Dakota resident that checks in five cats gets a Black Hills. Any elk tack for future thought.

I said I strongly oppose expanding hunting cats with hounds in the BHFPD. That said, if there are certain roadless areas that hound hunting could be expanded to, that may be okay. To that end, however, I suspect hound hunters would quickly push cats into areas where hounds aren't allowed. In general, I make these comments about hounds because I don't want hounds running into private property.

I sincerely hope the SDGFP starts to manage its game and fish resources with the Game and Fish in mind and stops being so concerned with the number of nonresident dollars coming into our state. Since I started hunting and fishing our game and fish numbers continue to fall. There are fewer mature big game animals than ever and fishing our South Dakota lakes seems to be becoming more and more difficult.

I strongly agree with opening the season during elk and deer seasons, as well as pursuit of multiple tracks of lions.

I strongly oppose expanding hound hunting. Population objectives are being met. Increasing hound hunting would take away opportunities for boot hunters. It also starts down a slippery slope of commercializing hound lion hunting. Once money can be made guides will start showing up and lion hunting as we have known it in the hills will change to a paybto play system.

I support the use of dogs in the Black Hills Fire Protection District

I support the use of hounds in the Fire Protection District.

I support the use of hounds to hunt mountain lions in the Black Hills, as it's the most effective method of increasing the quality of harvested lions. With hounds, I believe hunters would harvest less young or lactating females.

I think GF&P does a good job managing lions. We don't need to allow out of staters, or expanded tactics that make it an unfair chase for the cats. Please don't allow dogs, or night hunting. We are expanding technology too much into fishing and hunting and it is ruining the experience and some game populations. It is about the hunt...it is not intended to be a guarantee kill. I think we need to outlaw drones, and other sonar technology from hunting a fishing.

I think GFP is doing very well with how it is managed at this point please stay with the same system

I think GFP should be protecting elk and deer herds and worry less about lion presence in SD. Do the math and see which increases your budget the most and more importantly, what about the number of hunter hours spent with each species. Lions are a joke. Rid them.

I think it would be beneficial to keep the kill locations updated with the kill quotas. All units Park, Hills and prairie.

I think mountain lion hunting should be just like coyotes see 1 shoot it! they are all predators that kill everything we want to hunt!

I think opening the season in Nov would be good. I had a Mt lion eat a deer in my truck this deer season, Nov. Truck was parked next to a cabin with yard lights on.

I think residents out hunting deer or elk should be able to get a lion tag that can be used to legally harvest a lion if they see one while hunting during deer/elk season.

I think the mountain lion population should be regulated and open year-round until your quotes are met

I think the number of lions in our area is greatly impacting the deer population along with disease. I have game cam photos of 3 lions eating a fresh kill that we found during archery season. SE corner of Bon Homme county. Mark Yonke

I think there are more mountain lions in the state then what we are lead to believe

I think there are too many around and need thinned out

I think there are too many logging roads that cut through the hills to allow hound hunting, but yet I am very pro hound hunting, just not in the Black Hills. I think the Black Hills present a very unique opportunity for boot hunting only.

I think we need to bring the ML pop down to help the elk & deer #s and my personal preferred method is allowing harvest during deer & elk season.

I think you all do a great job.

I truly believe the GFP could and should take much better measures to manage the Mountain Lion population in South Dakota for the benefit of the Mountain Lion and other wildlife. All of you at the top need to be better listeners of the people you have in the field and those who spend a lot of time in the field.

I trust GFP to make decisions. I trust myself to protect myself & my dog if needed. So far, so good. Thank you.

I want what is best for my great grandchildren and beyond to have the opportunity to hunt and gather as they please. Opportunities are less every year. Fishing spots are fewer, and the pressure seems high.

I was neutral on most hunting questions as I feel I don't know enough about lion populations and success rates. I personally like to hunt lions with dogs and tree the lions, take a picture and walk away as I have no desire to hunt them unless they were on my land.

I was opposed to dogs for hunting, but argument for being able to pick what shoot in a tree seems to be better way to control sex of animal.

I was raised on a farm and ranch and always believed predators were blamed for livestock losses without factual evidence. Most was scavenging, and not predation. Thank you for the opportunity to comment

I would appreciate a lower total number of lions in the hills

I would be in favor of allowing hunters to harvest a lion during the deer seasons in the BHFPD if they encounter one. No hound hunters in the BHFPD to meet the quotas and put the fear of hounds to the lions may help keep them away from residential areas. The hound hunters have more of an option to harvest male/females/kittens. Thanks

I would like to be able to spend more quality hunting time in the hills with my family, reduce the lions so I can hunt deer with my daughters more regularly.

I would like to comment on the trust in the GFP, the disagreement of the GFP comes from a long history of both denying the presence of mountain lions in certain areas as well as underplaying the population throughout the hills. This also comes in line with the new regulations that are attempting to be placed for both the elk landowner tags and limiting deer tags for residents. Both of these are steps forward in the privatization of hunting and deepening the pockets of large landowners. From past experiences and the regulations being pushed by the people who are suppose to support and protect hunting rights for all people, I find it very hard to trust or support the agency at this time.

I would like to harvest an elk soon. I am getting old. Get the cats under control.

I would like to hear from the biologists on the current estimation of the lion population and have a comparison of population density as it relates to other western states that have lion hunting seasons. If the quota is 60 and we (boot hunters) do not meet the quota does that actually affect the population of the deer and elk? 60 is a number set by GFP to prevent over-harvest, correct? Is it actually bad if we do not hit the quota every year. I would prefer NOT to allow hounds. If we are going to allow hounds there are a ton of logistics that are going to be difficult to enforce. Selective harvest; IE only taking the big males that get treed. The purpose of harvesting is to to control the population, correct? The best way to control the population is to harvest females, correct? What about the dogs trespassing across private property when running a track? If we choose to allow dogs then it should be at the end of the season and perhaps west of the Rochford Road to the Wyoming line. The houndsmen are asking for the opportunity to run lions in their home state. How many houndsmen are there? 10 or 12 maybe? If these guys are allowed to run their dogs and each harvest their one allotted lion is that really going to affect the lion population significantly? Especially if they only harvest the big males. Will they be allowed to use their dogs to help their friends? Or clients for a fee? It just sounds like a bad idea that opens the door to problems. I do know this... I live in the Black Hills. I would just like to be able to have a rifle deer tag to hunt where I live every year. I could care less about west river or east river, I don't have the time or resources to hunt those units. Before the lion population boom, this was possible.

I would like to hunt this season during firearm rifle season as well in Hills.. I am out anyway, be nice to combine opportunities.

I would like to see a trapping season for Mt lions. I do not like the idea of using snares on lions. I feel too many non target species will be caught.

I would like to see hound hunting in the Black Hills Fire Protection District handled the same way it is done in the park. And yes, we have hounds :)

I would like to see hunting with dogs allowed.

I would like to see lion populations up across the whole state.

I would like to see only boot hunting to be continually allowed within the BHFPD. If quota isn't met I would be accepting of allowing hounds the last month of April. I would dislike seeing mountains take the route of the preference point system. It's one of the last big game species where it is equal opportunity. Trapping using live box traps would be an interesting option. I do not like the option of snaring; being we are such a high recreational forest, but secondly then allowing hounds to hunt lions, they could become snared accidentally...Maybe only allow snaring on private land only.

I would like to see the Black Hills put into units. When there is a lot of snow not many are killed here in the Northern Hills, but more are harvested in the Southern hills. I would like to know where to find your depredation studies. Hills tags are difficult to get anymore, why? Is it because of depredation and hunting. Have we met a quota since lion season was separated from deer season? Keep out of state hunters out, because then it isn't tradition but a business. Hunting shouldn't be a business; it should be a tradition.

I would like to see the GF and P go back to allowing mountain lion hunting during the November Black Hills deer season.

I would like to see the Mountain Lion season start sometime in October or 1st of November and continue through April in the Black Hills Fire Protection District. Also allow hunters 2 licenses but up the harvest to 80 total or 50 females.

I would like to see the season extended until the annual harvest limit is reached, especially on low snow years

I would like to see the season start earlier. At my age, its tougher hunting in the winter months when it's extremely cold and the snow is deep. Especially if I wanted to use archery equipment to harvest a lion. Maybe even open it open to archery only for September/October, then any method in November. Then thermal after January 1st.

I would Love to Hunt lions but to old

I would love to hunt Mt Lions. I would enjoy seeing one in the wild as well. Listen to your licensees, they most of the info needed for managing.

I would see things differently if I was a rancher - be much more concerned about the # of lions - not sure how much loss is due to lions wonder though also wonder about the original creation of habitat and wildlife before man came and changed so much God had a design - we messed it up

I would strongly support the allowance of hunting mountain lions during deer season, along with ease of purchasing licenses (no draw)

I would support night hunting of lions outside of the Black Hills

I'm glad that SD allows archery hunters to carry defense firearms like pistols when hunting. I wish the rules were more clear about when deadly force is permissible during a Mt Lion encounter while hunting other game or when hiking. Also what steps to take if there is an encounter.

I've hunted everywhere since the first lion season in 2005 0-28 not a success story

I've never seen one but I have saw lots tracks while I am hunting in the woods so I know they see me

I've had a lion and her cubs kill my chickens. They need to be hunted to keep them at an acceptable count and away from homes.

i've had. mountain lion kill a horse once but new cattle

If certain lions pose a threat. Harvest them

If harvest limits are not met by a certain date then allow a depredation hunt the last few weeks with hounds. I understand the economic impact with non resident hunters but I would like to see this stay a resident only hunt.

If lion numbers are down elk and deer numbers increase this allows more tags for hunters as it is tough enough to get deer and elk tags now

If quota isn't met, allow dogs for a week or two until quota is met. For areas outside Black Hills, allow all resident hunters to shoo a lion without a mt lion tag and if someone gets one, they can keep it for \$500 or so tired of buying licenses for this and that just in case one of those come by.

If the GF&P wants to expand opportunities for lions look at: expanding the season opener to December 1 allow night hunting/calling

If there is ever a dog season, I would give them the last month of the season to fill the quote if there is any. Then the boot hunters would have a fair chance and the dog boys and girls could clean things up at the end. Hides are prime at the end of the season as well.

If they allow dogs in the black hills get ready to lose all cat hunting just look what is going on in Colorado and people think it won't happen in South dakota leave the dogs out of the hills

If they were too many lions in SD, the quota would be met every year! And its not.

If you allow dogs to run mountain lions in the black hills the tree huggers will be here and try to stop in the next year look at what they are doing in Colorado it is just a matter of time be for it happens NO DOGS in the hills

If you want honest answers don't put my name on the return survey

If you want to do something good for the state, you should reduce significantly lions, coyotes, a coons

In some areas the population of lions are high in the hills. Deer population are getting lower in those areas. They move to areas with more food. We have try to that.

It is difficult to trust SDGFP when in the past members have blamed elk hunters for declining elk numbers while radio collar studies were showing cats killing 24 or 25 of every 25 elk calves each year. I want a healthy cat population but when I see as many as I see each year (without even trying to see them) there are too many still! Thanks, I appreciate your efforts to gather input!

It would be nice to see the pursuit and harvest of a lion that is traveling with another large lion be allowed. I have seen multiple trail camera photos of larger lions traveling together. Also I have had times I've had to abandon tracks because a second large track had joined after I had initially started following single track.

It's good to have a Eastern hunting right I have seen 3 in the last 6 or 7 years I had farmer Friends that had 3 - 500lb caves mauled scraped down their sides and a lot of People's kids walk around in the trees here I walked by one checking my game camera's going to my third camera I heard a Brach Break Looked back and seen him Jump out of a tree that I Just walked by Now I watch a little more

keep dogs in csp

Keep dogs out of it. Boot hunters only

Keep non-resident out allow use of dogs last 3 weeks of season Gives boot hunters time and then houndsmen can fill the rest of the quota.

keep the dogs in the park

Keep the harvest the same - I think it hard to find maps of wilderness boundries

Keep the hunt sporting but reduce the lion population.

Keep the numbers about the same and don't let the lions become overpopulated to where they are hazardous to deer/elk numbers

Keep up the good job and don't pay attention to the radicals

Keep up the great work!

Keeping mt lion population under control is very important - majority of people would like to see more turkeys - deer - elk - sheep

Kill all the lions and wolves

Kill more lions

Large predators must be controlled by the states not by the federal liberals. Good deer and elk populations are dependent on predator control, including mountain lions, wolves and grizzly bears. In this state, grizzlies should be eliminated and the rest controlled. If one big cat eats 20 deer in a year only 500 lions must kill close to 10,000 a year. Add to that just as many killed by wolf packs we will have moving into out state from all directions if blind liberals keep control.

Lease pasture for cattle grazing the past 3 years. No livestock loses. Have seen lion dragging off deer on game camera or looking in patio door and on our land

Leave it the way it is.

Let's ensure we pay the biologists to do biology and not math or statistics. Having accurate accounting of lions and other species is good for ALL. Whether you agree with using dogs or not, too many small and very small lions have been killed and this will continue to grow large cats who will be competing for food, pushing them into human populous.

Like any predator, mountain lions need to be managed but not over harvested. They provide a critical balance to our wildlife ecosystem and I have always trusted our SDGFP to monitor and give guidance to the number that should be harvested. Please never allow night hunting of mountain lions. I am an avid hard blown coyote caller and I am sickened by the number of hunters that are now harvesting coyotes at night with thermo imaging optics. It poses such a risk when hunting at night. Finally, I am always amazed at how mother nature controls our ungulate and predator populations.

like to see more lions

Lion harvests are greatly limited by boot hunting. It's also safe to assume that not everyone who has harvested has done so by those means. If meeting quotas is the goal we need to adjust methods of pursuit accordingly.

Lion hunting is an awesome opportunity here in the hills. Hope its around a long time.

Lion hunting is an important management tool that should always exist. We should allow that tradition to be used forever and allow more hunting with dogs as that is the best success rate for hunters.

Lion hunting is difficult and takes skill and years to learn. The use of hounds is traditional and does not always mean a lion will tree. More education and outreach to non hunters would be beneficial. Most people don't understand lion hunting. Look at some of the work by Steven Renellia.

Lion population need to stay inside Black Hills

Lions are a predator. They keep wildlife on their toes. The healthy ones stay alert, the cripples, sick or old get taken first

Lions are an important part of our ecosystem. Hunting them w/ hounds allows for more proficient management decisions. It allows time to identify the animal's sex & age before harvest. Houndsmen are professionals & their dogs were born for this purpose. It is more dangerous to send a hunter out there with a distress call to sit at the bottom of a tree & try to coax one of these animals in. It is exciting to see lions more often but to effectively manage population of all game animals, we need to have ethical & efficient tools available to us

Lions need to be able to be hunted at night

Lions need to be managed cannot allow numbers to get to like some of the other states

Listen to the South Dakota hounds men association they will be here forever -

Live on the east edge of deuel county. Have Mountain Lions show up on trail cameras a few times. It's not uncommon for local cattle to run through fences or have dead calves when there's a lion in the area.

Livestock on my daughters ranch in faulk county - cattle and goats have found lion tracks in several pasture dugouts

Look at #6

Losing livestock to a predator is something that will always happen. It is our responsibility to help protect our livestock when those encounters happen. But those encounters should not be happening every day and night if the predator population is properly managed. The lion population has been very poorly managed for several years now which has allowed it to become as high as it is now. To have several different lions from young to old and male and female in the same 5mile radius is not something that should be happening

Making a hunt for non residents may be harmful for terrible hunting and gates not closed, cattle running and cattle killed along with goats sheep. Deer season is hell for ranchers with non residents.

Man and woman can control the #'s of elk and deer through hunting - and there are alot more people wanting to hunt elk and deer... More than we are allowed to now. Have been applying for CSP elk bull tag for 30 years and with no luck drawing... I don't think I care to feed cats with elk I want to hunt. And will likely only to be able to take 2 bulls in my lifetime in the hills. If cats are cutting into my chances of drawing elk and deer tags. then I am in favor of alot fewer cats. I sure don't mind you calling me to chat. Thanks!!

Many license holders never see a mtn lion in the wild. We should have ideas on how to increase the harvest while not decreasing opportunities for the "working person" hunter. Work schedules don't often allow to hunt fresh snow or are even can be limited to weekend hunts. I believe using dogs, or allowing out of state hunters decreases the chances of the average person to have the opportunity to fill a mtn lion tag. It becomes an issue of those with money to have a higher chance than the average hunter.

More opportunities for resident hunters who use their preference points to successfully draw a custer state park permit with hounds. I've been trying for several years and have been unsuccessful.

Most places I've hunted mountain lions aren't a real problem. I've hunted big game in different countries and us. Do not introduce wolfs in SD!!!! They will kill just to kill!!!!

Mountain Lion Harvest location data is taken from hunters. I feel it is public data that should be publicly available.

Mountain lion populations are way to high. I can replace livestock but it is impossible to replace family/friends. It is only a matter of time before something bad happens.

Mountain lions are predators and will kill anything to eat there are plenty in other states. In our state they can all be exterminated. They post a threat to all living beings!

Mountain lions are so internal part of the BHE ecosystem and there fore population balance is necessary to support that ecosystem.

Mountains are good for the nature of life in the Dakotas

my horses have been attacked twice my barn cats keep disapearing

My primary residence is in Sioux Falls, however I have a second home in a rural area north of Pierre in which I spend at least half of my time hunting & fishing throughout the year. I don't own any livestock but my family does. Thank you

n/a

N/a

N/A

na

Na

NA

Need more lions east river for more hunting options

Need to be able to use hounds in the hills

Need to be put on predator list hunt them year around

Need to harvest more mountain lions. Start the season earlier.

Need to open year round in blackhills until quotas have been filled.

Need to reduce the number of mountain lions!!! Our we won't have a deer turkey population left.

need to use dogs

Night hunting. Open all predator hunting up for unrestricted night hunting on public lands, to include the use of thermal and night vision devices.

no comment

No dogs. No night hunting. Longer season, Dec 1 through April 31. I also feel that cellular trail cameras are a form of cheating, which should be addressed.

No hound hunting

No need for mountain lions or wolves we have plenty of hunters that can manage wildlife numbers

None

None at this time.

Not a fan of hunting with dogs, thats a young persons game and discriminates against older hunters ,and not fair to the lions ,something GF&P never seems to take into account. Same with starting the season right after Christmas,it should start 1st of November while theres still some decent weather.At 65 I'm finding myself coming down sick while climbing the Hills in freezing weather. You should have the seasons separated for the Hills and outside the Hills,theyre 2 entirely different things.Lots of spotted cats getting turned in,no tickets,lots of baiting going on same thing,no tickets.

Not hunting (a walk) a mountain lion let us walk within 10yd. If not seem it was going to let us walk right up on it. Not afraid at all! It let us veer off safely - 2-29-24 about

Note.. people who have hunted and resided in South Dakota their whole life should receive an elk license by their 60's and 70's .. thank you.

Obviously I'm a hounds men (that I hunt CSP almost every year.) It is a great tradition and sporting way to contest population. We can take the proper sex on a hunt that the GF&P believe to be the best management move. I think the boot hunters need the time to pursue there trophy but why not allow the hounds men of SD to help meet GF&P goals. I know most of the hounds men in SD and most want what is best for the lions and the Deer/Elk population. Maybe start with a limited access permit to run hounds in the BHFPD (similar to Custer State Park) to me it is working in there for the elk calf survival and deer. I have noticed in person one the last 10 years. There could be different units with different quotas based on population. Thanks for this opportunity to write.

OK

Only hunt east river so far. Might go west river but I have a wife that gives me a lot of no answers for going west lol.

Open lion season from Oct 1 through April with a quota.

Open NR hunting with its own harvest quota

Open season starting September 1st in the BHFDL

Open the season earlier in the hills

Open the season with the deer season. If the quota has not been met by mid February turn the dog guys loose!

Please allow trapping and use of dogs before opening it to out of state residents. Thanks you.

please consider expansion of hound hunting

Please continue with these surveys and any other public outreach or public hearing strategies.

Please do not allow nonresident hunting or greatly expand the use of dogs for mountain lion hunting.

Please do not even consider using hounds to control cat populations. The harvest numbers have been extremely well balanced with a typical harvest amount being consistent. There's also no where else to hunt mountain lions in which it's only done by hunters on foot . Not dog runners

Please do not expand dog hunting or night hunting in bhfpd. Please do better enforcement of the houndsmen in csp. I've witnessed houndsmam party hunting by driving all over the park hoping to be the first to cut a track then getting the phone and calling the guy with the hunter. Also would like to see limits to the number of times a houndsman can guide each season in csp. Sure seems like the same few houndsman guide most csp hunters with dog tags. Please don't feel pressured by the few houndsman or the city folk to expand dog hunting. I strongly feel that allowing big game tag[deerand elk] holders to also harvest a lion, especially archery hunters will increase harvest if needed.

Please inform the community and have state biologists and GFP workers at the mountain lion classic/raffle held yearly to hold informative meeting for the community that supports mountain lions the most!

Please NO dogs outside of the custer state park!

Posted most of my thoughts in the previous text. Open boot hunting starting Nov 1 close Jan 31 and allow dog hunting Feb 1 to April 1. Keep the quota the same (males and females). Dog hunter would be able to tell if it's males or females when treed and keep management in check. Starting the boot hunting in November isn't going to mess up deer hunters too much, verses opening it Oct 1 for elk hunters. I feel there is enough people chasing elk around already we don't need cat hunters up there also. This is all in the Black hills fire protection I'm talking about. Thank you for the survey and taking our input.

Put a bounty on coyotes and allow the use of artificial light and state and federal land

Question 2 is a loaded question the "unacceptable? wording. If that word wasn't used my answers would change. I think numbers are high but don't want lions completely removed. There is an acceptable risk having a managed lion population.

Really don't see any need for a season at all

Reduction in mt lion population in se sd is a must. I continue to believe reduction in elk tags in csp is directly related to elk population decrease due to increase in mountain lion population

Release the hounds

Right now there is more distrust of government than I've ever seen. Public relations is probably one of the more difficult aspects of game management. Transparency goes a long way

SD is increasingly moving towards the commercialization of Big Game Hunting. Most SD residents who hunt Big Game in SD do not want their seasons and preference points affected by increased out-of-state hunters. Do not further commercialize big game hunting.

SD lions are essentially taking revenue from the state and opportunities away from hunters. Units like 27A have been decimated by cats. In the early 2000's this was a premier mule deer hunting unit and now you're lucky if you see a deer in a lot of places. The only thing that changed was lion pressure. Allowing hunters to buy a tag and shoot lions year round statewide, would be a good start. The non season fire protection district rule needs to go away! There are too many lions living on the border of the fire protection district that are not shot in the off season months because they are on the wrong side of the line. Lastly turn the trappers lose! What better way to actually get some cats harvested and get a handle on cat populations.

SDGF is the biggest joke in this state! I was lucky enough to draw an elk tag in 2010. I couldn't apply til 2019. It will take me at least 15 yrs to draw again. In that time Comissioner Beis has had the opportunity to kill 24 bulls! Don't gimme that shit about depredation either! He has cows on FS land for \$1:35 a month! You wonder why people don't hunt anymore? They can't draw a tag!

Season opener same as deer

Season should be longer make it limited if needed to large adults in later months

See previous comments in survey

See previous comments. Above

Seems like mt. lion just get in the way of my chances of drawing a deer or elk tag. Kind of like out of state hunters there not worth the trouble for me

several years w/ cattle until retirement

Sightings of lions, East River have become more frequent so if population control is adequate within the Black Hills why are the lions territory being expanded?

Since 2013-2023, a ten year span in South Dakota has harvested 465 lions, and 264 of those lions were female and contributed to 56.77% of the totally harvest. 201 of those lions were male, contributing to 43.23% of the harvest. The remaining 35 lions harvested were all kittens just baby kitty's many less then 3-5 months old and the smallest weighing only 14lbs and many in the 18-30lb range so kittens that were clearly still surviveing off of their mother contributed for 7.53% of the 10 year harvest. If that 7.53% number sounds ok to you and you dont consider disgusting in your mind, you're a heartless individual that is clearly not for the greater good of true lion management. You're just a senseless killer. Also to be noted that the female harvest of a lion population should never exceed 15% yet here in South Dakota nearly 60% seems to be perfectly excitable by those in left in charge of providing proper management of South Dakotas lion population. South Dakota doesn't have to to better we NEED to do better they way these numbers are and able to be freely accessible to anyone if the exact reason lion seasons get shut down by modern day ballet box biology.

Since mountain lions were introduced steady decline in elk & deer numbers even in east river areas I live along a creek will see deer & turkey then gone for week or two will come back but some neighbors have seen mountain lion on camera

So far we have had no issues with predators killing our chickens.

Start the season in October. This will help to get the cat limit. No dogs in the BH forest, but continue in Custer Park and prairie.

Strongly disagree with out of state hunters being able to hunt mtn lions here. I believe the outfitting businesses are already out of control on all other species and would think this would be the same. I am a Hunt Safe Instructor trying to get youth involved in hunting and alot of places are getting locked up by leased land and hunting is getting to be a rich mans sport and not a family tradition like it used to be. I commend the land owners that allow our youth and others to hunt without the huge price tag! We try to teach our youth about making family friendship with the landowners by maybe helping with tasks on the farm or ranch and making a lifetime friendship instead of just offering money to buy your way onto land like alot of people. Hunting is a tradition that is fading way too fast!!! I think our future generations are going to miss out on alot of hunting because of the almighty \$ and it's sad!!!

Thank you for all that you do for South Dakota wildlife & hunters!

