



## What You Must Know Before You Hunt

**Grapevine Canyon, McGregor Range Buffer Zone:** Unit 34 in this area is accessible with military permission only. Hunters on McGregor Range must be able to provide proof of Hunter Education. **Blaze-Orange Clothing:** Hunters must wear at least 244 square inches of blaze orange while hunting on military property. Fort Bliss/McGregor Range requires all hunters to wear a blaze-orange hat and blaze-orange hunting vest. **Youth Hunters:** Hunters younger than 18 years of age must possess a Hunter Education Certification number. Mentored Youth Hunters may not apply. **Closed Areas:** Sugarite Canyon State Park; Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River Area, including Taos Valley Overlook; Subunit 6B (Valles Caldera National Preserve). Wildlife Management Areas: Cougar hunting by licensed deer and/or elk hunters who also possess a valid cougar license is allowed in the E.S. Barker, Colin Neblett, Humphries, Marquez, Sargent and Urraca WMAs, and the Valle Vidal and Greenwood Area. All other Wildlife Management Areas are closed. Under this provision deer and elk hunters only may hunt cougars in open cougar zones, and the hunter must adhere to the weapon type restriction and season dates as specified by his/her deer or elk licenses. Dogs are not allowed. Restricted Areas: Only bows and crossbows may be used to hunt cougar in the Sandia Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest in Units 8 and 14. Zone E–Unit 10 and Zone G,H,I–Units 13, 18, 19, 20: These units are subject to closure by the Forest Service and/or the military during operations. **Florida Mountains Hunt Area–Unit 25:** Cougar hunting is closed in the Florida Mountains Hunt Area during any ibex season, except by licensed ibex hunters (only for allowed sporting arm type and season dates as specified on the ibex license).

### Legal Sporting Arms

Centerfire rifle or handgun; shotgun no smaller than 28 gauge, firing a single slug; muzzleloading rifle; bow and arrows; or crossbow and bolts. **Only bows and crossbows** may be used for Sandia Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest in Units 8 and 14. **Electronic calls** may be used throughout New Mexico.

### Baiting and Trapping

Cougar baiting is illegal in New Mexico. Trapping and foot snaring are legal only on private land with written permission from the landowner and on State Trust Land.

Foot snares are prohibited on GMU 27 and those portions of GMU 26 (San Luis Mountains) designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as critical habitat for jaguars. Jaguar critical habitat area in GMU 26 can be viewed at: <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html> by clicking the "online mapper" link.

Neck snares are not a legal method of take. Legal trapping and snaring dates are Nov. 1–March 31. All other requirements and trap restrictions for furbearers (pages 121-123) apply to cougars.

### Bag Limit

Valid cougar license holders who have successfully harvested two cougars may request two additional carcass tags. Tags may be used in Cougar Management Zones that have not met the established harvest limits during at least two of the three previous seasons. Before requesting additional carcass tags, licensed hunters must meet all reporting and tagging requirements for two cougars already taken.

No hunter may take any spotted kitten(s) or any female accompanied by a spotted kitten(s). New Mexico law does not require cougar meat to be taken from the field.

# Cougar

Licenses, applications, harvest reporting and general information: **1-888-248-6866**