Thank you for allowing the public to voice their opinions through this survey.

thank you for asking our input

Thank you for being stewards of our natural and animal resources

Thank you for including me in this survey. Please give more weight to opinions of hunters and rural respondents, who are most impacted by lions.

Thank you for taking a look in to the current mnt lion management. My main concerns encountering a mnt lion while leaving the forrest in the dark and the negative effect on deer and elk population, specifically in the Black Hills

Thank you for the opportunity to hunt mt lions and bobcat in SD!

Thank you for the research

Thank you please manage the mountain lion population to acceptable levels

Thank you!!!

Thanks for the opportunity to give my feedback.

Thanks for the opportunity to hunt cats.

Thanks for the opportunity to share feedback!

The best thing GF&P could do is expand the boot hunting season during deer season, to open opportunities. So many times I cut fresh single tracks while deer hunting but am not allowed to pursue them. Some of the rules such as following only one set of tracks is outdated - it only punishes the honest hunters. I am strongly opposed to hunting mountain lions with hounds in the Black Hills. They already have the entire rest of the state year round, and nearby Wyoming to run hounds. Hound hunters cannot control their dogs, which opens up trespassing issues with the increasing development of the Black Hills. It also further commercializes big game hunting and guiding in our state. I am strongly opposed to night hunting a big game animal (mountain lions). It opens up ethical and legal concerns. Recap: Open up season during deer season, NO Hounds, NO night hunting, & Get rid of arbitrary track rule that only honest hunters follow.

The best way to control them is open it back up during deer and elk season, that is when people are in the field not Jan and Feb when it's below 0

The cattle on our property are seasonal - only a few weeks in the Fall

The current season is during the coldest snowiest times of the year. It is also after most hunting seasons and Christmas so I believe that keeps a lot of hunters from participating.

The ecosystems are all interconnected and good management tools are important. I love big game hunting and have been frustrated over the past several years concerning decreased opportunities to acquire tags. Hopefully good decisions are made going forward, to help maintain a healthy balance.

The Fire Protection District should not include private hand out side the US Forest and Parks

The first question you should have asked is "did you hunt mt lion in 2023. I did not but I had a mt lion lic. Did not have time to hunt but I look forward to future years.

The GFAP told the public 30 years ago the lions didn't exist in South Dakota. They are presently telling the public that wolves didn't exist in South Dakota. I truly don't believe anything the GFAP says. They told the public that the lottery license for deer was only going to last for 5 years to increase the buck population and that was a lie. If the GFAP really wants to do something good make the land owners that get elk tags every year hunt on the own land. I mean ready if they are getting deprivation tags because the elk are causing damage to their property then why are they allowed to hunt off of their property?

The GFP is doing a solid job thus far. I really would hate to see our state mtn lion population get ruined due to cats getting killed by the aid of hands. If people are complaining about "Too many cats" need to actual go out and hunt them. They will soon notice that there actually isn't that many cat in the hills. Thanks for all you do!

The issue this year in my opinion was the lack of snow.

The limits to the way hunters are able to hunt lions needs to change. Look at the harvest numbers this year and one of the worst conditions to hunt, and still were taking good numbers of cats. Even tho they tend to be younger cats. There are lots of cats that need to be harvested.

The lion population in South Dakota is excessive particularly when the source of their food-wild game and livestock is considered. With deer, elk and wild turkey populations declining, we don't need lions to further reduce their populations. Only increasing hunting opportunities will help with this problem. Also, the movement of lions into residential areas is unacceptable.

The livestock we have are in Nebraska - within Juiles of SD. Where have the deer gone is SE gregory and western charles mix co near Pickstown? There used to be so many deer in the area and many were road killed. Now one rarely sees a deer in that area. I don't believe it is disease as the ranchers in that area are no and seeing the carcasses. I fully support expanded mountain lion hunting opportunities and reduced restrictions on hunting and harvest of lions. Thanks Dr. Buckley for your time.

The mountain lion season and harvest structure is fine the way it is, and it has been set up this way for a long time. There aren't enough lions in the Hills to open this type of hunt up to non residents, as evident by the fact that the quotas have not been met and the lion population has not grown out of control. Please leave non residents, and as painful as it might be their dollars, out of mountain lion hunting in South Dakota.

The mule deer population in Fall River County is 27A and 27B units is at an all time low. Please do not allow any harvest of mule deer doe. Thank you.

The old timers got rid of the cats for a reason. Not shooting them on sight is a big mistake. Because you'll never get rid of all of them. The elk and deer herds will only suffer while the cats are as abundant as they are now.

The only effective way to manage numbers of lions in an area is with the use of hounds. Hounds could target sheep areas an take out females as needed to keep the numbers in control

The opportunity for expanding dog hunting is the obvious choice. Stop listening to the screeching of the tree huggers and use common sense. Also the govt being what it is, I'm sure the potential for taking a few more dollars out of sportsmans pockets has been explored. Permits, registrations, additional regulations, etc... Its a bureaucratic Disneyland just to do it already.

The reason I have a lic is because there have been sighting and have seen footprints close to my land and want to be able to protect my livestock

The state GF&P spends too much time attracting out of state hunters. Your current spin you put on ringneck harvest should be split up between preserves and others. Should start the brood count again to determine how the population truly is. Your current draw for resident elk needs to be revamped. I started applying 25 years ago and now doubtful if I'll continue to apply. The only side that wins with your current system is the GF&P, certainly not this lifetime resident.

The use of dogs is a great management tool since it allows a very close evaluation of any animal prior to a decision to harvest based on sex, age and cubs if applicable. I'm baffled that we use that option in CSP but not the rest of the BHFD. Expanding the season to include deer season would bring in more hunters if harvest goals are not being met.

The use of dogs would help regulate the population better. It is easier to gage the age and size of cat treed then just running & gunning.

The use of hound would allow the harvest of mature cats not young and lactating females witch is the majority of the current harvest

The way your allowing hunting seems to be keeping them at a good level

their is absolutely no reason this anamial is allowed to live in this state. the gfp will find this out when a human becomes the lions next meal ,Only a matter of time

b

There has been sighting in my area but personally never saw or hunted one, and have never traveled to hunt one

There is AT LEAST 2,000 lions in the black hills area. They are all over trail cams on skyline, piedmont, nemo road etc. i looked for tracks on a 5-6 mile hike around hill city and saw 3 different tracks in the last 4 days. There is easily 5x more lions then what is believed in the Black Hills area.

They are not native to this part of the state. I view them as an invasive species.

They have never been a problem for me

They need to change the deer draw back to the old system.

They should be listed as verman. The same as coons and coyote. No licence needed.

This comment is not about mountain lions by I have stated this position on other surveys. Non-resident hunting in South Dakota should be severely limited. The benefits of being a resident of South Dakota should be reserved for South Dakota residents only.

This was a much needed survey. When are you sending one out on wolves? Why does the GFP do things first and then ask the public to take a survey?

To effectively maintain a healthy population of Mt Lions, you have to allow the use of dogs. No hound hunter will be turning in 15 pound or lactating cats like the "pro" boot hunters

To many lions - deer population way down if more deer and elk more revenue to offset lion income less lions less danger for pets and people I had a horse attacked by a lion one lion will eat a deer a week you do the math more deer would bring out of state hunters with more \$

To many lions isn't good for small children and pets

Too many lions everywhere

Too many mountain lions - decimating the # of elk and deer need to consider additional methods of management - allow dogs in Fire Protection District

Unfortunately in recent years i have lost all trust in sdgfp. Financial based decisions with no concern towards our future deer and turkey populations are just one example. Also regressing in youth/mentor opportunities like changes to turkey season that negatively affect our youth opportunities. Literally scares me and is just disappointing beyond words to see a heritage I enjoy largely due to the non political connections it brings to everyone involved now be ruined by just that, money and politics.

Use a lottery system for lion tags. Allow dogs to be used. Fill the quota and be done!!!

Very much opposed to allowing dog hunting for lions w/in the Black Hills, trespassing issues will be a concern along with turning the sport into a paid to hunt harvest.

Walworth County SD Farmers Ranchers and lineman have seen cougars... Ive yet to see one in our area I combine grain for 45 years around 1500 - 2500 acres seen a large mountain lion 2007 at Savoy, SD

Way too many cats and coyotes in the hills

We also have horses and pets.

We are asking for trouble when they have been seen in areas that children walk to school at and if one child gets killed because you are not putting enough human pressure on them, it will be your fault

We definitely need to manage mt. lion (bear and wolf) populations to enhance elk, deer, turkey etc. populations. Hunting is conservation and big business/economic impact. Thanks for the opportunity to participate! RMEF Life Member/Member for ~33 years.

We have both cattle and horses.

We have cattle and horses.

We have lost a lot of our poultry and livestock to lions

We need to allow dog hunting on lions so we can harvest males, not females. Dog owners will not shoot females out of trees. I have been to many trees and seen it was a female and pulled dogs and let run. Same as young toms. Dog owners do not allow this.

We need to explore more options to keep the lion population in check. It may not be politically correct to use dogs state wide but we need all avenues looked at before we have a tragic lion / human encounter. With the increased traffic in the Black Hills it is a matter of time. Then what????? It will be to late.

We need to let deer and elk hunters hunt mountain lions during deer season and elk seasons which will help to bring the lion populations down to acceptable levels

we need to make applying for cats much easier and try to help people who are senior citizens get some tags--in all our other draws the people who are older with lots of preference points don't get drawn--- we need to give the permits to those with the oldest ages first and get them taken care of -then over the years the age will work its way down to a nice balance.

We need to manage the population or they will become an unacceptable risk to livestock people and pets, numbers need to be kept in balance to preserve our other great types of hunting. I love the presence of lions out would rather shoot an elk.

We own several acres in the Black Hills (300+). We have a lot of lions in the area but the terrain and not being able to use dog makes our success in hunting lions very low. Would support dog hunting with rules and guidance to respect landowners.

What about wolves damaging the deer and elk population

What exactly is the problem with how it is now? In my opinion, everything is going perfect the way it is. Just because the houndsmen are pushing for expansion, there should be no expansion of hound hunting. It's too easy for them to kill cats and killing cats should be hard. They should be earned with boot leather put in. Just because the quota for BHFPD isn't met in recent years doesn't mean there's a problem. It's not a mandatory quota. I think it's better for a healthy population of cats to not meet the quota. This antiquated, deep seated fear of mountain lions is unfounded and should not be factored into population. Management decisions as much as it is, let's not weather trends over the time skew our decision making either. Some years there is a lot less snowfall during Mountain Lion season, so hunting is a lot harder than the quota is not met. Other years there's a lot of snow and the quota is met or almost met. This is just the natural way of things. The quota does not need to be met each year. We do not need to be so reactive to this natural cycle that we start changing management laws to close. I believe the GFP's population estimate is very accurate. I believe the quota amount and the overall structure of the season is set up excellently. This will be an unstoppable thing. Town Hunters will never be satisfied, They'll just want more and more. So let's not start to give in at all. Thanks for allowing me to be heard.

Appendix D: Resident Perceptions

1) What I see on my property (lion, track, killed) 2) what other hunters tell me they are seeing 3) what I read on facebook hunting forum and for SD

?News & Facebook - learning about sightings, habitation ?

of sick or diseased lions impacting communities Accounts on local news or media. Aggressiveness and natural avoidance levels of cats in the area.

#1 I don't know how many were taken to make the right decisions

1. Encounters in my living area by other in our development 2) Pictures of ML's on my game cameras - central Hills 3) Game Dept/News reports

2 of my cats have been killed by mountain lions (verified by GF&P & neighbors) - taken in my yard. A neighbor 2 houses from me has a mt lion video taped looking in their window & at their front door. They have small children!

2017 we had livestock killed by mt lions but none since then

74 years old lived here all my life. We never had many until about 30 years ago. Now we have way to many.

a booming white tail deer population

A drastic reduction in deer numbers in southern Black Hills had a horse run through a cross-fence badly injuring it

a healthy balance because we can coexist and the avoid humans for the most part.

A hunter saw one twice over the years have seen tracks

A lion population fluctuates every year in every over capping territory. Year to year studies will have varying results.

A little worried about an increase in population, four cubs have born in the area I live in, in the past two years

A lot less seen these days, not so many around

A natural predator in our area. Does require management of population.

A student in Colorado was jogging at school and was killed by a mt. lion. We have seen and heard proof of them. They are part of creation. If they didn't exist there would be overpopulation of other animals. Deer ruin gardens!

A very helpful SD Game, Fish and Parks are and staff

absence of deer population

Absence of news of significant livestock depredation

After 17 years of preference I finally got my elk license. With help from 2 people we hunted 22 or 30 days. Once season opened. we saw 3 mountain lions and only 3 herds of elk. Sickening!!!

After living here for twenty years I have only seen 2 lions and one was in Wind Cave National park. I don't see them as a threat.

All life needs a predator - prey relation that is balanced.

Amount of animals they kill and safety to public. Have killed way more than I ever thought they would seems more around then you would think.

Amount of deer they kill.

An ecosystem needs all populations to be healthy/remain viable

Animal Population Control - Supporting Healthy Ecosystems

Appears the population is becoming more noticeable in the area partly because the increasing rural urban population leads to more sightings. Potential issue is that as the subdivision extend more into the national habitat that lions will become more comfortable around humans and may have more negative impacts.

As a former mtn lion hunting guide in Colorado, I find it fairly easy to find lion tracks when looking for them after a fresh snowfall.

As homes are being built further out of the city (Rapid City) I believe we are seeing more mountain lions as we are taking/disturbing their homes and normal hunting grounds.

As long as there is a management program in place, we can coexist with the lions- You better get busy with an educational and management for the program for the bears also- they are here- no use denying or sticking your head in the sand!

ATV in the back country where they should not be allowed and the same goes for homes people should not be allowed to build in wilderness areas.

Availability of food is the primary factor that impacts mt lions.

available food source

Balance impact on other native animals

Balance of nature

Balance wild

Balanced wildlife population

Based on current population and adult lion ranges, we seem to be at a healthy population to sustain hunting without endangering the health of population

Based on Game Fish & Parks commission action proposal They gave data that in Dec 2023 the lion population was 274. And by Dec 2024 a decrease to just over 200. The use of dogs being the most successful.

Beautiful animal, if ever see one. Have only seen one in 30 years, that was near a highway and some distance from our car.

Beautiful animals. I have seen them 10-12 x since moving to SD. They are not always a threat to humans but occasionally to spots where cats and small animals are easy prey.

Before the season was implemented it was nice to see lion track. Now you don't see tracks.

Believe they are important but control the population... especially near populated areas.

Biggest is encroachment of their territories by humans

Breeding pairs introduced into a populated place was dumb

By seeing young subs by as many as 8 in one litter that will grow and will be close to residential areas and schools where young children are present.

Cabin in Spearfish Canyon have seen mtn lions on our cameras only at night

Carrying capacity and biodiversity

Cats stay with mothers for approx 2 years. Killing 1 female cat with kits is equivalent to killing 3 lions.

Caught on camera near home deer killed close to home

Concerned about mountain lion extinction due to over hunting.

Conversations with community members

Cow

Daily work in wildland fire 2001-2017 in SD, hunting and fishing regularly 2017 to present

Danger

Decrease in population in deer & elk I have 33 years pref for CSP elk mountain lions ruined it

Decrease of ungulates

Decreased number of deer sightings in the Black Hills year over year since 2021 at least.

deer & elk population seems down

Deer and elk population

Deer are on the decline! Mountain Lions and Coyotes are the #1 reason! They both need to be regulated more. They are decimating the deer and elk herds!

Deer population down significantly

Deer population is disappearing, no porcupines left in BHFPD

Deer population is noticably down and I believe mountain lions are a cause to some of that

deer/elk populations, cattle production loss in BHFPD

Discussions with associates who live in several types of communities and reports of sighting from our resort guests

discussions with friends

Diversity is important. They help control the deer population.

Do not hunt lions but prefer natural over the overpopulation of humans

Do not hunt. Have never seen a mountain lion here.

Do not like the killing of wildlife. In over populated areas transfer the animals to unpopulated areas.

Do not want any danger to every thing

don't have any

Don't want a predator living among us

Don't want them around

Elk & deer populations take a hit. We (huters) are the only "predetors" to keep numbers down.

elk and mountain lion predator/prey relationships is important to water grass carrying capacity.

Especially in CSP reduction in ungulate and bighorn yearlings by mountain lion predation. Also increase in presence and attacks by juvenile males in urban areas.

Factor 1 is I believe that if we keep our ungvlexe populations up we should have enough prey for mountain lions.

Factors that influence my perception of the lion population: anecdotal information, discussion with other hunters, and personal observation over the years. Having hunted in SD since 1980, specifically in the Black Hills, I unequivocally believe the deer population to have declined significantly due to the impact of a purposeful elevated line population. Fomented by GFP, evidence is clear when lions migrate out of the hills to other regions of the state and nation. Decreases in the numbers of bighorn sheep and mountain goats around Mount Rushmore is further evidence there are too many lions.

Far too few! Hunters are not responsible

Fear of predation on my beef cattle and my love of deer/elk hunting.

Fear of the unknown

Fearful of mountain lions becoming acclimated to humans in the Black Hills, resulting in a bad mountain lion / human interaction

Fellow hunters - GFP Info - news personal opinion what have read & seen on internet

Fewer deer and elk in areas where I've seen mountain lions or mountain lion tracks

fewer lions means more deer and elk

Finding deer and elk carcass

Foot prints in snow 4 feet from my house took my cat off my front porch

Forest Service Retired - aware of mgt of wildlife - so necessary thing

Former rancher, also have seen havoc caused by them to livestock, pets and one 4 year old girl

Frequency of negative interactions w/ humans. Deer population

Friend have mountain lion kill their pets

Friends and family

from what I have been

Game camera has caught a mt lion in Sept, Jan and Feb for the years 2021-2024. 2022 she had a cub.

Game cams

General balance in local wildlife environments Health of ungulate populations subject to human hunting

Get rid of all mountain lions in the black hills, we don't need them killing wildlife.

GFP

GFP does not release (or accurately know) the number of lions in SD

GFP information, general news, reports

GFP mgt

GFP reports, news, talking, to GFP wardens talk.

gotta manage cats

Had lion activity in area several years ago Horse head creek bridge cattle wouldn't stay in that pasture. Since then - nothing. Really don't know. Had foothill mountain ranch in Co. moved here 1996. Co they were becoming a problem here don't know.

Had two lions kill a deer in my backyard and got 4 on video at one time. Found many deer kills.

Harvest amounts, social media, visual accounts by self and others, game cameras

Has been to many sightings of lions in areas of housing or farm land

Have deer everywhere, no evidence of mountain lions or their action though live in forested area outside city.

Have lived, hiked and hunted in SD (mostly Black Hills) for 45+ years. I have seen one fleeting glimpse of a mountain lion in the wild.

Have not seen any danger of them

Have not seen one in person - they have torn apart the tops of our animal pens we are in their territory but with control they show a still have room.

Have seen sign of cats & tracks & a couple trail photos also friends sightings.

Have seen too many in town and residential areas

Have seen tracks in the snow - no actual mountain lions. I do not hunt them, but if necessary will dispatch one if under attack and call GFP to report

Have them in my neighborhood. Find deer carcass every once in awhile. Don't cause any harm so far.

Haven't seen one.

Having

Having children (all are over 16) that are more prone to be out in the woods & parks as a getaway to have a vacation break. thinking about

Having only seen 1 mountain lion in my 78 years in SD I see no reason to hunting seasons on mountain lions

Having property north west of Pringle and having lived there most of my life

the number of physical sightings both rural and in populated areas highlights the population perception

Health of the environment is the only factor to take into consideration. One Health.

healthy cats, big cats

healthy ecosystem

Healthy natural environment. Proper predator to prey ratio. Balancing nature and private property rights.

Hearing about sightings/sighting one myself

Hearing from those who hunt, personal observation

High deer population.

High, but acceptably so

History

ho-hum

Hope we always have them, but they need to be managed

Hound hunting - treeing a lion and killing it = disturbing behavior by "hunters."

Housing developments in the Hills have infringed on their territory, thus pushing them into more populated areas. If there must be a season to decrease population, that's fine but not just for the sport of killing.

How close they are spotted in residential areas -even those in the national forest. As an avid hiker around Pactola, Silver City & Edelweiss mountain I have seen their tracks on occasion but neighbors have seen them in passing. I hope I don't look like a tasty treat to one!

how fast lion numbers are harvested

How frequently I see them (never have)!

How many sightings reported around home

How often I see them lack of lion kills to my livestock

How often they are found in community areas.

How often they are spotted

Human/lion interactions and the displacement of juvenile lions to places far outside of the black hills is biological proof that the mountain lion population is far too high. All of my neighbors are afraid of a lion encounter and have begun to conceal carry firearms as a result. It seems our forefathers had the good sense to eradicate the lion population in more densely populated areas of the US in an attempt to promote human flourishing.

Humans do a poor job of "managing" nature (amongst other things)

Humans invaded their home the lions have a right to survive too.

Humans!

Hunter success or nonsuccess proliferation of deer in the Black Hills limited media stories of issues with livestock, pets, etc.

Hunting is a tradition but population must be managed so hunting can take place. Hunting lowers risk of injury and death of livestock, people, pets.

Hunting is an excellent way to control the population.

Hunting is conservation

Hunting lions ? dogs is not acceptable

Hunting small & large game I have seen 3 each in 16 years they lions don't like people

I am 31 years old and have only ever seen 2 lions in my life. I spend alot of time in the Hills hunting and 4-wheeling.

I am 91 years old and live in town - have no real reason to worry about mountain lion population at this point in my life

I am a farmer with livestock. I think the pop. in ranch areas can have both. I have not heard of many problems with livestock losses. Coyotes are a bigger prob.

I am a native of the Black Hills so I am familiar with the situation and the controversy. My livestock, pets and family/friend have coexisted peacefully with lions and other wildlife on whose habitat we dwell and conduct business. In addition to long experience with cougars here, I have a Harvard degree in Environmental studies.

I am a runner, and it does scare me, the thought of confronting one along my path

I am a serious archery hunter with traditional equipment. Lions also hunt deer. That is their role. Their presence is part of the "wild" outdoor experience.

I am a wildlife biologist. I live in the Black Hills.

I am an avid hiker. I have had the privilege of seeing a mountain lion on very few occasions. The lions were never threatening.

I am glad we have mountain lions here and i want them to stay.

I am in the Forest and CSP a lot for hiking and have never personally seen one. I feel the numbers are over estimated.

I am much more likely to see a lion in my yard then in my frequent walks in the hills with my dog. We see them now and again on neighbors security cameras.

I am not a hunter. I am a homeowner in the Hills and I accept that mountain lions are a normal aspect in this environment.

I am not a hunter. Therefore can not say except they have no place to go as their homes at being taken by housing

I am not sure what is a healthy cat population. I know the deer population keeps growing - there will be more sightings of cats as long as more and more homes are in the hills.

I am out and about hiking and see evidence of them so rarely, that I have a hard time believing there are too many of them. But I do see some evidence which is always a thrill.

I am terrified of them but understand their importance to our ecosystem.

I am told to take my pistol w me when out on the trails - there are a lot of them. I saw on u-tube to fire by their feet. I don't have to kill them unless threatened.

I believe 10 is too many of a hunting limit.

I believe a healthy population balance where they have ample wild prey & are not stressed into killing livestock, pets or humans is a good fit for the area.

I believe hunters in South Dakota would like to hunt deer and elk instead of mountain lions. Some hunters have waited 30 years to draw an elk tag.

I believe hunting of the big cats is a important and valuable tool to keep the population in check. I do Not condone the state wide shoot on site, anytime of the year season.

I believe in a diverse ecosystem

I believe it is a strong and healthy population.

I believe mountain lions are a natural part of the Black Hills and needed to balance nature. I don't believe that they are a threat to people, they didn't go out of their way to hunt humans!

I believe mountain lions are on important part of our SD wildlife.

I believe mt lions were in the Black Hills and South Dakota prior to the expansion of people taking over their habitat areas. We need to educate people about Mt. Lions. Rumors or misinformation cause fear. However, I do believe their population needs to be monitored as with other animals. Too many can cause disease or eliminate other animals species.

I believe that the area BHFPD and CSP could support more because I've never seen one and there are lots of deer. I'm not aware of domestic livestock losses due to lions.

I believe the lion population is adversely affecting elk populations in the black hills. I believe there are more lions than thought and the population should be decreased.

i believe the lion population is at a good level currently. There should be plenty of wild prey for them to survive on and cats bothering livestock should be targeted for GFP relocation or hunters should have a way to get the livestock owner's info in order to get permission to hunt that cat. I would love to hunt a cat with dogs but have seen where outfitters ruin the hunting areas for the average hunter by "leasing" up all the good land. When you make it a "for profit" sport, you ruin it for the average hunter. It is my understanding that the lion population is healthy now which shows good management by GFP. They are a tough hunt under current rules/regs but worth the challenge.

I believe the number of mountain lions harvested each year is about correct; however, there is a clear issue with mountain lions encroaching on centers of population. Here in Deadwood there has been a noticeable increase in the number of mountain lions sightings, the number caught on home cameras, and the number seen during the day. Following the trendline of what folks have observed (i.e., not hard data), the situation will soon be intractable.

I believe the number of permit is too many. The mountain lion will be exit because of over hunting if should be no hunting on lions

I believe the SDGFP monitoring the mountain lion population and administering the hunting seasons and permits is a logical method

I believe there are more lions than we think. I do believe that good houndsmen can help keep a healthy population going.

I believe there are too many in the black hills. I think a 3 week hound season at the end of the regular season should be available to help reach our quota. Use it as a tool to help manage our ungulate populations. As our deer herd has declined to the point of no doe tags. And we all know the numbers of lion kills on those species, which bring the money to our economy and state department.

I believe we do need a stable mountain lion population but not to overly expand hunting to such a degree where it starts to decrease.

I believe your taking too many and the season is too long. I also believe dogs should not be allowed.

I bowhunt in the Black Hills for archery deer, getting very difficult to fill an archery deer tag in the Hills. Too few deer around, would be interesting to know population trends in lions over the past 5 years.

I defer to GF&P experts to determine healthy populations levels & controls.

I definitely don't know enough. I have heard of increased mt. lion and ranching incidents but I don't know how that applies to other areas in the hills.

I do not agree with the use of dogs. On foot, no dogs is acceptable but still not great as I'd like to see the population stay the same or slightly increase.

I do not believe there are very many. It takes a mentally ill person to kill one. Let them live their lives. It's a sick sport.

I do not hunt. My perception is based on news stories and media reports regarding mountain lions.

I do not know how many lions are here. I lost a miniature horse to a lion in 2008. GFP brought dogs, killed the lion, at that time I was told that "unofficially" there are more lions than told to the public.

I don't agree with hunting them, especially with the use of hounds. I believe this is a vanity kill and lions are not necessary from an economic and ethical standpoint.

I don't believe lions only kill old and sick deer and elk. If deer and elk are overpopulating, then increase the number of tags. Why make hunters apply for 20+ years for an elk tag? I'd rather have people harvest the deer and elk than lions!!

I don't feel there are no many out there anywhere

I don't have enough knowledge regarding population to answer

I don't hear from many people that have seen or been affected by mountain lions. I have spent much of the last year in a large area of wilderness and have seen few tracks x minimal kill sites.

I don't hunt them - they don't bother me.

I don't know how the expanding population of people in the Black Hills can safely co-exist with mountain lions. I am afraid to go hiking anywhere.

I don't know what the actual population is or what the ideal population should be. So I selected #3. I trust wildlife biologists to manage them, and hope politics doesn't interfere.

I don't like when they are in town, killing or hurting animals or people - but those that built homes in country should expect them to be there

I don't own or hunt with dogs. I believe they would be a asset throughout the hills.

I don't see as many as I used to

I don't see them

I don't want mountain lions out of control (I know they pose threats to people, animals, pets, and livestock. Overhunting worries me and out-of-state hunters, they can hunt at home.

I don't mind mountain lion hunting in moderation. But I am opposed to hunting with dogs. If you can't hunt an animal without dogs you shouldn't be hunting. Use your hunting skills not a dogs skills.

I enjoy elk hunting so I'm bias toward watching the elk population thrive. I do own livestock cow/calves and have been worried about lions caught on camera but we have yet to have an incident as of yet.

I enjoy the mt lion population company back. I hope the we don't increase the amount harvested, sounds about right.

I feel it's fine as long as they don't get out of control and start coming after humans.

I feel people need to learn now to live with mountain lions. We have moved into their territory and taken their habitat. I have lived here for 30 years and have never lost a pet. I see tracks a lot.

I feel that the mountain lion population is too high at the moment. Too many sightings in town, but that could as because of so much construction going on in the hills.

I feel they are a keystone species and are necessary to control the deer/elk population - not the hunting of deer/elk.

I feel they are necessary - but no increase in them should be allowed

I feel they need to continue to have the present seasons continue

I find it hard to believe killing 40-60 lions each year doesn't drastically reduce populations

I grew up in a forest service family and the lessons I learned about conservation, ecology habitat and respect for the natural world stayed with me all all my life

I grew up in So Dak populations were quite low in the 1960s to 1980s. Today's populations of all wildlife are up. Part of this increase is due to good forest management.

I grew up in the Northern Hills and never remember hearing of (or seeing) any mountain lions. It is unnerving to see them in town now.

I had a neighborhood lion in Custer that hunted sick deer and a lot of small, nuisance animals like skunk, rabbits, racoon, etc. It did not bother my pets or grandchildren. I wish it would have taken more deer, as they were so destructive to my gardening attempts!

I have a large old mt lion who sleeps in my fenced in front yard or who sits on my back deck and watches me through my patio doors. He is not a threat.

I have been hunting around the world they go after predators because the value/hunting income is mostly in this region Elk/Deer Turkey/small game. Yes have lions but lets be smart every elk calf/deer fawn loss is how many hunters, big horn sheep, mtn goat valuable animals lost to lions.

I have been thrilled the few times I have seen one. Lots of tracks but very few sightings.

I have captured 2 photos on my 2 acre lot of different lions in past 6 months. And, it is quite obvious the Black Hill Lion population is far too high because to many juveniles have been displaced to places as far away as Connecticut.

I have encountered mountain lions while hiking in the Black Hills and seen evidence of winter kills while cross country skiing.

I have friends who have had pets killed by lions, they seem to have little fear of people, we have children that play outside

I have friends who hunt them

I have game cams on my property - several lions 7 dens have been kill or property - GFP investigates the tells me it was road kill and the coyote got it bullshit (Lie!!) the end- nothing done!!

I have heard very little about the hunt or population the last few years. I have seen their tracks around our home but never the live animals. My son & grandson have hunted but to no results. They have seen some lions.

I have hunted the Black Hills (very successfully) since 1959 and my only encounter with a lion was a picture on my game camera a year or so before the first season! And I lived in the woods.

I have interacted with cougar in the wild. They are a valuable member of a healthy ecosystem. Big cats are naturally curious but dislike human interaction. Humans cause the problems, not the puma.

I have lions around my property several times thru put the years. With hunting I still have lions passing thru my property.

I have live in the Black Hills my entire life. Born in Belle Fourche grade school in Deadwood Jr High & High school out Nemo Road & have lived in the Rockerville area for 44 years. I am retired from USDA forest service and in my 72 years have only seen (1) one mountain lion.

I have lived among the lions; male & female. I have never felt threatened. I don't want to see dogs used in hunting.

I have lived here 25 years and only saw one

I have lived in city limits for 20 years and they have always been spotted very close to my house.

I have lived in the northern Black Hills since 1974, mostly in the forest and not town. I have seen 2 mountain lions in that entire time. Beautiful animals that are losing much of their habitat to over development.

I have lost calves due to mt lions (gfp confirmed) our deer population is crazy low in the southern hills. Only one cat has got killed in fall river in the last 4 years. We don't get the snow. During June through November I have gotten at least one game pic per WEEK of mt lions on my ranches. We need cats in the hills but we need dogs to kill the cats to reach the quota.

I have moved to a home 1 miles from Deadwood 24 years ago. Have have never seen a lion since I have lived here now for 24 years. I moved here from Sioux City, Iowa.

I have never seen a lion in the wild

I have never seen a lion we have had a few walk near our house

I have never seen a wild lion. I have seen tracks while hiking and had a family member who lived by Lead have pets killed by lions

I have never seen one in the wild.

I have no factual knowledge about lion population certainly nothing you don't know. I suspect you have more reports as more people creep into lion habitat, not necessarily that there are more lions.

I have no opinion - I don't hike or hunt

I have only seen and lion 3 times in my life time in the BH.

I have only seen one in my entire life

I have pets but I 'm a pet owner who knows the risks of having pets living where I do. I think mountain lions need to stay present here for population control.

I have rarely seen them myself and have only a couple of acquaintance that have seen them in the wild. Mountain lions play a critical role in the natural cycle of thing in a healthy forest.

I have seen 6 cats in 10 years living in Hill City & Rapid City. All of these were in the Hills away from human pop. I have had only one threatening encounter w/ a cat.

I have seen a few mountain lion in the seven year that I have lived here. I have no problems with some livestock loss.

I have seen mountain lions a lot more in the area which I live

I have seen one on our security camera, as have many neighbors. I feel they pose a threat to my dogs.

I have seen signs, but never have seen one would love to though!

I have very little knowledge concerning the perception of the mountain lion population. This is evidenced by my answers or lack of answering answers. I do believe they are an integral part of the food chain.

I haven't had any experience hunting or seeing any mountain lions. I only know one person that hunts them.

I heavily base my perception on deer population & trail cam sightings on cameras our family and friends maintain. Both coyotes on camera & lions on camera appeared significantly higher in 2023's season.

I hike a lot and often see paw prints from them

I hike a lot/ I see many kills. I get them on camera often. Sometimes up to four in a group

I hike alot - southern hills - I always as a hunter watch for and assess wildlife - I see in some areas - lion sign - tracks - stool and such. There are lions out there - That is good

I hike often and have only seen a mountain lion once

I just do not hear much about lion being seen much. Overpopulation typically you would hear more sightings.

I know of there presents

I know they are out there. I had the pleasure of seeing one up close. I have also captured them crossing my property on a trail camera.

I know they are there as If find their kills, tracks, scat and such when I am hiking and looking fir mushrooms. I have only seen 1 live, wild one. Must be looking down to much!

I know they exist here. it is important for them to be here. There are too many turkeys and deer compared to 50 years ago.

I like mother nature to do most of the shaping

I like mountain lions. I looked to see if they have attacked humans. They have not. They can stay and help control the ungulate pop.

I like the fact that they are here and have not caused any big threats or concerns.

I like to see them in all the areas of our state. With all the developments their area has decreased - humans have to learn there is a balance to be considered. Also awareness exceptance that wildlife has to exist within these areas.

I like to watch the lions and other wild life in the wild

I live here. I am in the remote area of the Hill's.

I live in a community where I see mountain lions on my cameras surrounding my property - cats of all types are curious and we have never had a negative encounter and we have a domestic cat, 2 dogs and chickens

I live in a mountain subdivision in the Central Black Hills. I have never seen a mountain lion in our subdivision, since moving here in January 2010. Our office manager has seen a mountain lion "sunning" on a residents deck evidence of a "kill" have seen them a video com. Whatever is being done presently is working in my opinion... we have not encountered any issues with mountain lions. We also "chose" to live in a National forest. Stick with what is obviously working in our area.

I live in Box Elder and regularly see a group of deer in my backyard. I haven't been affected by them and the precense of deer and rabbits here lead me to believe the area has none.

I live in lion country worked at a national park. I believe they create a balance for wildlife populations.

I live in the Black Hills and believe the population is much higher than it is estimated. The greatest way to keep livestock, pets & people safe is by active hunting and population reduction. Our population is too large and has too ? of people.

I live in the Black Hills and see them and the dead animals they leave uneaten

I live in the Black Hills outside of Hot Springs. In 20 yrs I have seen lions twice, seen sign on a couple other occasions. If we can control them with hunting opportunities that is a win.

I live in the city of Spearfish and have not seen mountain lions even through. I have chickens. I do feel mountain lions are an important part of the balance of our local nature.

I live in the city, a mountain lion was sighted in our neighborhood for over a month.

I live in the county and know they are out there although I've not seen any

I live in the forest south of Spearfish and regularly have lion in my yard and have come upon lions three times in the Black Hills National Forest. I am much more wary of hunters and shooters than a lion.

I live in the heart of the Black Hills on 50 acres and walk / hike throughout the area & have never had an encounter - more and more construction is moving into their territory - we need to learn to respect the wildlife & live among them if living here.

I live in town so not often affected by them

I live on a ranch and early see mountain lions. When I see them, they are skittish of humans and easy to scare away.

I live on Red Canyon Road in the Canyon Rim Ranch. We used to have elk, deer, turkeys in significant numbers on the ranch. Excuse me, I forgot antelope. Now the numbers are greatly reduced we hardly see a living thing now - to many lions.

I live on the outskirts of Rapid City, 10 years ago. I felt those were way too many lions, now about existent.

I live outside of town in BHFPD and see mountain lions on my Game Cameras often, about twice a month. This has grown from 5 years ago.

I live rural with a population rear by that have been seen. We have livestock and don't believe we have lost any to lions. I know of 8 different seen within 4 miles of our place.

I lived on a ranch until I got MS and couldn't hunt anymore. Then moved to hills and lions help in the echo system.

I love to see signs of them at my workplace (Evergreen Cemetery in Hot Springs). I find their tracks after each fresh snow. Sometimes there are kittens following mom.

I may have a misperception, but my impression is that the mountain lion population is small because of years of mismanaging population control - hunting too many humans invaded their territory, and interfering with nature.

I miss seeing the mountain lion that lived next to us and would bring her babies around to see us each year. We haven't seen her since the second hunting season!

I miss the greater numbers of coyotes that were in the Black Hills. Seems there were more before mountain lions became more prolific.

I need to trust that SD Game Fish Parks is handling business honestly. If you say lion population is too high, increase the harvest #s. Lions need MILES of territory. If I see lions in populated areas, that tells me their food source is low and the animal kingdom is out of balance.

I never heard enough about mountain lion season or population of cats to answer questions 3-5. SD residents need more education about living with mountain lions.

I observe them frequently near my residence

I own 450 acres on the Wyoming/SD border mountain lions are there. but not a threat to people or livestock.

I own a resort very near Custer SD. We are seeing a big increase in sitings and evidence of mtn lions. I call GFP and the lady says "oh they won't hurt anything", I would like to release signed by GFP that when a lion kills a kid or a guests' pet, that GFP takes full and legal responsibility for the action.

I perceive the reduction in deer and elk populations are due to mountain lion dinners.

I personally like mountain lions and believe they are an integral part of nature and control of overpopulation of dear and other wild life.

I prefer elk calfs & deer fawns

I rarely hear about mountain lions or their activity

I rarely see one but have seen tracks at my inlaws place in Pringle, SD - in the snow & around the house

I realize we live in the Mt Lion alley. But there should NEVER be a dog hunt season in the state not even CSP. They choose to get and train dogs - they know they can go someplace else to hunt them. But don't expect our laws to change to suit them. THEY KNOW THIS BEFORE THEY INVEST IN DOGS. Also any lion hunting dog should be licensed if the dog or dogs reside in SD. Even if it don't hunt here in this state. Then you know who has them. I watch the Facebook post on these dog owners. The attitudes, leave me a little bit distrusting.

I really don't have an opinion either way

I really don't know if we have too many or too few, but I trust fish and game to know.

I recently moved here, but all indigenous wildlife needs to be managed to provide a healthy environment for ALL, wildlife, lives stock, pets, people, roads, parks, etc.

I remember as a kid here there was no lions. I've saw a couple of mountain lions in my life and they are a beautiful animal ? state I wouldn't want them not here they are beautiful I'm glad they are here.

I remember the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s when there was none or very few. After i moved home to the Black Hills after 2000, I like seeing them once in a while! Would like to have more around!

I ride the Mickelson trail. Had an encounter with a mountain lion in 2014 while on vacation. When I got close enough to realize it wasn't a dog, I turned around and was thankful it didn't follow me. Nothing recent.

I see less sign of mountain lions in the hills than I had in the past. But I feel it is a good population now.

I see the tracks all the time

I see them occasionally in Custer State Park. Imperative to keep small animals under control.

I see very few some tracks. We have spotted them on our property 3x in the past 10 years no fear of them only respect

I see, observe lion tracks, lion scat and occasional (prey) kill remnants. The lion population density within a 2 mile radius around Custer, SD seems appropriate Not too little sign and not too much sign.

I seldom see one. They have to eat something.

I solo hunt and find it very enjoyable whether I see one or not.

I spend a fair amount of time outdoor, in the permitted areas and have seen a few, have not felt threaten, but respect that they are present!

I spend a lot of time in the woods hunting, hiking, trapping and am always aware of lions from sightings, tracks & kills. I guess I have good firsthand knowledge in the northern Black Hills anyway.

I spend over one thousand hours in the woods per year most in a very isolated undeveloped region. And I see hardly any sign of lions like in years passed. Even the coyotes have returned, lacking any apex predator.

I spend time in the field see evidence of cats including deer kills

I started hunting when I was 12. In the 70s started hearing of lion tracks and seeing lions. In the mid 80s I saw more tracks and 90s more tracks.

I support good management that controls the true numbers of lions

I talk to people every day that have seen lions near their home everywhere in town and out

I think all animals including predators are an important part of a healthy ecosystem

I think all wildlife is important to preserve.

I think animal should be protected along w/ safeguard to population

I think I see more signs of a healthy lion population now than in years past. More varied areas for certain, includes within the city.

I think it was a good idea to start a hunting season when you did. The population was getting out of balance.

I think lions are important that lions are part of control of other animals. Lions found in rural areas should be relocated if possible.

I think that the lion is an important piece of the wild animal ecosystem

I think the biggest factor that impacts our perception is when we hear of mtn lion attacks on pets, livestock, or people in the surrounding areas.

I think the GFP has managed the mountain lion population well with the present seasons and parameters.

I think the mountain lions pose a threat - but I always feel bad about any animal being "hunted." I suppose something has to be done.

I think the population is okay; unless there is problems in different areas

I think there is more than we know. Also, because of the difficulty in getting a cat, the numbers will always be high for population

I think there should be more mountain lion population in the Black Hills

I think they are an essential part of the ecosystem and their population needs to be maintained, but I don't have hunting experience / knowledge.

I think they are beautiful and play an important part of managing deer population etc. They clean up dead carion as well.

I think they are necessary like the wolves in Yellowstone. I also agree they control deer population. I wish they would not kill elk & livestock.

I understand the need to monitor/manage the ML population but think to many are harvested!

I understand the role of the mtn lion with respect to natural control of deer and small game populations. Mtn lion are curious, so my activities outside must include awareness of my surroundings.

I view mountain lions as part of the natural environment in rural SD. Also I feel them to be less of a threat to nature than prairie dogs.

I was a logger in the Black Hills for many years. I know they have seen me more than I have seen them. The fact that I have not been eaten yet tells me that GF&P are doing a good job keeping their population in check.

I work in the woods.

I worked in the national forests for 35 years. Encountered a number of lions during that time. I worked in an area where fatal human encounters happened several times. Its part of being aware and prepared.

I worry about safety of human and pets

I would like see a healthy population of mountain lions throughout the state of SD, and maintained well factors include the elk, deer, livestock, and small game population.

I would like to see an increase in our mule deer population

I would like to see dogs used for hunting. It could limit the amount of lactating females being harvested.

I would need to know more about the trends in mtn lion population in SD over the past several years in order to answer questions about whether I think they should increase or decrease.

I'm a PhD biologist teaching mammalogy in the Black Hills at the collegiate level (undergrads). Many of my students are interested in cougar in the Black Hills, so I try to keep on top of this, but it isn't my research focus.

I'm a rancher, not a hunter, haven't had livestock impacted by lions

I'm an avid hunter & I've seen our deer & elk population continue to decline.

I'm concerned with the population becoming too small - will it play a part in the extinction of them

I'm not very informed and for that I'm sorry. I'm not from a family of hunters. We keep taking away from their habitat?? Then we want to kill them??

I'm rural. Lions in my area are shy and don't impact me a lot. I see about 1 a year and hear them 3-5 x a year. In towns, they are a hazard, as they have no fear of people.

I've had a lion outside my window in the daylight and they have killed ducks in my backyard

I've hunted in SD since 1972 and only seen 3 lions

I've lived in the Black Hills about 65 years & have never seen a mountain lion

I've lived in the Black Hills for 55 years and only seen on mt. lion. I don't feel there are too many. There are far too many deer.

I've never seen one

I've never seen one in the wild so I wouldn't mind the population but I don't want to see hunting them restricted either

I've never seen one.

I've only seen one in 34 years. I see deer almost every day

I've seen lions and scat. I've been stalked by lions while hiking. I have come across numerous tracks and no less than 6 dens while hiking in the past 5 years.

I've seen them in the wild before and it definitely lends a wild aroma to the hiking/camping of the Hills to know you may encounter one

I've seen too many outside Spearfish near crow peak - in neighbors yards and on their cameras

I've worked outside all across the forest for 12 years & the only lion. I've actually seen several running across a highway. I've never felt threatened by the fact that they exist.

If deer and elk populations are substantially impacted, I would be concerned.

If I read, see or hear news accounts of mountain lion sighting east of the Black Hills, I think there are too many mountain lions. I tend to believe overpopulation of mountain lions in the Hills causes them to head East.

If I see them in my neighborhood, its time to cull the herd

If I start seeing them and deer population decreases to much or they start taking livestock and pets there are to many

If mountain lions are posing a threat to local communities after the hunt, I believe there should be an increase in the number to be harvested.

If the lions are kept under control in populated areas I believe they help keep the deer population down. I would be in favor of raising the license price for trophy hunters. Beautiful animal.

If there were to many then the deer would not be overpopulated in the hills

If they are found in town too much-too many don't want extinct or protected status.

If they are moving out of their natural habitat to find food, I would consider being over populated

If they are out there and I don't see them and they aren't killing livestock population is about right

If they became a factor such as harming people they should be addressed

If they're close to town, need to get rid of them.

If you are seeing them there is too many. We need some but not a lot.

If you do the people math on how many female cats then are it will not take long to have way to many and the will kill off all other game (they are killing machines).

If you want to decrease lion population put a bounty on them It's all about money to you people.

In all the years I have hunted or hiked in the Black Hills I have never seen a mountain lion (Bobcat yes). I would love to see one and my grandchildren some day. Thank you for all your work.

In hiking on the forest I have seen tracks

In March of 2022, out next door neighbor put a trail cam in his backyard. Within 2 days he had pictures of 2 mountain lions within 50' of his house. They have 2 small children, and live in Custer. They showed the pictures to the Game and Fish and they elected to nothing about it.

In my area of the southern Black Hills we occasionally get a mountain lion which is healthy. However, I don't think we need fewer or more mountain lions in any of those areas.

In our area. I no of no problems

In the 18 yrs I have lived in Custer I have not seen a lion or evidence of lion predation. Only 1/2 the number of animals allowed in the hunt have been killed which leads me to believe the the lion population is not as high as GFP estimates

In the past (5-10 yrs ago) I saw more mountain lions when hunting in the Black Hills. Population of lions seems to be dropping below sustainable numbers.

in town pet attacks

Increased sightings in populated areas seem to indicate too many/not enough hunting range for the lions

Increased sightings in residential areas

Increased sightings. Decrease in deer and elk populations due to predators like mountain lions

Increased siting closed and in town

Info it: mtn lions only received through news media. Typically a story when one is sighted.

Information provided by GFP

Is there enough natural food source available to them? If not, then they of course will go after what they can ie pets, livestock, etc.

Isolated incidents of lion attacks on human beings. The benefit of lions for managing deer populations.

It created a balance eco system

It doesn't bother us

It is the job of GFP to tell us what is best for all game herds - not ranchers or hunters! You have the science!

It is to late to close the barn door after the horse gets out. With the population growth, we have alot of hikers, runners, campers in the Black Hills/ We don't need loss of life.

It keeps the deer population under control

It seems like the deer population is growing mtn lions can keep that number down. It is important to have mtn lions where there is a large deer population.

It seems natural to me. I am not aware of any killing of cattle or sheep

It's a little bit scary when you see mountain lion tracks around your housing development.

It's hard to say without seeing the data / numbers. I think the current rules are probably fin. I just don't like the hunters. They're typically rude assholes.

It's important for a healthy mountain lion population to exist in the Black Hills. They are important for the food chain and ecosystem.

It's the circle of life

its to high you used to go out and not cut 9 track no that's all you see there every where.

Job of F&G to manage the resource responsible I sure left to their own device ranchers would destroy them all - not acceptable

Just by news in local paper; sometimes by the few who tell me one has been seen in the area. Less than 3

Just don't want them in our yards getting our pets

Just keep them controled as normal

Just reports I hear/read from SDGFP

Just worry about calves and pets

keep deer number in check

Keep the population at a point that they don't harm livestock, maintain a population that would support annual hunting

Keep track of the numbers and manage by hunting for a sport that requires a expensive licening fees.

Kill way to many mule deer and elk. Mule deer kills in the hills out number be whitetail even though whitetails out number the mule's.

Killed my cats and my goats

Killing deer and elk fawns

Know of lots of baiting to hunt them which is unfair

Lack of balanced reporting

Lack of data on mountain lion populations, expiration of season without filling quotas

Lack of information provided with regards to bear, wolf and mountain lion populations and management

Large predators have role. Unfortunately one of their main prey specie by number has found city life desirable. Urban deer are more a problem.

Leave nature alone!

Leave our local mt lions alone! As long as they stay respectful leave them alone. They manage themselves. If we have a problem lion either or GFP will take care of that one. The adults teach their offspring to be respectful.

Leave them alone!

Leave them alone. People build home in the mountain lion "home" then the people have problems. Deal with it.

Less deer and less elk population

let them be, as with other wildlife, they were her 1st. There are natural factors to keep their numbers in check.

Let WL biologists do their Job in managing the hunt and keep the greedy state tourism and parks out of it. It's not about more hunters and more money for fewer lions.

Level of lions being harvested

Like to hunt deer, elk, bobcat, and porcupine and turkey

limited awareness of current # of mountain lions and issues related

Limited contact with human

Lion population reduces excess deer population, less lions more deer. More people killed by hitting deer with car. Deer cause more property damage. (I like deer by the way.)

Lion population will manage deer and elk herds for better than men would ever!

Lions are not killing enough of the vermin called white tail deer in the Black Hills

Lions are part of a healthy ecosystem but are vilified by humans because they impact our livestock and pets. Lion management should really be limited to problem animals, but I realize that's impractical. Modest management is best.

Lions cause me trouble with fresh weaned calves. I have seen a young dog killed in a friends yard. Always concerned for young children and baby calves.

Lions growing faster then permits allow

Lions help to manage the deer populations

Listen to the experts

Little impact to ranchers and urban areas. Population encroaching on lions territory should be aware of them.

little personal information

Live here for 5 years - only seen one in that time - not over populated.

Live in center of the hills - outside of Rockford (2x) have seen cats & 2 caches - 150 yds from home - viewed only thru game camera - have never felt threatened! or unsafe hiking

Live in the country we have seen tracks, especially during winter. We walk dogs and have no problems. Besides they were here first.

Lived here 10 years and never seen one. It sounds like they are more of an issue in northern hills like Lead/Deadwood

Lived in BH most of adult life. Never have seen one.

Lived up on Triple M Ranch Rd. We learned to exist with them. They would come in while we were out camp fire - our signal to go inside for the evening.

Livestock as wildlife

Livestock deer #s

Livestock depredation human-lion interactions

Livestock killers

livestock safety strongly oppose traps/snaring due to risk with other animals & pets

Livestock, small game and big game populations

Living in the Black Hills since 1995 observing the mountain lion

Living in WY and watching lion, grizzly, and wolf populations decimate deer, elk, and moose populations (while greatly protected) has formed my opinion that apex predators need severe reduction.

Living rural with livestock and pets, with limited medical services

Local communication with neighbors and others in our area about sightings and livestock (poultry) attacks.

local news report

local news reports

loss of livestock

Loss of pets in the Foot Hills around Piedmont area.

Lots of deer, minimal alternative predation

Lots of sightings the past few years But lions were here when we moved in.

Love wildlife

Low deer numbers / low elk numbers / low turkey numbers

Lowest deer count on my property in 3 generations (2023). I have not seen a lion but the tracks and urine smell are present.

Many years of ranch life in the white mts of AZ and hunting and guiding in AZ. A healthy lion population helps to cull the sick and weak deer and elk and helps and increase the overall health and quality of the herds.

Media news reports

Media reports Concerned citizen discussions Veterinarian opinion

Monsters in the woods is wild and thrilling

More are causing threats/deaths of pets-chickens as they are not afraid of humans anymore

More lions are seen throughout the communities then seen in wild. I believe they need to be maintained by Hunters and be a little more pressured to reduce negative habituation.

Mostly talking to other hunters, or hearing of/from people who have directly been impacted by mountain lions (taking chickens for example) These are very rare in my circles hence generally neutral.

Mountain lion population are part of nature. I have never seen one in the wild. They exist in South Dakota's habitat.

Mountain lion population dynamics, i.e. are the cats migrating out of the BH area? and if so how many are seen caught, etc. to the predator / prey ratio balanced?

Mountain lions are a great part of our ecosystem. No human incidents. Keep to themselves.

Mountain lions are a natural balance

Mountain lions are a part of nature

Mountain lions are a requisite for healthy bovine populations and habitat being that they were indigenous in all states, prior to colonization.

Mountain lions are a very reclusive animal. Most people never see one. If the biologist maintain a huntable population, they should be hunted. If have problem animals (residential areas) they should be dealt with.

Mountain lions are an extremely vital part of a healthy ecosystem. This is their home first, ours second.

Mountain lions are an important part of the eco-system Let them do there thing - if they take down deer its better than cars taking out deer

Mountain lions are an important part of the ecosystem & should be maintained. We are building & expanding in their territory so we need to be cautious not blame the lions.

mountain lions are an important role in food web and ecosystem. While I want them to thrive & increase, I fear that would lead to the perception & over correction of populations later on.

Mountain lions are beautiful animals. What is done with them when they are killed? Mounted or eaten?

Mountain lions are becoming far too comfortable with people

Mountain lions are high level predators, necessary for deer control but a threat to human life and activity in the Black Hills

Mountain lions are important to help control wild game. However, we are seeing more coming into town which poses a huge safety risk. We have two small children and live against a cattle pasture.

Mountain lions are important to our ecosystem. Hunting should not be based on public whim but science.

Mountain lions are killing the deer. Mountain lions are important to the ecosystem.

Mountain lions are moving into residential areas they need to be kept outside city limits to the best of the GFP ability.

Mountain lions are necessary for well being of Black Hills and should be managed to continue BUT NOT to be a nuisance to farms, pets or endanger people - delicate to fund that number... good luck.

Mountain lions are part of a health ecosystem. People need to take precautions with pets and during hiking to limit negative interactions - Also just seeing a lion does not mean it is necessarily a problem.

Mountain lions are stealthy and reclusive. The fact that the number of sightings and attacks on livestock and pets has increased despite the high population of natural prey is concerning.

Mountain lions have killed people and a lot of pets. There was a reason we didn't have them here for years. If they are hungry they will eat whatever - keep them in Custer State Park mayby. they have too many offspring.

Mountain lions help keep deer populations healthy. Deer populations in Rapid City for example would be less of a problem if we had more mountain lions.

Mountain lions in a populated areas

Mountain lions in South Dakota rarely are seen in populated areas. They avoid people. We have plenty of open space and wild life for them to co exist.

Mountain lions in the hills give me pause from biking or hiking in the area

Mountain lions live on my property. Frequent trail cam pics of singles and pairs. 3 personal encounters all outside the season.

Mountain lions pose little threat to people and are a sign of a healthy balanced environment.

Mountain lions should be allowed to be hunted the same as coyotes as they are a danger to livestock.

Mountain lions should not be in populated areas

Mountain lions were around before people

Mt lion kill of deer and elf offspring

Mt lions are human killers most usually when attacked!! Should be removed from populated areas!

Mt Lions are rare to see and don't pose a threat to people or domestic animals if treated with respect. If people would keep their pets under control, there would be less mt lions around neighborhoods.

Mt lions can manage their own population GFP is only interested in selling licenses to get more money. I feel that non-shooters have much say so about management of any animals.

Mt lions our part of the ecosystem/environment around them without them other populations get over populated. Delicate balance we need to pay attention to be average

mt. lions are important to the ecosystem as long as they are not killing livestock, pets or people.

Mt. Lions keep the populations of undulant (deer, elk, prong horne) healthy by calling sick and weak animals. This supports healthier grasslands and forests.

Mtn lions are part of nature. They deserve to be here as much as people. I need to be respectfully aware of them in how I utilize my property and experience nature when hiking and camping.

Mtn lions should be treated like coyotes

Multiple cats traveling together in most sightings

My dog was killed by a mountain lion in front of me in my backyard. I live in city limits.

My family and I are afraid to go hiking or camping in the Black Hills because of mountain lions. We don't know how to protect ourselves. We wish the state would do something about it.

My family live within city limits of Keystone SD. Because the trustees and city employees refuse to enforce a ban on feeding wild game we are overrun w/ deer.

My friends telling me when they see them Facebook groups Seeing areas where there seem to be way fewer deer than you would expect

My home is surrounded by national forest. Mountain lions are an important part of that. They were here before I was. We live in peace together.

My nephew hunts lions and his comments principally guide my opinions and perceptions of the issue

My opinion is based on what I hear

My perception is that all species are managed for the enjoyment of hunters and not for the environment or the health of the environment

My son was followed by one.

My time spent outdoors during hunting, fishing recreation Talking with other outdoors people A lifetime of hunting in SD 50+ years

My work in the environmental field gives me an appreciation for the role predators play and I also agree with the need for a regulated hunting season.

myself - neighbors had many pictures on game cameras with cubs over the last yr. only see at night

NA

NA I only got a tag in case I see one while hunting other species.

Native predators play an essential role in the ecosystem and have a right to live in large, natural areas of good habitat

Natural biodiversity is necessary! Mountain lions are part of God's "management system" - our encroachment into their "homes" puts us more in risk of being involved in an incident. Mgmt on the conservative side is important!

Natural part of a healthy environment. Management should be minimal and only problem cats.

Natural part of the habitat

Natural predators are a sign of a healthy ecosystem and I think people are so disconnected from nature that they forget that.

Nature

Nature -without human intervention or "management" has its own way of keeping a healthy and natural balance. Human interference always destroys and disrupts that balance.

Nature is a circle/cycle of life

Nature's balance

Natures way of keeping things in balance

Near within 1/2 mile of my home I found 11 deer carcasses that appeared to have been predated - presumably cougar since they seemed to be moved to a secluded location

Need in ecosystem

Need more deer and elk, less lion

Need more mountain lions to help maintain the health of the increase in the deer population

Need proper management I think were a little over populated in the Black Hills

Needed for balance of wildlife. Too many deer, so prefer anyway to reduce that population.

Needs to be the delicate balance like all other predators - they were here 1st

Never been an actual documented attack on a human. If I am seeing them and they are being run over by vehicles there are far too many.

never less than we have now

Never saw one

Never saw one or heard of one second hand only myths and rumors

Never seen 'em. Not a hunter.

never seen one

Never seen one

News and word of mouth and GFP reports

News articles about mt lions in city limits or looking into people's windows when I hear about a mt lion killing livestock from farmers & ranchers

News reports & conversation w/ friends/neighbors

News reports from SDGFP

News reports of the number of lions taken per season

News reports talking to local residents

News social media

news stories - per attacks deer population

Nice they are there

No comment

No dog hunting

No impact in our life. They are very shy. We go hiking and sleeping outside. We love to know they are around. It is their land. They were here before us.

No impact. It is good to know they are around. They belong to this Land.

No mule deer in the bh, mt lions are killing way more deer in the bh than hunters are. 200 mt lions in the bh, 1 deer per week=10,400 deer killed. That's not right.

No, of human encounters that are threatening.

none

None

Not a hunter; tend to find many hunters are not people I associate with, so not interested about it

Not enough deer and elk in the Hills

not enough lions because they're are too many deer and elk

Not seeing too many deer or elk out of town

Not sure

not very many deer are left

Number and amount of time it takes to each quotas.

number harvested and speed of harvest too many lions harvested

Number of lions

Number of sighting trail cause door bell camera.

number of tags issued should be based on a healthy lion population

Number of times I see or hear one. Stories from neighbors and friends.

OK to have a few, but not over population

OK to have lions but population must be controlled. Allow what ever form of hunting it takes to control the population. In the Black Hills mtn lions can soon kill too many deer and/or other animals.

One appeared in my backyard and caused no harm but was unacceptable in such close proximity to pets and children

One of God's creatures!

Only a couple seen in the past few years. So I guess its ok.

Only if they run out of natural prey in the wild, which I don't see happening.

oppertunity to hunt

Other states have protected mountain lions... the population of mountain lion increases throwing off equilibrium - mountain lions not only attack pets, livestock, but also hikers - outdoorsmen. SD is known for its outdoor recreation - we do not need mt lion population increasing and posing risk to human tourism or livestock

Over abundance of wildlife that a mountain lion would prey on. People need to be aware that this is where they live and be more responsible when it comes to being outdoors or living in the country setting.

over populated

Over the years since lion season has started, they have been too many young lions taken

Over-population of deer, diseased deer

Part of nature

paw prints, diminished mountain goats

paw prints, partially eaten pray

Personal experience in the BHNF

Personally know of some people that have lost pets to mt lions others have lost livestock. If cats are in town then there are too many pushing them in.

Pictures of elk kills, several deers killed on my small property, pets

Please do not hunt lions, especially with dogs - so cruel

Plenty of sightings in and around Hot Springs in 2023. GF&Parks has really underestimated the number of mt lions in the Black Hills

Predator populations are rarely well managed. Liberals allow predator populations to increase at the expense of hunting.

Predators are a necessary presence to control populations of deer and other sources of food for predators

Predators are needed in a healthy ecosystem. The deer population need them as well.

Predators can be expected in rural areas, including mountain lions. Residents should take precautions.

Presence of scat Sitings on game cameras Discussions with hunters

Previous experience. Have seen video of them in our neighborhood

Prey species ? density of terrestrial lions, human populations, tourist seasons & vehicle travel density

Prey species population numbers are still quite high in some areas. This indicates a lack of keystone predators. Population dynamic numbers are needed to make this survey relevant.

Proper state management will keep mountain lion to populations that provide for good hunting and track. Live stock and pets - as food white trail female deer I wood. Hope more would be talked by mountain lions.

Public information

Published lion population information. Lion encounters with humans in populated areas.

Quit taking their territory and people would see them a lot less. That goes for all the wildlife.

Rabbits in area decrease

Rancher - livestock production

Ranching

Rarely see lions or sign of lions

Rarely seen

Rarely seen Rarely troublesome Part of the eco system

Reading the and hearing stories about in town and around school yard

Remove more cats if they are affecting elk and cattle in the state

Reports from other hunters

reports of lion live stool hills

Reports of sighting in my area

Reports of sightings & activity by ranchers & farmers I have contact with

Reports of sightings, local deer population, local domestic pet population, physical evidence such as tracks and kill remains

Residential (town city) sitings. Mountain lions seen in areas in central SD that haven't been seen before. With all wildlife and growing people population they are getting pushed out of their habitat.

Run OK with them. I would like to see a few more permitted to be harvested. Hound dogs are ok with me.

satisfied with current population

Saw a lion on my property north of Rockford. Have seen sign throughout the hills

Saw one on Thanksgiving Day in CSP. (very healthy) Treasured the experience. Tracks in his territory indicated he was the only one in that area. Please do not overhunt.

See a lot of deer kills in the hills so they are pretty hard on the population I think.

See Q13

See them frequently close up on cameras in our neighborhood on thunderhead falls road.

See them occasionally

See to many cats on trail cameras

Seeing lions kill 100 sheep in one night to train cubs. Having deer killed in my yard and left.

seeing lions, the remains left

Seeing more lions now where we live - a little too scary

Seeing mtn lion sign and word of mouth from other sightings.

Seeing mtn lions in town

Seeing them in city limits of Sturgis is concerning to small pets and people. Also since this is a heavy mountain biking set. Concerned about the safety of people enjoying the hills.

Seeing them or their sign is nice & shows that they are at a good population level

Seeing tracks, trail camera pictures, finding kills deer and elk populations

Seems to be growing and should be managed

Seems to be more lions in the Hot Springs area and in town

Seen one in our yard 5 times in 32 years lost 2 domestic cats 3 years ago. Mother with cubs teaching them to hunt. I feel they help in maintaining over population.

Setting a limited amount of tags to people who are able to hunt and old enough

Several thats near us

Several years ago there were too many. Pets disappeared. Now the numbers are good. We see them seldom but we know they are here.

shed hunter is my primary outdoor activity. i see more dead deer than i expect to

Sheep industry has been destroyed- An entire tourist season has been destroyed. Years ago out of state big game hunting brought in thousands of out-of-state hunters providing SD with huge profits for many industries. Now even SD residents have to wait years to get a big game license. Even some land owners. This is a disastrous financial situation for SD. & the massive loss of income for ranchers due to livestock slaughter. IN ADDITION! Recently some states have reintroduced wolves, same stupid financially ridiculous nonsense as mountain lions. The proper number of mountain lions is about 3, confined in bear country.

Should be perceived as a natural animal to live in South Dakota. Populations and their excessive ways of living have degraded the natural beauty of the Hills.

Should remain a state population to assist with managing prey populations

sighting kill sites near my home

Sightings and livestock kills

Sightings by residents Missing pets and dead livestock Hunters abilities to ranch harvest numbers

sightings in close proximity to populated areas indicating possibly to many cats for available food source

Sightings in residential areas and far too many tracks in the BHFPD.

Sightings near my own residence (on ring came near SD state home) as well as others. Known deadly attacks in other areas.

Sightings of mt lions and amount of tags filled

Sightings within city limits.

Sightings, interactions, reports of contact

Sightings, mt lion tracks in urban areas, or killing of livestock by mt lion in rural areas

Sign while hunting - I do not know many lions hunters - so licenses do not appear to be too many.

Signs of them when hiking and backpacking living on a goat farm (1-2 years) stories from other residents personal experience

Since I don't know the current population I have remained neutral in my answers to number of permits and the state departments management of hunting mountain lions

Since I have moved back here (2006) there have been 4 go right past my house. (little bit scary?)

Since I live in Deadwood, we have an acceptable number of deer and other wild game inside the city. I think a few visit each year by mountain lions is acceptable.

Since I'm not a hunter I don't think I can perceive any factors. I guess as long as they're under control.

since mountain lions aon this place about 1/5 as many fawns making it to yearlings

sitings - haven't heard of too many lately... yet to see one... hoping!

social media

Some of the factors are that we have had mountain lions around eating animals. But we like how there is hunting to keep the population down under managed levels.

Spend a lot of time in the woods and the number of deer has dropped dramatically and they are showing up more in town; Custer, Rapid City especially

Spent years getting rid of lions, bear and wolves. We got along fine without them. Can get along without them now.

Stable population

Stories from friends in the hills

Stories of depredation - livestock & other domestic animals. Decrease in # of deer & elk in BH.

Strong deer and elk populations are impacted favorably by mountain lions killing the lame, sick and weak from the herds. Controlling the lion population through hunting ensures a proper balance of the ungulates and lions.

Strong lion population & elimination within city limits. Especially Rapid City,

Success of hunting season harvest sightings of lions and tracks in the area

Taking domestic pets & livestock

Taking of wild game, young deer and elk

Tell the truth in the lion population. Treat them like any other predator.

Thank you for communicating with your community about the mountain lion situation. We believe GFP is doing respectful research and making experience-based decisions that help keep the balance of predators and natural order. We do not want anyone to bring in other predators like bears into our location.

The amount I see on my property

The amount of pets disappearing from Cleghorn Canyon is shocking. Also all the home security cams capturing lions roaming around Rapid City patios is shocking.

the amount to be killed each year. I wasn't aware we had that many lions

The Black Hills area is too small for a viable mtn lion population to coexist with people

The Black Hills has a large deer population the presence of a large predator is important to help control the deer

The Black Hills has lots of lions near towns. Would like to see more management by way of using hounds or lengthen season for licenses.

The cats have an incredible "range". seeing "sign" ie, scat, tracks, etc. in towns leads me to the conclusion that we have too many for the carrying capacity of the land. Additionally, a diminution or reduction in deer and elk tags affects hunters as well.

The concern I hear from people regarding mountain lions are their perceived threat to livestock and pets.

the decrease of the deer herd in the BH

The exists population eats too many deer/elk

The factors that affect my perception of the mountain lion population are the cruelty and careless attitudes of the hunters I know, and the scare mongering of my neighbors. I've had neighbors who shot ANY animal on their property that wasn't theirs, and I don't give a damn about any rancher's "prize" ewe that was really worth \$1.25.

The factors that impact my perception of the mountain lion population have to do with the number of cats that are hit by cars, as well as incidents of cats, going into housing developments, and taking pets.

The fawns are being killed, also turkeys and elk calves

The frequency that lions are spotted in urban areas

The increase in mountain lions had decreased our deer and elk hers. Drawing a license for deer or elk is very difficult compared to say 10 years ago. but it is not the only factor.

The large area they travel and establish residency

The limited ungulate populations and lack of reliable mountain lion population abundance data.

The lion population in the BHFPD is too high. Lions are too intelligent to be lured to decoys and calls. Hunting with dogs needs to be allowed.

The lions are a valuable, necessary part of the ecosystem. Boot hunting ok for control. Using electronically and and dog packs, not so much.

The number of deer and elk the lions kill each year

The number of elk/deer kills I find in the forest.

The number of lions I have seen. The number of lion kills I have seen.

The number of lions I've seen and heard of being seen locally has increased in the past 5 years. The number of dens I've seen while hunting and hiking has increased in the past 5 years.

The number of reported sighting or claimed by my hunting friends

The number of sightings in populated areas

The number of tracks, of then multiple sets, that I personally observe while hunting.

The only predator they suffer is human - we need to manage them somewhat - moreso with the influx of population unfamiliar with them

The only thing I have to go on is what I hear or read

The population needs to be controlled. However; any mt lion that poses a threat to livestock, pets or people should be shot on sight - no exceptions!

The population needs to be controlled. In our area, there are now coyotes. Not sure if that is caused by lions or disease. Only problem I have is taking a female with young cubs. It makes them starve or go after prey like pets.

The practice of elimination the larger healthy lions puts younger lions at risk for not learning how to hunt wildlife, creating a situation where pets become their preferred source of feed. Would encourage a better strategy.

The reduced population of deer in the hills must have a correlation with the number of lions. With the deer almost half of the goal, predation has to be a factor.

The sharing of information such as trail cameras etc

The state and GFP denied the presence of mountain lion in the Black Hills for YEARS. They're doing the same about black bear. Mountain lion and black bear are natural to the black hills. there is plenty of land and good for them not to be problematic.

There are balance in nature

there are far too many deer and hopefully the lions would help with deer control, I would like to have some lions in my yard

There are far too many people in the Black Hills to safely co-exist with mountain lions. It is just a matter of time for a mountain lion attack on humans.

There are not enough hence the over abundance of deer. I do not like mountain lion hunting. They are pressured too much as it is. There is zero supporting in it. It is not hunting, its killing.

There are plenty of deer, etc. to feed a large population of mountain lions. Threats to people, pets, and livestock should be minimal or none.

There are plenty. Food becomes an issue. I see them in town eating peoples pets.

There are so many deer in the Black Hills. Predators can help keep the number manageable.

There are to many lions in the Black Hills area. They have taken a toll on the deer and elk populations in some areas, also porcupines, racoon and bobcats.

There are too many. We can see them on camera in town far too often.

There part of South Dakota and the U.S. should be around always

There rolls as part of the entire eco system

There surviving

These animals are part of nature no issue at all with nature

They are a beast of nature, should we get rid of them like the moose, bear and Buffalo?

They are a beautiful animal but needs to control population so there is not a problem.

They are a beautiful animal deserve a chance and harm no one

They are a beautiful creature to see

They are a critical part of our ecosystem. They provide balance within are forests. I have had them on my property and do not mind.

They are a natural & necessary part of the ecosystem.

They are a natural animal of this country and need to be regulated just like everythings else

They are a natural predator and should be here in controlled numbers

They are a natural predator that's native to this area, we are the newcomers

They are a normal part of our environment.

They are a part of nature and deserve to live and populate naturally

They are a very dangerous animal that can be hard on livestock & have been known to attack humans.

They are an important aspect of the ecosystem. Management is acceptable as long as it is not allowed to upset the balance that would affect on the ecosystem as a whole.

They are an important part of the balance of (deer esp). They have not caused any harm to people in general, and are needed to keep the balance.

They are an important part of the ecosystem. They help maintain the health of the deer & elk populations. Chronic wasting disease is a symptom of an ecosystem lacking the appropriate number of predators

They are an unnecessary predator

They are bad for the deer population

They are beautiful but shouldn't be allowed to overpopulate

They are depleting the deer population in the southern hills. I've seen several lions on my game cameras at night.

They are destroying our big game populations! There is way too many and the quotas are not being filled either. Even if it was being met there is way too many. You don't even see a deer hardly anywhere up in elk country.

They are destroying the elk population

they are important for natural wild game management. the black hill population seems higher than previous years

They are important in the chain of life

They are killing way to many deer and elk. I have lost 2 beef calves to lions (seen lion kill 1 beef calf - GFP confirmed) I put out 30 game cameras and have got over 25 different cats.

They are living in their natural habitat - humans invaded their territory.

They are my immediate neighbors and visit my property from time to time

They are native to the Black Hills are it should remain that way

They are natural to our environment and need to be managed.

They are needed along with all wildlife to sustain a normal ecosystem

they are part of our ecosystem

They are part of South Dakota's ecosystem they help keep the deer population down. I would say SD needs more predators ie. bears & wolfs

They are part of the ecosystem and are an import part of the Black Hills

They are part of the environment we encroach on their living areas they need a place to live as well

They are part of the hills.

They are seldom seen in recent years - I believe they are declining in population

They are very brazen, they are in my pasture during daylight hours - fairly residential

They are vital to controlling deer population as long as they do not pose a threat to people, I for like they keep things in balance.

They are way to close to my home, children, pets, livestock. I have lost livestock to them in the past. I fear for my safety, as well as my family.

They aren't killing livestock in the southern black hills that I know of. I find it exciting that I could possible see/hunt another one.

They belong here.

They deserve to live in the black hills without being bothered. DO NOT SNARE OR TRAP THEM !!!!!

They directly impact the deer and elk population negatively. They have killed deer right in my back yard - 100ft from my house

They don't impose unacceptable risks

They exist, they live among us, they are not intrusive - they are surviving and their land is being taken up by development. They are adapting to these changes as any species would.

They go where the food is like any other predator. Ultimately we are interrupting their territory and search for food.

They have a large hunting range, people see one and they freek out, in reality they are around us all the time, I have land in Hot Springs and have see a few cats, they do not harm anyone

They have been here long before we were

They have been spotted in my town and at my chicken and my neighbors cats but its just nature

They have the right to live in the Hills in their natural environment. When people and pet animals are threatened then something needs to be done

They help keep deer and elk populations in check

They keep to deer and elk on racoon population healthy and in check

They kill and eat deer and elk.

They kill elk calves train to kill deer

They kill livestock and wildlife and are a threat to pets and children

They kill more game than you can even imagine. 10 years you won't ever see a deer like you do now.

They kill to many deer, elk, sheep, goats

They need habitat - not in populated areas - professional naturalists determine gaming limits and where to hunt

They need to be controlled in all areas to acceptable numbers. I one becomes a livestock threat it needs to be taken. Remember this livestock producers are a vital source of wildlife production.

They need to be culled so that they are not coming to residential neighborhoods to find prey. See comments provided in question 13

They need to be managed but are difficult to with a few hunter. Need to encowled hunter involvement.

They need to go!

They pose a danger for humans and pets.

They pose a healthy environment.

They reduce the amount of deer & elk that would be available for hunting. They weren't here until you reintroduced them

They scare me

They should be controled to not over populate

They should be put down if there are alots of them

They should be thinned out no deseases safer for all, pet, people, livestock, and other mountain lions

They weed out the sick & old deer & small game rabbits etc

They were here before we were. If they are hungry they will hunt and kill.

They were here first

They were here first - I've never seen one in the wild- lions may help control the influx of Californians.

They were here first so humans need to live around and respect all wildlife in this area. If you infringe on their territory then there is going to be conflict.

They were here first. As long as they don't got into livestock or do too much damage to game. I have hunted deer in NE for 45 years but Mt. lions all one species I have no desire to kill

They were very few years ago. They made a remarkable recovery

They will kill any living thing to survive, including family pets.

They're an important part of the black hills and should stay in the black hills, population control by hunters is important.

They're are part of nature and if we disrupt the ecosystem then there will be other impacts

This is their home and they were here before us. They have a right to be here. Hoping for less housing and more habitat for wildlife.

This is their home as well. I rarely hear of anyone encountering them or being hurt by a mountain lion.

this isa their home too. i have seen them in the wild. proper management is the way to control populations

Threat to livestock

Threats to town people and cattle

Ties to ranching

To few deer and elk

To many lion's and not enough hunters

To many lions

to many lions = to many deer gone

To many mountain lions near Rapid City. My dogs chased one out of my back yard last week. We're a mile from the foot hills.

To much development is reducing habitat for mt lions

Tons of deer in town

Too big of a threat to people, one person hunt/killed is one too many. Too few deer.

Too hard on elk & deer

Too many

Too many & need to fear man more. If hunted with dogs would fear man more!

Too many & they are not afraid of humans.

Too many cats

Too many deer. Lions can reduce deer accidents and balance wildlife.

Too many deer. Urban deer populations are high. Only 35 mountain lions were harvested in 2023 which didn't hit the current limit.

Too many in residential areas harming pets

Too many in town.

Too many in towns. Small pets and animals killed by lions. Hiking and biking is decreased due to lion population.

Too many lions being sighted in residential areas

Too many lions killing dogs cats cattle calves turkeys deer rabbits sheep lambs people

Too many of them are being seen in town.

Too many people

Too much lion scat on and near my property cats and dogs go missing

Tracks found and sightings

Tracks in snow. News reports.

trail camera had 5 different lions on my 44 acres by Keystone

Trail camera pictures of lions on my personal property in the black hills. Hunting opportunities for my family and future generations.

Trapper, see what they do and called for a season long before you guys (Game Fish and Parks) woke up about the problem

Treat them like are other predator

Truly, very little knowledge (personal) to their point. Much of what I have learned comes from other hunters or those who have lived near me for decades in their area (I am relatively new to SD).

Unacceptable is hard to define as I think all animals have their place and this creates an inherent risk to other animals. We cannot choose to disregard some animals to protect others.

Uncertain of present population and ecological effect of populations presence At this time their presence does not affect me

Understanding of a sustainable ecosystem

Ungulate population decrease cause a less favorable view of mountain lions.

Use to see mountain lions have not seen any lately

Videos in populated areas

Visiting with other hunters and residents

Visual siting, trail camera photos, number for deer and elk caches found

Visually seeing them around our property

Way more here than 10 years ago, 20 years ago +++ they help control deer population, turkeys, etc. I think they are a natural necessary part of the wildlife system that makes SD a remarkable place

Way to many

We all know the cats help control the deer pop

We believe a natural ecosystem to maintain the wildlife population. Taking out one element throws the rest off. There will be too much of one animal and so it goes.

we believe in natural selection the problem is people taking away habitant

We can see occassional mountain lion - not enough to cause great concern

We enjoy occasional sightings

We find way too many deer and elk that have been killed by lions and coyotes. The deer population in our area has seen a huge decline!!

We got rid of our sheep because of lion kills. Even through the lions were trapped and killed it was too much to try to keep our livestock.

We have a cabin in the Black Hills and we have small Pets. I'm a sportsmen and like to hunt but I don't hunt mountain lions. I don't carry a firearm when hiking in the Black Hills but I know alot of my frinds have started carrying a firearm when hiking in the hills due to the threat of lions.

WE have a small ranch in the Northern Hills S of Lead. I see evidence of about one deer kill per winter, rare sightings and occasional evidence of tracks. At times I wish the lions would depopulate the elk - too much fence damage

WE have far too many deer and mountain lions can take care of dropping the population naturally. I think hunting #'s should be evaluated each year so that too many lions are not harvested needlessly.

We have had near our farm (Union Co) " " " " " cabin (Custer Co)

We have lived here in the country for 40 years and have never seen one

We have lost livestock

We have lost livestock to mtn lions!

We have only seen one.

We have them on our property, many times within 40 yards of our home

We have way too many deer. Mountain lion are vital to prevent the deer population from exploding.

We hear of mountain lions in town - are they hungry? Is this a sign there are too many mountain lions and/or not enough food?

We hike and are active walkers on the Mickelson. We have encountered kill sites, we are alert but unafraid. Our son in Keystone had a deer killed by a lion in his driveway in 2022 we have 3 grandchildren under 5 living there.

We like to hunt deer but see very few while hunting, no large bucks the last 5-6 years

We live in the "urban - wildland interface" just west of Rapid - lost of lions. We worry about pets and kids, or threat from ill or orphaned lions. On the other hand, there's too many deer & turkey - lions need to eat more!

We live in the Black Hills fire protection district. We used to see lions regularly and loved that experience. We haven't see or heard one for probably 7 years.

We live in the hills. We have personally seen Mt Lions on several occasions and several of our neighbors have as well. Also on trail cams walking right up to our homes. The increase in sightings in the hills and in the actual city limits of Spearfish has increased quite a bit over the last few years. Hunting is an important part of SD tradition.

We live near Johnson Siding. We have seen lions on several occasions. We have a trail camera and fairly regularly get photos of lions.

We must hunt to keep a good balance

We need a healthy balance

We need apex predators. There are far too many deer. Look what happened with beavers. Let nature do it's own thing!

We need more research to determine how many and what impact lions have on other species

We need mountain lions to maintain healthy deer and elk herds, weeding out sick

We need mountain lions to survive and not become extinct

We need predators to keep the deer population in check

We need to have a control mechanism for all wild life populations and this is one.

We need to listen to the people who are in the areas of the lions and make adjustments to the harvest limits

We own 30 acres horses & pets - when they cycle around our property, we do worry about our animals.

We ranch in Western SD. The mule deer population is very poor. We have not confirmed a livestock kill.

We see far too few & hear of no major problems.

We see lions on our cameras often, I feel they have a healthy respect for staying wild and away from people.

We see lions on our cameras often. I feel they have a healthy respect for staying wild and away from people.

We see them occasionally and value their role in a balanced ecosystem. We don't support increasing numbers significantly.

We see tracks at our cabin property in Vanocker Canyon. Also see lions on game cameras there rarely however. Recently news media reported a death of a person in another state killed by a lion. This is of future concern.

We should strive for balance in the animal population in the Hills. I think GF&P works hard to maintain this balance.

We've had the deer racing through our 5.5 acres a good part of the winter. Mt lions & deer activities on camera

West River South Dakota needs to remain WILD! If one wants concrete, houses and cars - move to Sioux Falls!

What I have seen in my neighborhood over the years. First hand accounts.

What I hear from friends that hunt as well as friends who farm and ranch. What I read in magazines for conservation groups.

What I hear on the news, from neighbors, friends, magazines

What is the current population? Large small? Not noted!

what man does not understand man has a tendency to kill. let nature take it's course among wildlife. pet owners should take responsibility for their pets. mountain lions are losing their food source due to people hunting their food source

When hiking in northern hills several years ago, saw a mt lion go quietly ahead of me - no problems. There were cattle on forest land - the ranchers should be there 24/7 to watch, monitor their stock; would help prevent many problems.

When I start seeing them in town. When attacks become more frequent.

When lions are comfortable roaming through residential areas in people's front yards and driveways and on porches and decks it has become an unnecessary risk and threat to children and pets.

When you see mountain lions in the middle of town (Rapid City) I feel they maybe have been chased out of their territory by other lions or due to lack of food available in the wild

Where I live in the Black Hills I don't see many mt lions even though I know they are there. They leave my horses alone so they don't pose a threat to me at all.

Where people are building homes in the mountain lion habitat

Whether I see them and being told whether other people see them and how often. It is much better than it was several years ago meaning less mountain lions.

Whether they are going into the cities or not

While I've seen tracks in my yard, I do believe that lions are more scared of us then we are of them.

While there are places they can be a problem (AKA area a elementary school in the muddle of Rapid City) there are few places where they don't actually belong.

Wildlife need to stop being classified as "game" or "predator"

With a good hunting season such as is now for mt lions I believe the number of lions will stabling at a number that the ecosystem will support

Without predators prey overpopulate. Nature may not be pretty to some. Mans emotions should be regulated not wildlife.

Word of mouth. My neighbor has footage of a mtn lion eating a deer on his property

Word of sitings - tracks or live News articles (may be embellished)

Worked in public lands in the BH since 1997. Understand the population factors.

Years ago you have heard much about lions, now there all over and getting more, going out to the plains

Yet there was not attacking of the mountain lion. I do not have any negative new against or about them.

You can find them and evidence they are present by looking, but they are not so overpopulated that they are everywhere and in town. Perfect amount. Good work.

Your survey should have included that the total mountain lion population in SD is under 300. So it seems like hunters are taking too many. Please reduce # of licenses.

Appendix E: Hunter Perceptions

The major impact lions have on deer and elk populations. Decimating the herds and taking hunting opportunities away from the public. Groups who want all lion hunting stopped, yet have none or very little knowledge as to the actual facts on the ground in our wild places!!!!

I believe it is very hard for anyone to estimate the mountain lion population. The last survey I read in 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 the estimated number of lions went from 525 lions to 260 lions in one year and they harvested 61 lions in those two hunting seasons. There were 200 lions less in 2019. I have seen multiple game cam pictures with a female and three cubs by her side. That is a possibility for six cub every three years from one female. Figuring the cubs are with the females for 15 to 18 mouths.

I live in the BHNF on 48 acres and have only seen one lion on my property. So, I don't feel we are over populated and they are an important part of the forest. I have noticed significantly less porcupines on my land, maybe related to mountain lions. I enjoy all the wildlife I see, so would not like to see more hunting of lions. I feel we are handling them well.

I own Land and livestock in Black Hills. I am going off sightings the time it takes for lion tags to be filled during the lion season and the health of the hoofed game animal herds. I buy a just in case tag every year.

1 harvest numbers 2tracks observed in the black hills 3 live sightings in the back hills

1 is 1 to many

76 years hunting and over 60 years as a timber faller on Forest Service and private land

A book called "cougars on the cliff" by maurice hornocker.

A degree in wildlife management

A number of lions are taken each year. I have lived in the Black Hills for about 30 years and have not seen any lions. During hunting fishing or hiking. I believe from the number taken yet lack of seeing them the population is acceptable.

All animals that naturally belong in South Dakota should be allowed to remain here in a healthy number. South Dakota does a great job of managing wildlife numbers through hunting licenses and it should continue that way.

All good

All I know about mtn lion density is what I hear in the media

Allow dogs for hunting statewide year round

Alot of deer have disappeared somehow in the Black Hills

Although I don't hunt them myself, I have friends that hunt lions every year. I hear the biggest challenge is locating mature animals. I have always wondered why hounding isn't legal? To me, after the first 30-45 days, allowing hounding would definitely create a more targeted harvest of mature animals and allow the younger cats to survive.

Amount of Deer and Elk

Amount of lion sign seen in and out of season.

Amount of tracks cut while out hunting deer or hiking. Also by the number of cached lion kills found while out.

Amount seen while deer hunting

Anecdotal evidence and pictures I've seen

Animal sightings. Population counts. Biologist reports.

Arbitrary numbers are given to carrying capacities without enough consideration afforded to landowners who have to "live with" SDGFP decisions and "stakeholder" dollars to reintroduce species of wildlife into the state that negatively impact landowners without due compensation for economic loss. Another example would include the introduction of bighorn sheep that have as yet to be a sustainable flock. No agreements for introduction and management were made with the USFS, yet they and we have to cooperate with sustaining the flock while it restrict our use of land resources.

Are elk and deer population is more important then mountain lions

As a deer and one day elk hunter again it seems like there has been fewer of those recently. I don't know if it has any connections to the mountain lions though.

As a hunter to see the impacts that mountain lions have on our deer and elk population infuriates me. To say that the cat population hasn't gotten out of control is simply naive...as residents What do we care about more about for our economy and way of living... being able to hunt deer/elk or to be able to say we have mountain lions in the hills... why are we protecting these vicious predators so much? They are no different than a rattlesnake.... Completely destructive. Treat them like a coyote, they are both predators that can be managed. Allow dogs to hunt cats in all of the hills. Allow the season to be year round. Do not have a quota limiting how many can be shot. They are worse than wildfire in the hills. Once you remove the negative impact of cats in the hills we will rejuvenate our elk and deer population allowing more resident tags for people feeding their families. The lobbyists that control these regulations are only hurting us. Please for the sake of hunting in the hills remove these things from our state.

As a hunter, outdoorsman, and rancher I see far more lions now than I have in the last 30yrs. While they are a vital part of a healthy ecosystem in my opinion, they are now populated to the point they are becoming less fearful of humans and our domains. In the last year alone I have had 8 different encounters with 8 different lions within 300 yards of my home. Most of these have been young lions. Since the start of 2024 I have seen 3 additional ones that I have not seen before. This is far to heavy of a population to have.

as a livestock producer we need to keep mountain lion population to a minimum. I have lived here all of my life and 50 years ago we never saw or even heard of mountain lions in the eastern part of the state. Deer populations were good and now we are seeing fewer deer and turkey populations and it is not because of over hunting. In fact I would rather feed deer and turkeys some corn than feed the damn mountain lions my calves. Get your heads out of you know where and let's kill these mountain lions. Also we do not need wolves in this state either. signed a livestock producer

As an avid mountain lion hunter I see the very high populations of mountain lions in the black hills which is evident after a fresh snow and lion tracks are very easy to find. We need to do a better job of managing the cat population in the hills. If we have a management goal set at x amount of cats we need to do our best to achieve that management goal. Boot hunters do not get the job done and it's time for hounds to be used.

As long as mountain lions are being hunted by humans they pose less risk to humans, pets, and livestock.

As long as ungulate numbers are strong and healthy with a balanced mountain lions population

Availability of food to sustain without impacting livestock mt lions are mt lions are predators & I understand they will prey on prevalent & vulnerable prey populations

Balance in the eco system. Maintain a population that has a neutral environmental and social impact.

Based on sightings, and harvest data.

Based on time I spend, hiking in the BHNF, I rarely see a mountain lion.

Beautiful animal and has a role in the nature population

Beautiful animal killed to mount or coat. I'm an avid sportman and wildlife lover of all wildlife. I completely trust GFP and their ability to make occasional trips to protect wildlife and satisfy hunters needs.

Been hunting for over 40 years, our deer population in Bon Homme and Tankton county has never been this bad. I have game camera's to prove we have way too many cats in our area.

BHFPD - manage with the use of Hounds. (selective harvest). CSP - limit successful tag holders to 10 yr draw.

Big game decline.

Black hills are becoming too populated, this in time will put humans and their pets at more risk. Lions do need to stay in check, they can be hard on wildlife. Deer and Elk generate more income for state and local business.

Black hills seems to have good game populations and rough country to escape pressure somewhat. I live and primarily hunt south central south Dakota and have seen deer populations wiped out in certain areas. With disease, coyotes, and over sale of tags the last thing we need is mountain lions also. There have been mountain lions spotted and harvested here and ironically some in areas where deer numbers have declined year after year

Boot hunting is a challenge and whether there is a quota or not - it will always be a challenge - which is why it is a desired sport among many predator hunters. There are approx 4,000 hunters who obtain a mtn lion hunting license each year - not all of which are actually pursuing the big game animal - making reaching the state's current quota that much more difficult. 38% of licensed hunters spent time hunting mountain lions in the Black Hills Fire District in 2022/2023 season. Mountain lion hunting can be very difficult, even in the best of conditions. And in south dakota, the last few years of the lion hunting season, the snow and tracking conditions have not been the greatest . According to the 2023 mountain lion status report published in july 2023, the Black Hills population objective is 200-300 total mountain lions, with hunting seasons structured primarily to allow for maximum hunting opportunities using boot hunters. Mountain lions on the prairie are managed primarily to abate potential livestock losses on private property while at the same time to provide recreational hunting opportunity. Both of these objectives and strategies are great. Given the considerations in this report, the majority of biological surveys and indices suggest the mountain lion population in the Black Hills has decreased in recent years but is within the established objective of 200-300 total animals. Population growth appears to be relatively stable, however, current mortality rates observed would likely not be sustainable for this small population. Proving that there is not a need to make any adjustments. I am opposed to hound hunting in the black hills fire protection district. Hound hunting takes away from the ethical pursuit of the mtn lion hunt - they are an animal who will humble you time and time again.

By the numbers taken

Camaras on our land, kills in my yard and neighborhood. Social media photos and videos from friends in hunting and hiking in the hills

Concerned with the decrease of elk and deer population in southern areas over the last 15 years.

Concerns for livestock.

Considering the amount of other Wildlife that Mt. Lions , with or without Kittens, consume I as a Hunter prefer to have a greater impact in the management of our States' Big Game population. Thank you.

Control and conservation

Conversations with local land owners/ livestock producers.

Could find signs of them, tracks or even spot them.

Current population & current rules

Currently we have the perfect balance of hunting seasons both types and styles. And the beauty of what the current seasons do it they allow the biologists and wildlife managers to manage the population with minimal negative impact or public conflict all while allowing max participation. It seems like the perfect situation, management happens with almost no bad press. Please don't change the current strategy.

Custer county rancher said porcupines are next to extinct due to too many lions. Also complained heavy toll on elk calves. I think an additional season for dogs only for 30 days after April cut off would be beneficial.

danger to livestock pets and children

Dangerous animal not only to livestock but people too

Dangers of encounter while hiking or walking, especially in dark. Affect on deer and elk populations.
Dangers to pets.

Decline in elk, goat, sheep population. Deer population is also hurt. Mountain lions do not belong in D. they are worse than prairie dogs. Let them hunt year round with dogs.

Declining whitetail and mule deer populations in the Black Hills. Increased mountain lion sightings in within city limits.

Decrease deer and elk number, population in the BH & CSP.

Decrease in deer and elk population

Deer - Elk - turkey - sheep populations are far more important

Deer & elk numbers

Deer and elk are more important to the State.

Deer and elk number appear to be down over the last several years

Deer and elk numbers

deer and elk population

Deer and elk population

Deer and elk population should decide lion # control

Deer and elk populations

Deer and elk populations are declining.

Deer and Elk populations in the Black Hills is more important to me than a mountain lion season. If there were only enough mountain lions to justify 5-10 licenses that would be enough lions for me.

Deer and Elk populations.

Deer and turkey declined

deer kills sightings tracks

Deer kills, my area lost a lot of deer to lions, 1 was taken

Deer numbers in Black Hills are declining due to too many nonresident deer hunters!

Deer numbers in the black hills are way below average

Deer population

Deer population has decreased considerably in the last few years and I think the lion population plays heavily into that problem

Deer population is a big factor

Deer population reduced as well as elk

deer population, hunting

Deer populations especially mule deer decrease in number

Deer populations have drastically declined in the Southern Black Hills as lion numbers have increased.

Deer populations seem to be lower over the last 10ish years, I'm not sure if that is hunting pressure vs predation

Depends on the population

Depredation of elk calves, pets and deer. The fact that they have to leave the BH because of overpopul

Distant from where you find them

Do not agree to hound hunting

DO NOT OPEN THE HILLS TO HOUNDS!

Don't change nothing

Don't hear much about them hurting livestock, pets or people yet if we have more that's what will happen. I like being able to hunt them but the less we have the better we'll be.

Don't need a mountain lion population! Allow people to use dogs to hunt them

Drastic reduction in deer population in se sd. Drastic increase in mountain lions captures on game cameras.

Due to low number of harvests

Dwindling deer & elk populations - the amount of time taken just to draw a tag in the BHFPD for South Dakota residents is unacceptable. 20+ years for elk in cases, most will only see that tag once in their lifetime.

Effect on big game populations, amount of sign seen personally, reports/photos of lions seen by others, opportunity to hunt lions.

Efficient killers that kill with purpose. A good predator to have in the area.

Elk and deer mortality rates

elk and deer numbers

Elk and deer numbers

elk and deer numbers are down damage to my horses

Elk and deer numbers need to be prioritized. If one human being is injured or killed by a Lion, it would be too many. Mitigate the risk.

Elk and deer population

Elk and deer populations. I feel the number of tags allots has little effect on the overall population because the success rate is so low.

Elk herd numbers. I want more elk, less cats

Elk populations, personal sightings

Elk, deer population

Encounters with people

Every lion eats way too many deer/elk/turkey and I think there are more than anyone thinks out in the Black Hills! Kill them all!

Everyone I know has pictures of mountain lions on their game cameras. The deer population in southeast South Dakota has been decimated by mountain lions.

Experiences in the woods and the impacts on game animals that are heavily hunted by mountain lions.

Extreme decrease in deer population. More sightings of mountain lions.

Family and friends run cattle

Far fewer elk & bighorn sheep

Far to many lions along the river west of Yankton

Far too many lions outside of their natural habitat.

Few big game tags / livestock

Fewer deer and elk in the Black Hills

Fewer deer and elk. Fewer pets and other small animals.

Fewer lions equals quality toms.

Fewer tracks while hunting this season

Finding of dead deer from mountain lion kill on my property

For me personally the loss of deer population in my area is important. The population of deer in my area has decreased drastically the last 10 years. I don't know the cause as we have blue tongue losses and I am pretty positive we lost some deer a couple of years ago to a mountain lion. The neighbor had a trail cam pictures of a lion one mile from my stand this year. Deer hunting is more important to me than pheasant hunting. I have never had a lion license nor do I intend to. It's been 16 years since I saw a lion on my farm. I don't use game cams.

For the most part the only hunting I do in the Black Hills is deer hunting. I have seen a significant decline in deer populations over the years. How much of that decline can be attributed to mountain lions I don't know, but the decline is very obvious and concerning! I also have observed a decline in other species, for example porcupines and bobcats. In addition to the perceived impact that lions have on various animals in the Black Hills they seem to be turning up more and more within our cities where they can become a danger to our pets and potentially people. I live in west Rapid City and picked up a mountain lion strolling through my yard on a security camera on 2-26-24.

game camera

General information from different sources.

General reports and sightings.

Get rid of the female quota - the less lions the better

GF&P needs to stop lying to people about the population of mountain lions in the Black Hills. The number 200 is repeated over and over and anyone who has any kind of idea reality knows the number is much higher than that. In the mid 90's it was around 400-500 and has only increased since then. The current hunting season is totally ineffective. If you look at the cubs born each year versus the lions harvested its easy to see the population is only going to grow. There are too many lions and the deer and elk population is suffering because of it. Its only a matter of time before a human becomes one of their prey.

GFP reports

GFP surveys

Good for everyone

Good management tool.

Good outdoor sport great reason to get out in winter months

Gotta have lions, just keep them managed

Grew up in the hills where it wasnt uncommon to interact with a lion

Had close encounters with mountain lions while elk hunting the Black Hills forest service. Found a lot of lion killed deer.

Hard on elk and deer population

Hard on elk population

Hard on wildlife & livestock

Hard to judge, due to the lack of information, released to the public about the number of Lyons, and their impact on wildlife/domestic animals.

Harvest data deer elk lion

Harvest numbers

harvest rates

Harvested 2 mtn lions (one mature male and one mature female) in BH boot hunting calling them both in after tracking them and think the BH are currently managed very well as far as mtn lions specifically and I do NOT see the need for hound hunters in BH other than in Custer state park. The deer numbers are currently too LOW bc of disease cycle and too many deer tags allotted for BH. That's what needs to change. Thank you for your efforts.

Have lost livestock & cattle

Have never seen one only tracks

Have no trust in GF&P, use some common sense

Have seen data on population from biologists out Of region 1.

have seen more sighting and more deer kills by lions last few years

Hearing about sitings of lions - too much/or too close to town sometimes

Here in Gregory County its all about livestock. Bottom line if they kill livestock then they need to be eliminated! That goes for wolves too!

High snow fall causes less foot traffic maybe open some gates later and earlier to compensate for snow. Seems snowmobiles have all of west hills with hunters banned. Cats are getting smarter and maybe a season earlier in deer and elk would compensate

Hound hunters and input on social media platforms and SDGFP data

How few postings there are on facebook. Few tracks seen in the wild.

How it affects deer and elk populations

How many cats and cat sign I see every year.

How many have been harvested

How many have to be killed by authorities or public for public safety concerns. Spread of tagged mountain lions. When they lion travel multiple states. This may be sign of overpopulation. Decrease in elk and deer populations. People have to apply decades for elk tags. Livestock kills.

How many I catch on my trail cameras.

How often I hear about someone seeing them

How often I see sign of them

Hunting deer, elk - I would like to see the lion population down

Hunting in the Hills its very obvious where lions are persistent based on deer population in an area. I have hunted the hills for 39 years. Trust me I know.

Hunting in the southern hills and see how cats can change a landscape for the negative for wildlife, livestock and human interaction.

Hunting is the only thing that impacts the population of lions.

Hurts big game populations

I agree that they are dangerous for other wildlife , pets and cattle, horses, etc and needs to be kept in control of population.

I am a big game hunter and help out on a ranch. Our deer and elk numbers are declining each year and mt. lions are efficient predators. Also, when talking to ranchers from other states such as WY and CO, mt. lions are extremely hard on livestock. The main problem I have discussed with others is when an area has a high population of mt. lions and needs a good management plan, people who make decisions based on emotions and not the best courses for conservation speak the loudest and dictate the policies.

I am a boot hunter for mountain lions. Usually out 1-2x per week. I feel like the numbers are down a bit. Seems to be getting harder to find cats.

I am a hunter with a ranching background.

I am a serious mt lion hunter in the BHFPD; I boot hunt and have several days afield each year

I am a strong advocate for a hound season everywhere. This is hands down the best way to effectively manage the population. It allows a selective harvest and much better way to control and manage the population. Instead of a mad dash to kill the first thing you see they can be studied and harvested if it is wanted or left in the ecosystem and move on to another say mature Tom or female dependent upon the needs of the population at that time. I can understand giving the callers and trackers a short period to hunt say 2 weeks or so then open hound season in the fire protection district and use that as a much more effective management tool.

I am an opportunity hunter I buy a lion tag because I hope to see and harvest one someday. Hopefully we can leave the price of them the same so I will continue to buy one every year without feeling the need to harvest one. 1 lion in my lifetime would be satisfying to me.

I am happy to see that they are thriving. I hope they will be able to coexist with all the humans building homes in their habitat in the Black Hills.

I am in the Black Hills on a regular basis and see mountain lion sign on a regular basis. There also appears to be plenty of deer and elk present so I feel the balance is satisfactory.

I am not a rancher so I don't have knowledge or an opinion on Mt Lion's affect on livestock. With rampant CWD, I think a strong predator presence is needed to cull unhealthy deer and elk. I live with-in the Rapid City limits. My immediate neighbors have either seen Mt Lions, or captured them on security cameras, in the last three years on their property. I know they are here and yet there have not been any attacks on humans in the Black Hills. I don't feel threatened by them.

I am not in favor of hunting lions with hounds in any capacity.

I am trained as a willdlife biologist and believe predator prey relationships need to be somewhat in balance.

I attended a meeting a few years ago about mountain lion population in and out of Custer State Park .The question came up several times pertaining to current lion numbers. After a few minutes of listening to the talking points from the GFP explaining that they had nearly a million dollars invested in radio tracking equipment and newest technology, they still couldn't tell us the number of lions in the park or the hills. I started hunting deer in the Black Hills in 1968. Hunting in the late 60's all through the 70's was incredible, no shortage of deer. Since the lion population has gotten out of control the deer population has diminished substantially. The lion's in Spring Canyon have nearly decimated the big horn sheep population in the surrounding areas. I believe the lion numbers need to be reduced, hunting with dogs should be allowed in the Black Hills..

I believe CSP has the right idea allowing hounds to assist with the hunt.

I believe outdoorsmen would rather hunt deer and elk as well as visitors to the black hills would rather view deer and elk in the wild versus mt lions.

I believe that coyotes and mountain lions pose a serious issue to our deer numbers across the state. If each mountain lion kills a deer every 1-2 weeks that is very concerning to me as an avid deer hunter that has seen my opportunities at drawing my preferred deer tag dwindle every year for the past 12 years. I understand coyotes play a big factor as well. Im ok with the new deer draw structure. But am concerned with how deer numbers will be in future years. I personally believe there are a lot more mountain lions in the black hills that what the sd game and fish have the population numbers projected at. I support the use of hounds and think an allocated number of tags should be permitted with the use of hounds in the black hills via lottery drawing and not only in Custer state park.

I believe that hound hunting isn't fair chase hunting and is purely just killing. The population and harvest limits in the black hills region have been well controlled by hunters. Using dogs to harass, pin down "tree" cats is for people that are miserable hunters. Not my fault. If you're serious about getting a car then figure it out and hunt them the ethical way. Just like I have done with game animals my whole life. That's what true hunters do

I believe that it is important that they be managed. It is more challenging hunting them without hounds but that's fine

I believe that out hills mountain lion population has a pretty dramatic effect on the deer population, especially the mule deer.

I believe the greatest indicators of too many mountain lions in our state is the reports of lions not being fearful of humans and the number of signs of ungulate kill etc.

I believe the lions are hurting the number of deer and elk in the hills

I believe the northern hills deer and elk populations have been drastically reduced by mountain lions in the last 30 years. I think hounds should be permitted in the BHFPD to reach the quote every year.

I believe the population is growing just by the amount of sightings outside of the black hills. I think that at this point in time the season is setup right. I feel like this is the only season that is setup for the residents and not for revenue

I believe the state is greatly underestimating the number of mountain lions in our state. I believe the lions are taking too many deer, elk, mountain goats and big horn sheep.

I believe there are too many mountain lions in the Black Hills. When was the last time the quota was met? If there is a quota and it is not met, is that managing the population? The deer population has been on a decline the past several years, and I have personally seen far too many mountain lion tracks all over the Black Hills.

I believe they have been somewhat overharvested

I bought a tag because I hunt pheasants with my grandkids and want to make sure there are no lions around our place. I don't actively hunt them. Haven't seen any around our place in several years.

I cannot say that I have seen any more or less sign or sightings of lions in the past 10 years but I have seen a decrease in deer and small game populations in the central black hills. I believe good science based management of predator populations is a necessity to keep all wildlife populations healthy.

I did not use my Mountain Lion tag this year. We never did catch a glimps of one on our cameras in Deadwood at our cabin this year.

I disagree strongly with the use of dogs anywhere. I'm not sure if lions should be hunted at all. They are good at removing CWD infected animals in the cervid populations.

I do like the prairie tag regulations.

I don't encounter a number of wildlife and livestock kills that I would consider excessive.

I don't know alot about the species, so my decision's are not strongly opinionated.

I don't mind them but we have too many lions. Our prey species, especially deer have enough working against them that we need to keep the lion population down to sensible level.

I don't see many big cats in SD but I know they are out and about. I could see numbers go up a little or a lot and I'd be very fine with that because they are a great hunter taking down deer that are sick and ill. Just pay the farmer/rancher for the loss of cattle, sheep and horses.

I don't believe we need mountain lions in the state of South Dakota especially in East river

I don't feel mountain lion or wolves are necessary

I don't feel safe hiking in the black hills unarmed, deer hunting I saw two lions and I feel between lions and sick deer dying off it's heavily impacting deer populations.

I don't have an opinion other than it's important that they have a population in the state. There are wayyyyyyyyyy too many coyotes. That population needs reduced.

I don't want any around. Let's shoot them all

I dont have one

I enjoy deer hunting and it's hard to draw a tag now, mountain lions seem to eat to many deer now

I enjoy hunting and learning about mountain lions and would like more opportunity to hunt them.

I enjoy reading the stats posted online by GF&P. I follow a page on Facebook called Black Hills Mountain Lion Hunters, where I see some of the commentary/debate/photos. I like that there is a season, am NOT in favor of recreational hound hunting in the BHFPD, but endorse depredation hound hunts for problem cats.

I enjoy the health herd rebound of antelope, elk, & deer. I live in South Rapid city and our neighbors had a cat and cubs on their game cameras.

I feel I have noticed a significant decrease in the number of deer and elk in the hills while recreating

I feel like they're getting overpopulated, and they're starting to be a threat to people walking their own animals, spitting their road in time out in nature is my opinion

I feel lion populations have been growing and tag quota levels should reflect that

I feel that a healthy mountain lion population is important, just not in the Black Hills. There are better and bigger places where they can thrive, mainly the Rocky Mtns. We don't need mtn. lions in the Black Hills or anywhere else in South Dakota. Hunters can easily control the deer and elk population. As far as income to the state goes I feel that more money could be made by selling more deer, elk, turkey tags and there could be more of these tags made available if the mtn. lions didn't kill so many of these other species.

I feel that I am a pretty avid hunter, and sportsman. I think I am pretty versed in all aspects of hunting all species of wildlife in South Dakota. Archery is my passion, and have been very successful in archery hunting for over 40yrs. Archery hunting takes patience, skill, knowledge, and sometimes luck vs skill is better. I feel archery has helped me understand many things with wildlife, in finding what ever species I am in pursuit of, and being successful at it. I have hunted several years in the black hills for lions. I have found tracks and pursued them with passion, and using all my aspects of wildlife knowledge to help find a lion. Last year was the one and only year that I did not cut a track. So far this year I have cut 2 tracks in the 5 days that I have hunted. I don't believe that the lion population is as high as people think , and that hunting lions is about the most fun thing I've hunted. (Even though I have not been successful)

I feel that in the Black Hills protection district. The fun recruitment is down, and the number of deer are down overall.

I feel that livestock and lions interaction are rare in South Dakota. You rarely hear of very many attacks or kills. By this it show we have healthy big game herds to support the current mt. Lions population. I believe we need to keep population at current level in black hills and the plains. I think mt lions are a cool animal and need be around for future generations.

I feel that mtn lions kill a lot of deer, young elk, and turkey. They are important to our ecosystem but the population needs to be controlled. Every year I put out about a dozen trail cameras. This yr I didn't get many mtn lion pictures. Last year I had several.

I feel that the season should start in October and you can use dogs. Many deer hunters see lions during hunting season. During deer season dogs are not used unless on private ground. That way it will not effect the deer hunting.

I feel they kill way to many big game animals, nobody goes to the black hills to look at mountain lions they go to seed deer elk bighorn sheep and mountain goat. I believe all of the above animals have decreased and I believe lions are partly to blame

I find far too many deer and elk kills. Lion population is still too high.

I find tracks often. I find dead deer and other game animals that certainly seem like lion kills. But not so many that it's a problem. I spend 50-70 days a year boots on the ground and I have yet to see a lion but I know I've been close.

I go by the number of deer that I see through archery season. I'm not seeing the numbers that I have seen in past years especially mature bucks. I see more deer in the city limits of Rapid City than in the hills.

I have a cabin in the Black Hills and have witnessed their presence.

I have a cabin near Rochford and see tracks always and fresh kills regularly and few fawns and elk calves

I have actually seen mt lions, I continually see sign of mt lions

I have an acreage in Yankton county and have had pictures of many different lions. The deer population is so that we didn't fill any of our tags this year. A few years ago we would have 100 dear in the field in the evening and now we were lucky to see 15. Christmas day my son and I tried calling varmints and a lion came in about 60 yards of us. I'm guessing we have had four or five in our area going by the pictures and tracks.

I have been an avid hunter in South Dakota, since the age of ten. The mountain lion population is still too high. Even at my age, I spend a lot of time in the field. Every year, I find multiple lion kills. In some areas, lions have decimated the deer populations. The SDGF&P is doing a good job balancing season with those who want to see lions untouched. Not an enviable job. I still feel that lion hunting should have started five years earlier than it did. The population had a huge head start, so now we are in catch up mode. Although I am aware other things contribute to deer population decline, I believe it starts with proper predator balance and control.

I have encountered multiple lions while on foot hunting deer/elk over last 5 years in the Black Hills. Deer/elk numbers seem to be down.

I have hunted but not harvested a mountain lion, I have however seen several.

I have hunted here nearly 40 years and have seen a lion 5 times had one run my horses through a fence over a decade ago. I just hope that gfp no longer denies they are present east river as a population

I have hunted in the Black Hills since 1970 deer,elk,turkeys,mt lions and some small game, in the past 3 years the number of whitetail deer has declined tremendously, with estimated population of lions at 277 in the Black Hills it seems inconceivable that 20 % of that population is shot without use of dogs in Black Hills District EVERY YEAR, this doesn't take into account other instances ie nuisance mt lions, vehicle collisions, disease or sickness, the season might be extended in Hills year round, young deer,elk and turkeys are shot every year , why not young lions ? they grow up to become more efficient hunters themselves ?

I have hunted the Black Hills since 1996 and have never seen a mountain lion although I have seen tracks and signs of them. I have spoken to several ranchers that have had bad experiences with lions killing livestock and family pets. Rapid City also has had lion sightings within city limits which does pose a moderate to minimal risk to children and family pets.

I have land in Hot Springs area (2000 acres) and my trail cameras show about the same number of lions as mule deer. There are very few deer left, and lots of lions eating the remaining deer, as well as elk. Last week I had a female with 4 yearlings on camera, as well as two solo adults. There are far too many lions, and season should be open all year, allow use of dogs, and perhaps have GFP state trappers pursue and kill lions until the population is at a reasonable level.

I have land in the high country on the west side of the BH Hills. 99 years out of a hundred does not allow hunter's into my area because of snow depth and no roads snow plowed. The majority of the BH Mt Lion Population is produced and rejuvenated in this high country as cats move into new areas from the high country. Your management sucks with your current hunting plan. I own land in the area I described and experience cat populations !

I have lived here all my life, and the deer population has never been as low as I have seen it. They are living in the populated areas. But in the forest they are decreasing terribly.

I have livestock and concerned about the well being of my livestock. The elk hers in the black hills have been negatively affected by the lions.

I have livestock and would like to see all lion killed

I have livestock to protect year around.

I have never seen one hunting

I have never seen one in the wild

I have no factors in mind.

I have no factors on mt. lions I have lived in the black hills all my life growing up in Inglewood and I have spent my entire life out in the hills doing many activities I have yet ever to be bothered by a mt lion.

I have no idea what the mountain lion population is like in South Dakota

I have no idea what the population is, but assume it is healthy based on the number of permits. It could be higher based on the number of deer I see.

I have no opinion

I have no qualms about Mt. Lions in our state. They are a healthy part of the environment. If Custer state park is to become an animal preserve to protect the wildlife of South Dakota, then Both the population/building and Mt. Lion population needs to be held in check. We cannot eliminate the Mt. Lion population in Custer only to increase buildings and tourist options.

I have no say in Custer of BH. I deer hunt and manage properties for deer hunting in the Yankton, SD area. This is the only area I can speak for. Now deer numbers area down from Springfield to Vermillion and up and down the James and Vermillion Rivers. Now this is the area I mostly focus and hunt, with the exception of one area on the Belle Fourche River. I do not think that mountain lions are the sole culprit in why deer numbers are so low. It is a combination of 3 years of EHD outbreak, a very harsh winter and droughts. Take that combined with the human element of this being an area with high hunter concentrations along the river, do we really know how many archery hunters focus to the Yankton area?? Yet tag numbers have not been dropped. With that said, lions are certainly in the area and do contribute, but I cannot say I see as much lion activity or kills as I did 5 years ago. Maybe that is just by happen chance and maybe that is due to decreased deer numbers. They are still relatively present on local trail cameras and security cameras. I do not think they pose an immediate risk to people and pets. Yes things can happen and more so to pets, but if they are not injured or perishing from hunger, I feel they will leave people alone. Same goes for livestock, though they may take the opportunity on occasion. I do think they can affect ungulates, but humans affect that just as much if not more so.

I have no statical factors. I have simply heard we have one of highest density population of lions. I know Lions are opportunistic hunters and kill whenever they can. I believe they will eventually have a significant impact on deer, elk, and turkey populations if they haven't already. It has become very difficult to hunt turkeys in the black hills and I believe the over population of lions is one of the root causes.

I have not been following the mountain loin debate this year, so I need to be educated. I would base my perception on the population numbers of deer and elk in hunting units.

I have not ever seen a mountain Lion ,yet I have hunted a considerable amount. I am a rancher and have not experienced any Lion depredation, lots of coyote and fox depredation, but not lions. I think we have room for the big cats!

I have not hunted them, I think they are vital to a healthy wildlife environment but think the numbers should be controlled so they don't get over populated

I have not seen a mountain lion, I know that they are present I have seen tracks. If I tried harder I may have an opportunity to take DNR. I have heard little of damage by them.

I have noticed that the number of tracks I used to see in the hills has greatly decreased. I'm not seeing as many tracks as I used to. I think they are being over hunted.

I have noticed within the past few years that I am seeing more Mountain Lions.

I have only seen 4 cats in 15 years. I am a part time trapper and rarely see signs of Mt lions

I have only seen lions in my life

I have personally seen the decline in elk and deer throughout the Black Hills I have also seen the porcupine population throughout the Black Hills reduced dramatically due to the mountain lion preference for food 1 adult mountain lion in the Black Hills will take more deer or elk than I will in my lifetime, I hope the mountain lion population decreases dramatically so that my children cannot deer an elk in the Black Hills

i have property in Montana as well as Sd and the lion populations in both states are not a solid count-- there are way more then the numbers show

I have property in the Balck Hills and see lions on game cams I have on that property regularly.

I have seen a lot of deer carcasses from mountain lions and the deer population in the Black Hills on public land has definitely decreased.

I have seen only 2 while in the Hills over the past 15 years, but I have seen sign of lion many times

I have seen the decline in elk and deer in the areas that I hunt consistently. I have found numerous kills in areas that we would see only a few in a season.

I have seen them on my property and tracks in the forest.

I have talked to many people about lions n all agree there's too many and it would be good to decrease the population in southeastern SD

I have watched deer numbers drastically decrease over the past 20 years in direct correlation with lion numbers increasing. I realize there are other factors such as EHD and CWD, but I have seen deer and elk completely leave an area due to excessive lion pressure. When a big male is removed from an area the vacuum is immediately filled by a new male. There are far too many sightings for an animal that is supposed to be elusive and have a relatively small population. The state needs to decide if it wants a healthy deer, elk, and turkey populations. Lions are impacting these animals and unfortunately fear of public outcry has drastically limited the proper management of SD lions.

I hound hunt in the park every year. Low deer populations where there is too many lion sign.

I hunt deer in the Hills, and the numbers seem to be down. Why? I don't know, but maybe lions.

I hunt East River. I got a tag to legally shoot one if I saw one again to protect myself, livestock and deer population

I hunted archery elk last year and in several areas I seen more mountain lions than I did elk or deer

I keep in touch with social media groups some dedicated to mountain lions some not. What I have noticed is a tendency for mountain lion attacks to go unreported to the hunters. Being in the field i can tell certain areas are more densely populated then others and some areas are just hard to tell because of the lack of access. My biggest obstacles are cats hiding in or escaping through private land. they seem to me to be more densely populated around towns located in their ideal climate. I have seen them observing humans and I find that amusing and very fascinating! I would like to see more data on the subject entirely before making a hard and fast stand on any of the issues being addressed but from what I can tell and have observed the population seems to be perfectly fine and healthy.

I know they are there as I see tracks, they are a necessary to help manage the forest & the whole state. Since you have wolves in the state you better keep mountain lions to kill the wolf.

I like the way mountain lion hunting in SD has been handled, I think the population currently is about prefect. There are a lot of areas I don't agree with SDGF & P, but mountain lions are one area I believe they have done a very good job managing.

I like to hunt. I think mtn lions deserve a spot in the eco system. I think they kill far more deer and elk then humans and need to be better managed. I think the use of hounds should be acceptable in all mtn lion hunting districts. it allows for a more selective harvest as well as a more productive harvest numbers

i like to see more big game opportunities for the younger kids before there off to college or move away for a job when they finish school. So if we need less lions to accomplish that then that would be a good thing.

I live 15 miles south west of priingle haven't seen any mountin lion sign for the last 2 years but have to many does

I live in central sd on the Missouri River, there are lions here in limited numbers as seen on trail cameras and a few sightings. I buy a license every year in case an opportunity presents itself while hunting. I predator hunt during the winter with hopes a lion could show up, and I have hunted in the black hills a few times. I saw a lion and its cache while elk hunting in 2020. I enjoy knowing they're on the landscape and hope to harvest one some day

I live in Eastern SD and can only make it out there for a limited amount of time so I don't have the ability to see many of them and track them

I live in eastern South dakota, and believe lions are not needed here, and are pushed here out of the hills

I live in Hot Brook Canyon, Hot Springs. I archery hunt deer and elk. Lions eat probably at least 15 deer a year and we have a lot of lions. That's a lot of deer each year. Just more pressure on deer/elk hard less hunting opportunities. What's the purpose of having 500+ lions in the black hills. It's not like the general public benefits in some way. They are extremely rare to see in the daylight, unless they are a trouble cat.

I live in Hot Springs and have to secure my dog at night. I have seen a line and many signs that then have been around. Hot Springs is over run with deer and turkey and of course that is a good source for the lions. People must always exercise caution.

I live in Spearfish

I live in the Black Hills and catch them on camera and see fresh kills

I live in the black hills around spearfish canyon tinton road area. I have had a run in with a lion at my home. I feel that hunting is the best way to keep the numbers from getting to high. I don't want lions to be in to be a threat to humans. I do not want to see hound hunting in the black hills due to to much private property mixed with the forest service and could pose more of a threat to the public by running the lions thro the developments. I know of two hounds man out of whitewood that are really good. They work really well with the land owners/ranchers and controlling them from Wyoming to whitewood creek area. I just think running dogs in the hills will bring out every wanna be hounds man that have no clue what they are doing. I do think that the season needs to open earlier and maybe not have so many restrictions on pairs and spots. Think will eventually bring bad light to lion hunting. And I also think that more data needs to be taken from the lion if you are going to require it to be checked in. It seems that Nebraska is far more ahead of our state with tracking of their lions. Know of a lion that was tagged in Nebraska taken in our state but seem like they wanted to know more than us. And was able to give accurate age that was way off from the estimate. But I do know this is still new and still a learning curve.

I live in the Black Hills forest. I enjoy seeing lions from to time. Have not see one on my property for 2 or 3 years. I do not see them as a threat to humans but pets can be in peril from time to time.

I live in the foothills , and i see pictures on my trail cams, and my neighbors. on a weekly basis..

I live on 50 acres in the Rochford area. We have numerous lions patrolling our land. Our deer population has been depleted substantially over the past 5 years - we have both mule deer and whitetails wintering in our valley. Last year between January and April, we had 6 whitetail and mule deer and 1 elk calf taken by lions. This is a substantial impact on our already stressed deer population.

I lived above Whitewood in Whitewood Forest Acres from 2007-2016. During that period, many mountain lions moved into our development as evidenced by game cameras. During that period, the local deer population decreased by approximately 75% and the wild turkey population decreased by at least 85%. I had one lion come up to the gate by my garage at 8 pm and another within 15 feet of the back of my house in mid morning. I saw both. Barking by my small dogs chased both away. My next door neighbor had a large lion sunning itself 20 yards from their house for a month. I also had a lion run out of the woods and grab a turkey 50 feet behind me. I believe there are too many lions in residential areas in the Black Hills. Since then, I have lived north of Pierre on Okobojo Creek. Four winters ago, there was a medium sized lion living in our neighborhood which several people saw both in the day and at night. One winter night, it grabbed a rabbit about 5 feet from the front of my house right after a friend left at 8 pm. Several times, I noted fresh lion tracks within 15 feet behind my house. A month later, I was down in my lower level of my house and observed what appeared to be a nest of tumble weeds in a corner under my deck. Upon further examination, I noted there were lion tracks leading to it and several bone fragments in it (probably rabbit remains). Not sure how long it had been living there as I was gone for a period of time. Have not seen any lions in the area since then.

I love elk more than having lions in the hills. I hate to see elk killed by lions but understand it's all part of it. When lions are effecting elk numbers that consequently caused gfp to reduce elk tags then I'd like to see more lions harvested. But please do not allow hounds in bhfpd, ever

I LOVE WILDLIFE!

I manage 400 acres in sw yankton county. at one time this winter, we had evidence of 8 different lions. 3 adults and 5 cubs. we are finding deer kills all over and our deer population has drastically declined in the last 2 years. drastically.

I mostly get info from social media pages so it may be prejudiced, although the people who run the page seem to be responsible.

I never them back in South Dakota

I often hunt in Gregory county in the Missouri River hills. I've witnessed over the last twenty years a healthy mule deer population 20 years ago to almost nonexistent at present. I'm not sure weather the presence of more mountain lion in the area has contributed to this loss or not.

I only hunt on my land

I only hunt outside the BHFPD so I don't really have an opinion on hunting within the BHFPD I have yet to harvest a mountain lion but i will continue to purchase a tag

I originally came from a state that made the laws that we couldn't run lions with dogs and bears as well. It became a huge problem that they still fight to this day! The deer and elk population was pretty much cut in half and now less than that

I own a small acreage and usually have lions on camera about once a month.

I own sheep and cattle

I personally don't actively hunt for a mountain lion. I get a license per chance I see one on my property then I will harvest it.

I prefer to keep the deer and elk population up.

I purchased a tag so I would be legal to shoot one if I seen one

I raise livestock and they are becoming more prominent in our area so that tells me they are not hunted or controlled enough

I really don't know much about the mountain lion population. I will get a tag every once in a while, if i know there has been a mountain lion in the area where i deer hunt. I have never seen one in person, just tracks close to where i hunt deer, and on trail camera. I have never harvested one, but i also haven't tried actually hunting for a mountain lion.

I really have no opinion on the mountain lion population in South Dakota. I have never hunted mountain lions in South Dakota. I don't know anything about the numbers of mountain lions in South Dakota. I put neutral responses to everything because I have no idea what the status of mountain lions are in South Dakota, my brother claims he saw one while driving through the Black Hills at night when we were deer hunting two years ago.

I saw 7 mountain lions last year (2023) - 6 on foot and one while driving. The season dates are not agreeable to when majority of hunters are in field which greatly impacts harvest opportunities.

I saw more lion tracks years ago than in the last few years

I see a lot of lions on trail cameras. I have one picture of a family group of four in one frame. I don't hunt lions much given the physical nature of a winter hunt. I would participate in a hound hunt if it were available in the BHFPD. The opportunities I have had to harvest lions has been in the months of September -December.

I see lots of deer & elk in the Black Hills so cats don't effect population much - traffic kills a lot more

I see plenty of tracks, other sign, and have seen mountain lions in person. I saw 7 mountain lions in one day elk hunting near Pringle, SD 3 years ago.

I see signs of what they have eaten when turkey hunting in the black hills. I'm constantly concerned about encountering one while turkey hunting or hiking in the black hills

I see sufficient sign to reinforce my choices above. Lions are mostly nocturnal. I hunt with calls during the day (dawn until dusk). This is when they are least active with infrequent contact.

I see them when the season is not open. The season is set up to run when the trail closures are active from the forest service so you can't access some of the best spots.

I see tracks around and see them out of season. I think they are an important part of the ecosystem. I sure want to harvest one but not that fortunate yet. We have lots of deer and turkeys around so I think that they help keep that population in control somewhat.

I spend a significant amount of time in the hills and have never seen one just sporadic sign.

I spend all most every day in the hills working . When gfp first allowed hunting mt lions I would see at least one a month. Now im luck to see one .

I started hunting around 07 or 08, I could call lions in snow or no snow. In the last few years I have noticed a large drop in lion population and also big game elk,deer, turkeys. I know lions have to eat and they follow the food source. I also know lions have their own territory and when food source gets low they expand their territory. It does not help when forest service shuts down more areas so I cannot get back in farther to hunt. I am 80 yrs old so try to drag one out at great distance will not happen, Keep gates open for lion hunters only

I think humans are moving into their territory. If they are a threat to pets is because we are moving too closely. Humans are seeing them more because deer are inside city limits because people feed them. There needs to be a law against that or a fine. If we need to up the quota, I think we just open the season into the same as elk hunting again. Just in my opinion!

I think if they wanted better control of the mountain lion population, they should be able to use dogs for all hunting.

I think if we're seeing lions taking up residence in town, livestock attacks increasing, deer/elk numbers suffering due to lions then we need to manage more aggressively. I think we've been doing well.

I think it is fantastic to have a healthy population as long as elk and deer are not drastically impacted negatively. Need a balance of predators and prey.

I think it would be good to find alternative hunting strategies (ie dogs) which will help meet set quotas and manage the lion numbers in the state. I think they've hurt the mule deer/elk population in the black hills district and now western South Dakota.

I think it's doing well, if there ever becomes a problem, there should be a five day hound hunting season after the boot hunting season.

I think its neat to have a few around & for people to see one once in a blue moon. It adds to the allure of them how rare it is to see one

I think mountain lions should be managed like any other wildlife. I think the state currently does a good job.

I think mt lions should be removed from hunting

I think mtn. Lions are very hard on the deer,elk,and turkey populations. Notable differences since I've been hunting

I think that it is good too have large predators

I think that their is to many cats in the Black Hills and with the way we hunt them we don't meet the maximum number with the lack of snow and I think the lack of hunters the number of cats just go up.

I think the Mountain Lion should exist/co-exist with the deer and elk population. I would prefer to have more deer and Elk and therefore a smaller more controlled Mountain Lion population.

I think the numbers of all ungulates has taken a huge hit. Sheep goats especially. Boot hunters are not getting it done. The only effective way to manage a mt lion populations are with the use of hounds. We have cotton by somewhat. But it's time to reduce some lion numbers.

I think the population has increased in the south eastern region of the state.

I think the populations in the Black Hills FD are just about right to sustain a good population of deer and elk. If too many get killed it may have our populations get wacky. If dogs are allowed I think it might get to be a little hectic. I think the GFP is doing a great job of managing the mtn lion population.

I think there is a healthy amount as long as they are only seen occasionally and are not killing livestock.

I think there should be a hound season in the Black Hills. This will increase revenue for the state and also have a better chance of managing the population.

I think they are an essential predator for our ecosystem that should continue to be managed appropriately. Also, I wish we could open up a trapping season for them as well, while maintaining the same annual quotas.

I think they are controlled very well.

I think they have done a good job of keeping numbers under control

I think we could manage the Lions better with the use of dog hunting. Go for the big Males and let the Females go strategy. For some reason that logic seems to escape most people's attention. But at least we get go out there and squeal like a dying rabbit and hope we don't get eaten ourselves. I guess that's what make it fun. Thank You.

I think we need to harvest more lion's to many are showing up in towns

I understand why the seasons run as they do, but for those of us who are not located near the Hills, the season is not inclusive to hunt very often.

I used to see large groups of deer in the black hills now I onl see 2 or 3 at a time. I think the lions are the major factor on that. I own livestock and don't ever want to see a lion around ever.

I used to see mountain lions fairly often. Now I haven't seen one in over 2 years.

I value the added effect on the environment that a large predator has (mountain lions), and do not want any animal removed from its historic range. I also do not want public opinion based management like a few other western states (Colorado, Montana, Washington, Oregon, etc.) to come into play. I support large Apex predators that are here, or come here naturally (Mountain Lions, potentially black bears in the Black Hills and Custer National Forest), but forced re-introduction or immigration of predators to please a portion of the states Populus that will never be exposed to the predators I am not in favor of. I think SDGFP is going a good job managing Mountain Lions, especially compared to other Western States, and hope that the same mentality is taken in the future when other large predators migrate to the state (Black Bears, Wolves, etc.)

I want hunting with hounds opened to entire black hills

I want more trophy deer and elk

I want them there and a hunting season in case I choose to do it

I would assume the gfp uses the proper methods to determine this and how it's managed should be left to them because they are the ones doing the research and considering how they monitor the number taken and the amount seen in the wild I would say they are doing fine

I would like to harvest one

I would like to see more mountain lions on the landscape. As it sits, we rarely see or even hear about them. As South Dakota's only large predator species, they should be more prevalent.

I would like to see the population increase to sustain hound hunting.

I would much rather see the deer and elk population thrive in SD and be controlled by hunters than have lions that over populate and spread throughout this state and neighboring states.

I'm okay having the occasional mountain lion here and there across the state. They were in this area long before us. However, I'm not willing to have a small population of mountain lions. At the expense of a thriving deer population. The culture of deer hunting is much more valuable - traditions, food, family and revenue for the state and it's economy.

I'm outdoors all the time and it is so rare to see a cat which makes next to impossible to harvest one without the sides of bait, dogs etc. They are an amazing animal but their numbers are too high.

I'm tired of walking my dog past dead deer that mountain lions kill

I've grown up east river my whole life only seeing the remnants of mtn lions. Since I started making trips to the hills I hope to see one but haven't yet. These cats are elusive. I've been stalked by one deer hunting and my dog killed by one, east river. I hope to see more mountain lions on the future as I hope to hunt them regular, I think that would be fun and good a twist to South Dakota's already existing pheasant and deer hunting and population. I've grown up hunting and fishing and I love the ecosystem when it's healthy, mountain lion only HELP our ecosystem stay healthy. Overpopulation of varmints or animals pose a threat and I believe the coyotes don't do a good enough job, not as fun to hunt either.

I've had the pleasure of seeing 5 now. They are magnificent.

I've hunted lions in the Black Hills the last 6 years as well as setting game cameras and scouting outside of the regular season. I believe the state has a very good management plan in place as it is working right now.

I've hunted the last several years of lions and harvested one. But I see far less lion kills than coyote kills let alone the number of tracks

I've never encountered one, but I assume they are around when I'm in the Hills

I've seen only tracks

I've seen way more concentrated numbers in relatively small areas.

I'm fairly neutral about the subject. I don't have adequate knowledge about the animal in South Dakota to even provide an informed perception.

I'm not too familiar with mountain lions and have only heard negatives in the news and such. I think they do pose a small threat to big game such as deer. I don't have land or livestock but would try to keep my animals safe if I did, to include hunting mountain lions. As far a human interaction, most people don't see or encounter mountain lions in heavily trafficked areas that I'm aware of. If they start entering more populous areas in search of food and become less afraid of humans, that that can become a problem. I don't know how many mountain lion hunters there are and what the current harvest looks like, but I say continue managing the population like other game animals and let them still be a part of the natural ecosystem they live in as long as they don't become a problem and negatively interfere with other outdoor activities and hunting opportunities.

I've been hunting and in the hills my entire life, I've only seen a total of 4 lions my entire life. I know there's more out there that I cant see because they're sneaky but I think there's very few.

I've grown up in the black hills and saw my first lions in 1976, since then the population has exploded and the deer population is way down. It's nearly impossible to draw a mule deer (any deer) license for the black hills. The lions have a huge negative impact on mule deer populations

I've had 5 different lions on my game cameras on 44 acres by keystone. I've never seen one in person but I know there are more than people know.

If deer elk to hunt, I have never heard a rancher complain about cattle. That is the want to be ranchers stealing and killing cattle for fun.

If I moved west river.

If it doesn't snow it's tuff to find a cat. That's the way it goes...

If it is not an immanent threat to society

If killing pets and livestock there are to many

If the population of deer and elk don't doesn't drop, mountain lion harvest is about right. I've harvested several mountain Lions in other states and Canada. Most of the time I believe the public do not understand the life of mountain lions.

If the state is going to consider Mt Lions a Big Game animal I feel they need to open the season during the ungulate seasons in the Black Hills.

If the state is going to use hunters & their almighty dollar \$ to manage wildlife then the lion is not needed as a predator for ungulate management. Any extra kills by lions (ie pets & livestock) is a sign of overpopulation.

If there were fewer cats we could have more elk tags issued

If they are being pushed out of territory there are to many

If you don't eat it don't shoot it.

Im more interested in the biological relationships between lions and native wildlife populations. Our biologist professionals are trusted to deliver accurate population information and dynamics and I trust their expertise. I refrain from the armchair biologists who think they actually know what is going on with our native wildlife populations based on their often short-sided analysis. Livestock depredations are a concern and must be investigated for accurate conclusions.

Impact on cattle and deer numbers and behavior.

Impacts other wildlife

Important part of state history. Not a sustainable population to include non resident opp.

in Custer County see very little sign last 3 years

In my BH lion hunting experiences of late, the cats seem to be concentrated to only a few areas of the BH's. I realize there could be one anywhere and there probably is throughout the hills, however the hunters know which areas they're most likely to get on a track. So then sometimes we experience too many hunters on top of each other. I hunt other species in many other areas throughout the rest of the state and I have never even seen a track. I randomly hear of one in an area or see it on the local news over the past many years.

In our local area of south-central Fall River Co, the deer numbers are almost none. Some of this could be caused by the extreme number coyotes. Have hunted cats every year since the season started (20+ days every year) and have not been successful I don't have the same access of those in the central and northern hills due to large tracts of private land where no hunting predators allowed.

In question 2 Mountain Lions cause a big threat to our Black Hills Deer population when not managed properly which we are seeing now. Dogs need to be used inside the Black Hills Fire Protection area to manage them properly. In Question 4 there are now very few serious Mountain Lion hunters inside the Black Hills Fire Protection area. Most of the Lions currently being taken within the Black Hills Fire Protection area are opportunist or taking them illegally. Question 2. Suffering Deer herds in the Black Hills is what hurts the economy.

In SD weather plays a role in mountain lion harvest. A few less or more snows can result in higher/lower cat harvest per year.

In ten years hunting deer in the Cheyenne river breaks, I have found three freshly killed large bucks; all killed by neck wounds & back ham partly eaten and still bloody

In the last 5 years I have saw more lions than ever. When you see big predators in the daylight they are plenty populated

In the last couple years we have seen less and less each year.

It depends on how close to people that the mountain lions exists, I think with population growing it's only a matter of time before someone's child or beloved pet is killed !

It doesn't make sense to me that there are as many as is said considering the cats' large home ranges and territorial nature. Also the fact that I've never seen a live cat in the wild with as much time as I spend exploring the hills year round

It is extremely hard hunting which I appreciate as a sportsman. I wish they were a little more common so a successful hunt could be slightly more attainable. Again, I have no excuse because I did not dedicate enough time to hunt. From a livestock owner they are far more of a nuisance rather than an asset so I cannot speak for them.

It is in my opinion that Mt. Lions cause a negative impact on the population of many species of wildlife to include deer, elk, & etc... without really providing a positive impact and the Mt. Lion should be seriously managed at a low level. They seem to be far too many encounters/sightings nor do I think the SDGFP has an accurate estimate of the Mt. Lion population. way too many thoughts to type here....

It seems every year the limit is never reached. I do think it should be considered to allow hounds in the black hills. I think boot hunters should have their own quota and hound hunters should have their own. I think the mountain lion population could support a quota for each. You can drive in the hills for a day and cut multiple lion tracks. I've done it. The numbers are there. And they need to be managed as much as possible to bring those numbers down slightly

It seems the deer and elk population's in the Hills are considerably lower than they have in the past.

It should be healthy and sustainable

It should be open during deer season. You would sell more tags and either hit your quota or come closer to your target. Hounds should be allowed in Black Hills. This would allow to harvest per gender.

It would be nice to be able to hunt the lions with dogs statewide. Then the hunters can focus on the male lions. I don't know if lion hunting is important to SDs economy, but the lower deer and elk numbers definitely affect the economy. Would like the lion population back to a number that will allow the elk and deer numbers to get back to there past levels.

It's a natural risk and we should enjoy our wildlife diversity. Like everything there is a balance we should seek.

It's just like anything else, you may see alot of sign, but see no lions. The next day you might see several! I worry about the elk and deer population, but enjoy the hunt for a lion.

Just an example I took my wife on an overnight shed antler trip in the hills last spring. In a 18 mile loop that we walked we found lots of cat sign (tracks and cat toilets) and numerous old kill sites where they had buried prey. I've been watching populations of ungulates go down for the last 25 years in areas I hunt due to cats and over harvest by hunters and have gotten pictures of wolves the last two years. Seems as though the plan to erase the game and take away the opportunity to harvest big game is well on way to working.

Just need a balance between mountain lion and big game.

Just right

just think there are a few to many cats, for a healthy eco system.

Keeping in mind the biggest killer of mtn lions is other mountain lions

Kill the ones that are seen near towns!

Kill to many fawns and calves

Kill too many deer and elk, no need for any m lions out of park

kill too many other animals

killing all the deer and elk population is way down on both

Killing too many deer

Lack in prey species populations. ex. elk, deer, mt goats & porcupine

Lack of all game deer elk mt goats etc

Lack of deer and reduction elk populations.

leave the current structure as is

Left unchecked for to long and kill far too many deer, antelope, elk

Less deer to hunt

Let hunters use dogs in the hills, and let trappers target them. These cats are killing all our ungulates. WAY too many cats.

Lifelong livestock agriculture farming in family

Like to see a few more

Lions appear to be reclaiming more of their historical range each year. More & more sightings are happening along ER Missouri Valley

Lions are decimating the deer population in Yankton county at a rapid rate. Currently I have verified 5 different lions on my property alone and I am reasonably certain there are as many as 8 total lions. This is in an area that covers approximately 1500 acres. A few years ago (2-4) we used to see deer herd sizes numbering in the 40 to 70 range feeding on alfalfa in the evenings. This past summer those herd numbers were 15-20 at most.

Lions pose a threat to humans and domestic livestock

Live in Black Hills. Enjoy chance sightings. Deer population healthy.

Live in the BH and see tracks almost everytime I go hiking. I also run 30-40 game trail cameras and see them routinely. Our deer population is at a low due to other factors, mostly weather and disease.

Live in the woods, see tracks thru our yard and have had on our deck. Appreciate their place in nature/natural order

Livestock

Livestock loss

Livestock on the east river side. Lion population has increased dramatically in last few years

Livestock safety is paramount

Livestock, public safety, hunting, wildlife encounters

Looks like the system is working at this time.

Loss of deer and other game

Lots of lions on trail cams, dead deer, dead elk

Lots of sightings in hill city. Almost weekly.

Low Deer and elk numbers

Low deer, elk, turkey numbers

Low East River

Male to female ratio. Reproduction cycle and number of offspring. Hunter harvest reports plus gfp non Hunter harvest reports. Not keeping up with the reproduction numbers.

Man is the only predator that can control mountain lion populations.

Many deer hit along the highway are evidence that there are not too many mountain lions in the Black Hills

Many fewer deer seen on our BH deer hunt this year. I believe that currently there are too many lions in the hills.

Many sightings, especially in the hills and foothills. Minimal reports of domestic animal attacks and also little to no human conflict. Cats in the last few years do seem to be willing to get closer to neighborhoods than before. I have many trail cameras out and have them mostly for cat hunting. If you know what you are looking for, they are relatively easy to find. I have talked with other lion hunters and most of us have had a chance to take or nearly take a cat. I believe a slight increase in the population would be good and sustainable for the Black Hills.

More and more sightings in city limits, towns and neighborhoods. Tells me the population is too much in the Black Hills.

More game animals in general.

More hound hunting possibilities Nobody from our houndsman group was even drawn to take a dog for the Custer park tag.

More reports of lions around homes and in towns must mean that there are more lions.

More tags for houndsmen need to be allotted so selective adult lion and Tom harvesting can be part of successful population control instead of the Goodwin family shooting kittens and adolescent females. Outfitting practices need to be strictly prohibited and discouraged. All tags need to stay for residents only. Boots and hounds

Most hunters enjoy hunting big game - deer and elk. The mountain lions have become over populated with no natural predators. This has impacted the deer and elk numbers dramatically. It's pretty obvious when license numbers decrease and it becomes almost impossible to draw one regularly. Seriously, in terms of the economy for the state, I have to believe that the sale of deer and elk tags to all that have a passion for this type of hunting would be way more profitable for the state, than the handful of mountain lion tags sold to the few that hope to be one of the lucky individuals to get the maybe possible 60 cats in the Hills. Let's have a few major mountain lion reduction seasons, let the other big game recover for a few years and get out hunting back to the way it was 15 - 20 years ago before the lions took control. Don't get me wrong I enjoy hunting the mountain lions, but I would much rather hunt deer, elk, and sheep. Deer hunting in the Hills was always a family tradition for us. This tradition I hoped to continue with my kids has ended because you can very rarely draw license. Mountain lion hunting is not a hunt to take your kids on if you plan on having any success.

most people probably have never seen one in the wild

Mountain lion population needs to be controlled and stable

Mountain lion Sightings in town have been increasingly more and more every year in recent years we see more and more cats showing up east river than we ever have before. And harvest by boot hunters have very large numbers of adolescent lions showing we have a very good breeding population in South Dakota.

Mountain Lions and Coyotes have greatly impacted and decreased the number of Deer and Elk in the hills. There are far more people that enjoy Deer and Elk hunting than Mt. Lion. I realize that your goal is to provided good hunting for everyone but that is not going to happen with the number of Lions and Coyotes that you have present in the hills at this time. You need to get a plan together to reduce both Lions and Coyetes.

Mountain lions are an important part of our ecosystem and their permanent place should not be in question. However they must be managed well to ensure they are in balance within that environment and do not become overpopulated as they have in the past. The result is a significant decrease in our other game animals.

Mountain lions are killing too many elk and deer, and are a threat to livestock.

Mountain lions are like coyotes. We will never be ride of them without poison 10/80

Mountain lions are signs of a healthy environment but should be kinda rare because they are apex predators

Mountain lions are the indicator of a healthy population of ungulates. As more subdivisions are developed, the population of deer does increase, therefore increasing the potential for more lions. Things are fine the way they are. I don't agree w/ hounds. Those are the lazy hunters trying to be successful the easy way. I have earned the respect of non hunters being a boot hunter. December 1st should be the start date for lions through the end of April.

mountain lions are thick at my place with lots of deer kills. and they have lost there respect for humans. see them in day llight when season is closed. deer count is way down.

Mountain lions have their place, but livestock should be protected. I see mountain lions while I hike a lot. I also hunt lions. I think that the season for the black hills should be all year until the quota is reached. I have seen three females with spotted cubs this year. It would be nice to be able to hunt those lions later in the year.

Mountain lions kill newborn deer and elk and thats why the population of deer and elk is low

Mountain lions should live in the mountains. They have no business on the praire or urban

Mt lion population is too high. They don't pose much risk to livestock but are detrimental to the wildlife populations

Mt lions are essential to maintaining healthy herds of deer and elk. I hate that so many young cats are being taken by uneducated over eager hunters. This year's low deer population may not be great for our cat population next year I think that needs to be studied. We may have too many cats for as few of deer we have left but at the same time don't we don't want to harvest too many cats and the population not bounce back. SD is filling up with non hunters who are clueless to the balance you must keep. I pray for you and wish you luck.

Mt lions, kill calves, deer, elk, goats, sheep, pets, and people!

Mule deer numbers and not being able to use dog even though there is a quota

My Elk Hunt possibilities have gone to crap. The damn mountain lions have cut off the season in Custer State Park four call elk tags which I've had a preference for about 14 years I believe without looking it up. And now there is no season for them in the last five or six years I believe. I think people are being misled about the number of mountain lions and how they affect the elk population at almost 70 years old. I'm running out of time and would much rather hunt elk than have people/animal snatchers in the form of mountain lions out there. I was lucky enough to draw a Custer tag over 15 years ago but since then hardly any car tags have been available and for that matter outside the park the numbers are way down compared to what they could be if you got rid of the mountain lions. If there were about a maximum of 10 to 12 pairs of mountain lions throughout South Dakota, that would be plenty as far as I'm concerned and maybe even less than that probably five pairs total.

My family has hunted in the Black Hills for over 50 years and the deer population has decreased tremendously in the past 3 years, especially whitetails, porcupine sightings are virtually non-existent now period..

My favorite big game to hunt is elk. Second is mountain lions. I spend 40 days (mostly afternoons after work) in the hills during lion season. I have had lots of encounters with lions over 9 years and killed 1. Boot hunting lions is one of the most frustrating and exciting things I've done. I love boot hunting lions and don't want to see it go away, however we have not met the quota for many years and I feel that we should have a limited quota using dogs just like CSP to control the population. I would like to see the use of dogs in April which would still allow boot hunters to hunt the early season. Dogs could then be used to meet the rest of the quota or have their own quota. It seems to me that the deer and elk population have declined recently, which I would contribute to the lion population.

n/a

N/a

N/A

na

Na

NA

natural predator to SD

Need more mountain lions east river

Need mule population to grow and between the predators and miss management by sdgfp it decline to a point where shouldnt even issue tags for 5 years

Need to able to run hounds in the hills

Need to allow 20 or 25 dog tags in the fire protection district cuz we have to meet the quota every year

Need to allow allow mountain lion hunters to use dogs in the black hills.

needs to be managed

Never be able to get a hold on management without the use of hounds period!!!

Never seen one. Would love to hunt one.

News and other hunters

News stories

No comment

No deer left in the Black Hills outside of towns

No real factors, just a perception from talking to people in the hills area.

none

None

Not appropriate near human or livestock populations. GFP ignored reality to allow cats to wipe out most of the elk in CSP. I spoke with ranger Sparky who frankly told me the lions were the reason why elk numbers were way down. At hunt orientation two days before, the facilitators all professed ignorance towing the party line. A bunch of damnable cowards.

Not being able to hunt multiple lions (2) with one tag

Not confident the GFP knows the population number. Lacks research

Not many deer left

Not near as many deer around. I've never seen so few of deer in all my life.

Not needed to harmful to other wildlife

Not sure

Not the number of deer that used to be in the hills.

Nothing

Number of friends hunt lions or know people that do

Number of game animals seen

Number of reported sightings Low deer populations (esp near residential areas)

number of sighting and the number of tracks

Number of tracks found in snow, or soft ground.

Number of tracs I see, reading, I love animals

Numbers of deer and elk licenses available

Numbers of deer and other wildlife going down

Numbers taken each year and sightings reported on social media

Numbers too high

Observing them in my area outside of Deadwood.

One of natures predators that is perfect for our states gaming geography.

Only if they are a threat too people and livestock

Open it to hounds part of the season enough with the boot hunting only and shorten the season to quit chasing elk out of shedding bed areas

Other animal populations are too low because of lions

Our deer population has been decreasing every year for the past 5-6 years and in that same time period lions have been seen as well as taken in our area. That tells me lions are either a bigger problem than GFP is aware of or they don't care. We see fewer fawns in the summer and fall than we used too which I think is a main diet for lions. so I think there are more lions as well as wolves than thought to be

Our horses have been attacked 3 times, twice severely injuring them.

Over the last ten years, I have steadily seen more lion tracks and sign in the Black Hills.

Over the years the deer population and quality of deer seems to have decreased over that time. Seeing lions more so I tie them together.

people seeing them in person or on camera, harvest

Personal experience and talking with other hunters / ranchers.

Personal observations & encounters

Poor deer and elk recruitment.

Population around Yankton has increased dramatically in the last decade and the deer population has dwindled. You don't dare let kids go and explore the wild areas anymore.

Population control should come from biology research

Population of deer, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goat

Predation of all big game animals, livestock and possibility of human harm

Predation on elk deer and turkeys.

Prior to allowing hunting, there were far too many lions in the Black Hills. After several years of hunting and adjusting harvest levels, it appears to me that the lion population is stabilized at a sustainable level. There are not as many reports of pets being carried away from the porch. If people pay attention to their pets and placement of food (attractants) out side, the conflicts are minimized. Legalizing lion hunting has taught the lions to respect and fear humans.

Problem lions are ever present in Keystone S.D. too many pets have been lost. I can't hunt in town but I know any harvest I get helps my neighbors for their pet's to survive and I've raised all of my children and onlion meat. We love it!

Provide more oppportunity for hunting them but do not over populate harming the deer/elk population

Published and rumored sightings

Quota not being met

Ready news stores & facebook posts.

Reduced deer licenses, news stories

Rely on GFP info

Reported harvests, sightings, game camera photos, tracks, kill sites

reports from hunters and reports from the public

Reports of them, especially in my area!

Safety

Safety of people and healthy ecosystems

Season needs to be with deer and elk season

Season should be during deer season

See less deer and elk. Where there are more lions

Seeing a lot of lion scat. Seeing a lot of crushed (not strewn around) turkey feathers wherever turkeys are killed by predators.

Seeing far to many

Seeing them, other people (that I know) seeing them

Seeing tracks of mother & cubs

Seems the added population in southeast SD has had effects on the deer, turkey, and Bobcat numbers the past 3 to 4 years. If they are the direct impact for this, I don't know. There has been a lot of disease also with the dry conditions. Would maybe like to see the ability to trap lions as well.

Seems to me that there are far fewer deer to hunt????

Seen many on trail cameras set out for deer hunting and seen many tracks throughout northern Black Hills.

Seen/over deer populations in the Black Hills, where I have seen mtn. lions or signs of mountain lions

Should allow hunting with dogs

Should be able to trap them

Should be open year around during deer season

Sighting either in person or on camera

Sighting in populated areas

Sightings and attacks

Sightings and livestock depredation

Sightings are up in the Plains. I have two ranches 60 miles apart. Lions are seen monthly!

Signs of tracks and kills

Since gfp has so poorly managed the states deer and turkey populations due to their greed and money first decision making rather than conservation before all. We dont need lions also negatively impacting the populations as well.

Since the lion population the hills became strong, I have only been able to draw a hills deer tag every 4-5 years. This is disappointing, less lion means more deer tags for hunters.

Since the start of the lion hunting season, lion populations have diminished significantly. No hunting was not the option. Now having a season seems insignificant since quotas aren't met. The licenses are too expensive for as few sightings as one has. Also, can't get to half of the Black Hills in many winters. Consider no season with the ability to shoot one lion per year, but it needs to be checked in with GFP. I suspect just about as many lions would be killed as with the licensed process. The cost per tag is a money grab by GFP. Get more money from non-residents if that is the goal.

Since we started hunting mountain lions (2005)? the deer population in the areas that I hunt is about 15-20% of what it was then. (my opinion) Is it the mtn lions, disease or something else? I think we are overselling special permits (antlerless deer) such as mentor, youth, handicap, etc that are not limited draw to number or species, whitetail or mule deer.

sittings in populated areas

Snow track and lion kills

Social media and SDGFP statistics

Some concern in some areas about mountain lions killing too many deer. However ?? May be decline in deer population from disease.

Some of the factors that impact my perception on the mountain lion population are deer and elk number in the black hills.

South Dakota was on its way to having the best elk hunting in America. Then these cats took over the Hills. The elk herd went down and us hunters can only hunt elk once in a great while. Which is unfair to hunters.

Starting to see a few more across the state. I think it's a good thing. Maybe black bears next!

stay the same

Surveys and studies

Tag numbers and success. Media reports of sightings.

Talking to those who have hunted them. I enjoy hunting as a conservation method

Talking with other hunters, seeing mountain lion tracks and getting pictures of mountain lions on trail cameras.

THE AMOUNT OF DEER AND ELK THEY KILL.

The amount of deer around in the areas I hunt

The amount of mountain lion sign I see in the bhfpd seems to make deer and elk population objectives very hard to achieve

The amount of tracks and huntets

The amount of tracks we see every year on our property, consistently seeing lions on our trail cameras and occasionally finding deer, turkeys and pets killed by lions

The amount of tracks, sightings, kills etc that I witnessed personally or heard about.

The biggest factor in my opinion is I can go out one day after a fresh snow and easily find 6 cat tracks within 20 miles of my house crossing roads

The biggest factor to me is from good friends and great hunters who have seen the decrease in ungulate populations throughout the black hills. From people who hunt every year for the last 10+ years, they've seen a large decrease in the ungulates which is a major issue for all sportsman alike.

The Black Hills are too small and no need for mt lion

The Black Hills Mountain Lion population is not being significantly altered through hunting. Having done some mountain lion hunting in the Black Hills I know success is heavily dependent on fresh snow falls. It just does not snow enough during the current hunting season to ever meet quota. Meeting quota would probably mean starting mountain lion season during the regular firearms deer season in the Black Hills. For whatever reason that season was discontinued many years ago. I come across lion tracks every time I venture out to turkey hunt or deer hunt and there is fresh snow or mud. I do not think there is any threat of lions in the Black Hills ever going away unless the population gets too high and disease takes them out again.

The decimation of the deer Hurd and Elk Hurd

The deer population has dropped considerably. Not sure if this is from lions or other factors.

The deer population is being affected where I bow hunt.

The deer population is declining rapidly.

The deer population is dropping due to predators.

The elk population in CSP was decimated by lionsvc

The expansion of ML sightings around eastern SD

The fact that they only eat "fresh" meat and at a minimum kill 1 deer per week. Also I believe harvest limits are too low

The fact that they attack domestic animals.

The hunting I have done the last couple of years including hound hunting (unsuccessfully this January), there are plenty of lions in the park and out of the park. It was not hard to find tracks and kills.

The hunting public has been misled by GFP on the lions since the 1990's. The hunting public was reporting elk and deer kills, we asked if it was lions, and we were told no. The hunting public has pleaded their case to oppose lions, only to have the public's interests trumped by whatever the department wants. This goes for all the lost opportunities on deer, turkey as well as elk hunting. I propose no season and copy the same format as what we have for coyotes. Lions have been pushing deer into the people populated areas in the hills. Pushed elk out of Custer State Park to the open burn areas. It's only a matter of time before a child is killed by lion in South Dakota. I don't have much faith in the department surveys when they don't follow the public's input.

The impact to deer and elk populations, sightings or encounters with humans

The lions kill our baby calves every year

The low population of deer and elk in the Hills, catching lions on trail cameras along the Sioux River by Hudson South Dakota and reported sightings around Parker, SD

The mountain lion population is hard on elk herds and the deer population. The state should allow more people to hunt them with dogs in order to better control the population. It should be rare to ever come across one or see one in the wild.

The number of deer & elk numbers are down

The number of deer and elk kills by lions has greatly affected the numbers of deer and elk

The number of lion kills I come across, the number of tracks I see, and the number of lions I see

The number of lions killed in bhfpd could stay the same or even increase. The main factor is male or female. The way hunters are killing females and kittens now won't help the deer/elk population, or the lion population. If we were killing mature males (mountain lions only predators) we would have more lions. If we killed mature males we'd have more deer and elk too, the young lions they kill now are rabbit hunters not deer hunters. We are leaving the mature Tom's on the landscape and killing the females. Science tells us we are doing this totally backwards.

The number of tracks or sightings I see each year

The number of whitetail deer has to be down for the numbers I see. I haul hogs in the hills I don't see the numbers I did 5 years ago

The number of young deer elk are way down had on kill deer right behind my pasture

The only reason I got a permit, was CYA. in case I had to shoot one. I would not go out looking for them to hunt. There should be an assurance that hunters can protect themselves without buying a permit. I don't trust game and fish to make to right assessment if self defense is a matter. So, I buy a permit!

The population is strong due to the abundance of deer and elk in the area

The population of Elk and Deer

The population of elk, elk calves, deer and fawns.

The population of Mtn Lions has gotten out of control in the past 20+ years. More hound hunting needs to be permitted. That is the most effective way to keep these predators in check. It shouldn't be about the money brought in for the state, but the security of our elk, deer & residents.

The population of the elk herds

The presence of mountain lions as a top level predator is beneficial in the predator/prey balance. Without the presence of wolves, mountain lions are needed to help keep the elk and deer populations in check in the BHFPD.

The presence of Mountain lions effects and drives away the deer population

The sole reason I purchase a lion tag annually is because they literally come through our yard. We have neighbors that have lost pets and we too, have animals that we have to keep an eye on (as well as our own safety) when they (or we) are outside, especially at night. Living in the Black Hills we have a large population of wildlife that the mountain lions prey on for sustainability. Unfortunately, that at times is a threat to our pets, animals and my family.

The threat to my livestock and my

The tracks I cut when I'm hunting for lions in the hills or bobcats east river

The tracks I find on our ranch after snow, the number of deer kills as well as livestock depredation (before I changed where I calve at) & sightings year round

The trouble that the gfp say mountain lions create is a false they tell the public.

The use of dogs is the best way to manage the lions. The state hires a houndsman to tree cats for them. Why not let us run our dogs. I have to pay money out of state to hunt lions with my hounds when we have them in our state. The boot hunters have shot enough kittens and possibly deer they mistake lions for when they catch a glimpse of one running by. I strongly disagree with the boot hunting.

There are a lot of lions in hills need to do a better job of harvesting mature animals not lactating females

There are areas such as around Whitewood where there are lot of cats and not many being hunted as the roads are all shut down (Crook Mountain) and a lot of private ground on the North side of Crook City Road and a lot of homes. There have been several horses attacked and killed in this area. These cats could be hunted with dogs and would help control the population. I personally have video of a cat killing a deer in our yard (in Whitewood) and my son has had several killed in his yard and one neighbor's dog (Crook City Road). It is time to open dog hunting in the protection area.

There are far too many. Look how they are pushed out of the hills.

There are just too many cats, at least where I been hunting, the Turkey population is down as well as the deer, I have seen many kills, more than usual, after a fresh snow I cut 9 different sets of tracks, seen a monster cat 3 times on a nice 5 point, got pictures, I could go on, personally I think they should be thinned down.

There are more than anyone realizes. They have begun to migrate into towns more & more which tells me their food sources are better in town?

There are no fences around the state to keep lions out or in the state. In order to properly manage and have accurate data ALL lions harvested need to be counted and location documented. I can say this is NOT happening. Problem lions, in town, are "relocated", when proper management would help eliminate these issues. Harvesting mature lions keeps population of lions healthy, still maintaining an adequate population and not pushing them into human populated areas, the best way going after easy prey such as pets, chickens, or domesticated livestock. Management of these lions would most easily and efficiently be done with the use of hounds. Having a Houndsman identify the sex and age of the lion prior to harvesting would be an excellent management tool.

There are not many east river and it would fun to get a lion out on the prairie.

There are still too many lions in the Hills & until you allow people to use dogs for hunting so we can take out the larger females & male we will always have a mountain lion problem.

There are sure some areas that the population needs to be decreased

There are thousands of hunters that have to go without a tag each year, that could make up the difference that the mountain lion consumes as a whole. Let's face it they are killing machines.

There are to many! Hunters should be able to use hounds to hunt lions state wide and in park

There aren't many problem cat encounters and hunters can still have some success if they hunt hard.

There is AT LEAST 2,000 lions in the black hills area. They are all over trail cams on skyline, piedmont, nemo road etc. i looked for tracks on a 5-6 mile hike around hill city and saw 3 different tracks in the last 4 days. There is easily 5x more lions then what is believed in the Black Hills area.

There is too many lions for the deer and elk population going down

There isn't an abundance of mountain lions in my area of Mccook county

They are a background predator, very few people see them in person but have cameras to see them and think they are a threat. They are not a threat and should be managed by fish and game policy accordingly. Public input should not waiver decisions on how animals are to llove and be hunted.

They are a majestic wild animal and their existence should be respected. If the people of Alaska can live with the state wildlife so can we.

They are a native species in our area.

They are a part of nature and need to be managed

They are a part of the ecosystem

they are a predator and need to be managed

They are an awesome animal to see in the wild. I describe it as exciting and frightening all at the same time. I have had the opportunity to see 5 different lions over 12 years living in SD. I believe there are more lions than a person thinks in SD, especially in the Black Hills. My response for this survey is more directed towards the "problem" lions. I personally know an individual who had a 3 week old stud colt by Whitewood killed by a lion this past spring. My wife helped locate the dead foal. I also know people who live fairly close to the kill site and report a multitude of lion tracks close to their animals and homes year-round. It's my opinion that the procedure for attempting to take the cat that killed the foal was severely mismanaged, resulting in the cat getting away and frustration of the horse owner. I feel that a different protocol could have easily ended in dispatching the problem cat. I have been out over several seasons attempting to call a lion with a very good caller who is proficient in calling coyotes. We have zero sightings in our attempts after setting up on multiple fresh tracks after fresh snows. I did not purchase a license this year. Hounds seem to be the most effective way of bagging a lion. My belief is there has to be a way to implement a season in the Black Hills for hound hunting, even if it's the last half of the season or every other season. I have had an encounter with a lion while deer hunting with my wife in the hills. Including a lion harvest tag during deer season could be another way to increase harvest to a group of hunters who otherwise would not go out of their way to specifically hunt lions, but would buy a tag while deer hunting and gladly harvest a lion if the opportunity presents itself. I have a degree in animal science and make my living working with animals daily. There's a statement that I find myself repeating, especially when I deal with people's animals mis-behaving. "You teach wha

They are an important part of an ecosystem, but when their numbers get out of balance, other species in that ecosystem suffer, and I believe we're seeing that in the decrease in the numbers of big game in the Black Hills and western SD.

They are an important predator in our state.

They are doing too much damage to the population of elk and deer in the black hills

They are eating all the deer and I am a taxidermist so they are ruining my business.

They are good eating.

They are killing way to many deer

They are not a factor unless you invade their territory. Or are stupid and unaware of your surroundings.

They are not needed to control the other animal populations. They kill more than is needed to balance out the eco system.

They are our states top predator. They are a sign that we have a healthy environment. I do believe that problem cats that are focusing on Bighorn sheep and mountain goats need to be removed no matter what time of year it is. I would like to see a healthy population of cats along the Missouri River. The habitat and prey are there.

They are part of the ecosystem, you remove one part and it upsets the balance of nature.

they are predators!!

they are present in my home neighborhood and pose threat to pets, had a cub on my porch yesterday at 3 in afternoon

They are rarely seen so it feels like there could be more

They are seen in town on security cameras. I find evidence of lion kills when out hunting. I know they are there but I never see them.

They do not to be in eastern SD

They don't bother me, one was in my backyard a week ago.

They eat a lot of elk and deer (particularly mule deer) and their population needs to decrease so we have more ungulates. Mtn lion season needs to open in the fall (October)

They eat a lot of elk. Elk are a extremely popular big game in black hills. An elk heavy balance would be a winner.

They eat to many deer and baby elk

they eat what they kill

They frequently come right up to my house in the night and I wish it was something I didn't have to worry about with a small child and dogs

They have decimated the turkey population in the hills and are tough on the deer and elk too. Hard to get a tag anymore

They help regulate the ever growing deer population.

They kill deer and elk population badly

They kill everything and leave less wildlife to hunt...the animals that people hunt and eat, like deer, antelope, and elk to name just a few. What do you do with a lion? Eat it? No. Hunt it because they are killing everything to include pets and potentially people? Yes. Get rid of all of them.

They kill game animals, livestock, and pets as well as pose a risk for human recreation such as camping, hiking, and motor sports

They kill way too many deer and elk that people would rather hunt and bring in more money to SD tourism

They need more fear of man and everything man has. It's only a matter of time before someone (adult or child) gets hurt.

They need to be kept under control as they are killing machines

They pose a very serious threat to people, livestock, and pets. There are better ways to control deer and elk populations.

They should be hunted with dogs. This would result in a better male/female harvest ratio.

They were hunted for a reason same as wolves

They're hard on the elk and deer population in the Black Hills.

Think they need to open the season when elk season starts like they used to

This is my opinion, but I feel over the last few years the weather hasn't provided the best weather to reach the quota. In turn I feel the deer and elk number are down in the black hills. I think there should be a shorter season just for boot hunters and then a season for boot and dog hunters. I feel 95% of the dog hunters are true hunters and managers of the wildlife and if treed a young cat, or younger female they would move on. I am an avid elk hunter and it's hard enough to draw a tag as it is now I would hate to see the numbers depleted so much that it's even harder to draw a tag.

Though sitings are rare in my area, my neighbor's cattle have been chased through the fence on several occasions and the carcass of one of his calves was found up in a tree. Our children are older now but they spent a lot of time exploring unsupervised in the pasture across the road from our house, as children should. As a parent, you wouldn't imagine the unnecessary stress that caused knowing that their are predators that could be hunting your children. To top it off, we were told by game, fish and parks officials for years that there were no mountain lions in our area, even when all of the signs were here.

threat to deer/elk

Threat to the elk deer herds

To begin with, having native apex predators thriving in the region is an important indicator of a healthy ecological environment. In order to keep prey populations stable, predators are required. Despite being a hunter, I am aware that hunters by themselves are incapable of performing the same ecological role as apex predators. Any notion that mountain lions must be eradicated therefore comes from a place of ignorance. Not only are lions difficult animals to hunt (with one of the lowest hunter success rates in the world), but they do not pose a significant threat to life or property in our area. To my knowledge no person has been injured or killed by a mountain lion in South Dakota, and while cattle losses are unfortunate it is simply the way of life on the great plains. Ranchers do have a right to protect their own, but given the nature of lions it would be far more effective to trap or to tree them using dogs than to expect hunters to perform the task of managing a population of lions in the region. Additionally, flooding the region with hunters in an effort to stamp out lion populations would put people (especially the hunters) at risk of accidental injury. Therefore, in my opinion, the best course of action is to continue to have a limited, regulated lion season which does not impact the region's lion population significantly one way or the other. This continues to generate money for the state's economy while also partially funding the resources needed to keep lions properly managed.

To few deer and elk

to many

To many

To many cats in the BH - start season in October.

Too close to my cattle

Too few deer and elk and limiting the season to being outside regular deer and elk seasons unnecessarily limits the harvest which is never filled. Recommend opening during the regular hunting seasons to give the opportunity to reach the harvest limits and control lion populations for the welfare of the deer and elk populations and increase the quality of the hunting experience for those species

Too many deer and elk being killed. Too many lion sightings in residential areas.

Too many sightings in town and low deer numbers

Top of the food chain. We must make sure they do not overpopulate and spread out to hazardous area.

Tracks and lion kills encountered. Reports of lion related incidents: pets being attacked & Mtn. Lion/vehicle strikes.

Tracks around my property, sightings

Tracks I see while out hunting.

Trail cam photos I have captured

Trail camera photos, missing pets, low deer and elk populations

Travel through farm 3x year

Turkey, elk and mule deer pop decreasing.

Two in the backyard with more on the way (kittens)

Ungulate populations seem to be decreasing everywhere, and need all the help they can get to restore their numbers. Predator management is a big factor in that.

Ungulates population I feel we need a healthy ungulate pop and this is 1st wat ever needs to be done. Cats 2nd!

Unnecessary decrease in deer & elk populations

Use of dogs to choose between shooting male vs female better

Very important species in our ecosystem

Visual observations, and GFP provided data

Way too many in the hills thats why they come west. I gave up on hunting elk because of lion population!

We all want mountains lions around but not at the expense that our deer, elk, and livestock are under constant attack anywhere in SD. Fewer is better. Do not let wolves into this state!!

We had a mother lion with 4 cubs on our property this summer and many yearlings wander through. Despite that, our deer numbers are good, and our turkey numbers are pretty high. I get a license only when they are coming consistently around our cabin, as I fear for our dog's safety. We have had a lion attack our neighbor's large dogs, which is disturbing. We haven't had a large male for several years. Most are juveniles passing through, with the exception of the female that had 4 cubs. We believe she is pretty consistently having 4 cubs as 4 years ago our neighbor had a female with 4 and last year there was a female with 3-4 caught on camera in our area. I think numbers are about right, but maybe on the brink of being too many. Seems there are many young and not as many older lions.

We have many lions in the area. We are fine with it. They have not posed any danger thus far. It's not in their nature to attack people unless provoked or protecting cubs. There's a lot of miss education out there.

We have no deer left in southeastern SD

We have run into a lion with our dog & have them very close /in yard. Carry a pistol when walking since that encounter. Don't see them as a routine.

we have too many mountain lions!!! if we do not reach our quota (Which is a low number anyway) we should use dogs to fill the quota. We should also be able to kill mountain lions year round in the Black Hills. They are killing our deer,, elk and pets everyday

We keep getting told that Mt Lions are showing up in other states and by DNA testing they are coming from the Black Hills. If this is true then there are to many in the Black Hills and they are being forced out by their own kind to find there own habit to live in. Plus you hear about them and see them more all the time now. There numbers are to high for them to stay a solitary animal.

We live in Hisega. There are far too many mountain lions in our area. The lions are often captured on front porch cameras walking through yards, on decks and around cars. During hikes we must always be aware of lions. When walking our dogs many of us carry pistols in the forest. One neighbor had a mountain lion enter their greenhouse. He and his son had to chase the lion out.

We live on the Clara Bell Mine property right in the middle of lion country. We are positioned to mtn act lions as well as a better than most private land owns. We have lived in this location for 23 years and have had family extensive experience with lions up close and personal.

We lost the Mt goat season because of depredation so obviously we have a predator problem. I have at least 7 different lions on my cameras and my deer and turkeys are obsolete the past couple years

We need large predators to help control populations of other wildlife. Without them the whole eco system would be upset. Just like when they tried to take all of the wolves away.

We need predators to have a healthy eco system.

We need to have special seasons to control mountain lions especially in the black hills fire district we need to be able to run dogs I don't care if it were a draw license like Custer but there are more mountain lions then anyone can count and control

We need to hunt lions with dogs in the BHFPD

We or u are trying to improve the Sheep and Goat herds. They live in about the same areas and Im sure they hurt the population

We own ground and have way to many mountain lion encounters/trail cam photos

We use to have deer then lions came in, have them on camera now no deer orturkeys. And cows and horses always looking know 1 is there just can't find it. Have had big herds of cattle ran through fences missing calves never found I could care less if they are in thehills just don't need then down here

We were ok without any lions for a long time. Now they are fairly common across the state. We believe the breeding population particularly on the river is understated. Deer are in decline. No one is suggesting lions are completely responsible but predation inhibits recovery. We are seeing more lions in proximity to people. Pets and livestock are one thing but it's probably a matter of time before there is a tragedy involving a child.

We weren't seeing as many deer during season this year. Then saw a mtn. Lion on our property and then knew why. We didn't have a license for cat and didn't shoot at it. But I talked to our warden and obtained a license. But never saw it again. I did purchase the 2024 license also but haven't seen any cats since.

We would like hound hunting so we could be more selective and not shot so much females and young cats are shot more much our toms

What I read in the news and my experiences while turkey hunting

What I see while in and around the Hills

When calves are killed nobody shows up with a checkbook

When I hunt mountain lion : see fewer deer, elk, and small game and have seen more cat tracks and cats

When I was mountain hunting in the fire protection district, I found more tracks than I saw hunters, and it appears there are a lot more lions than what is estimated.

When I'm the BHFPD in 2020 there was Mountain lion tracks on the deck within three feet of our front door at 6 am. The next night, one of the guys chased it off said perch at 3:00am. That same year, someone had to throw most of their deer away because a cat got into it. The deer population has suffered dramatically in the BHFPD. 10 years ago we would see 150+ deer a day, now we're lucky to see 20.

When people are seeing them in backyards, that is to many.

When the deer and elk are struggling in CAP & BHFD, the mt lion and coyote numbers are too high.

When they are eating peoples pets there is too many of them.

When they are trolling in neighborhoods they have gotten to comfortable.

Where I live, friends that are ranchers decrease of certain big game animals in specific areas

Where I usually hunt it seems like I see more lion sign every year. It seems like you see groups of mule deer does that are missing alot of fawns.

Where we live is extremely high population of mountain lions and is affecting deer population.

While archery hunting in the Black Hills Fall 2023, we hunt in lower elevations, close to Spearfish (less than 10 minutes from town.) My son was in his tree stand and had a mountain lion 20 yards away, just hanging out. My husband was checking a trail cam by his tree stand and a mountain lion came up behind him. He wasn't threatening, but he was close. There was a lion kill 50 yards from my treestand. A separate trail cam captured mountain lions multiple times. We do not hunt in a remote area, so the number of lions seen this year was remarkedly more than other years.

Wild game #s seem to be lower, primarily in BHFPD

Wildlife numbers but west have gone down dramatically

With cwd being an issue the deer populations will decrease thus adding pressure on the herd from lions. If for some reason wolves are introduced then that's an added strain on the deer and elk herds so an tight control on the population should be considered.

With more numbers comes more hunters. Initially hunting will drop but more cats will bring more hunters. More hunters gives more people the opportunity to learn about mountain lions from someone with experience

With the CWD problems are are having a we need to cut down the cat population. Hunting with dogs will get the go cats but it should be controlled by the state. If you are not going to hunt with dogs then open it Nov 1.

with the lion numbers kept in check, the elk population has rebounded. The mule deer numbers are still hurting so the lions could be decreased some more, but that is another issue with much to more be done.

Without accurate and honest results from scientific population studies it is impossible to "guess" on any wildlife populations including mountain lions

Worried about them attacking people and pets

Would like to season back to November before snow is so deep you can't get around

Would like to see deer and elk numbers rebound.

would like to see more hound permits

You don't see many around

You let this get out of hand - Fix It!

You should allow hound hunting for better management in the hills

Your bread and butter is deer and elk in the hills. No that is screwed up for sure. Doesn't take a rocket scientist to see what the lions are doing to the herds. Lions are deer/elk killing machines. Now that interest in Mt Lion hunting is null...we have a problem. Question is...are you going to ignore it or solve it?
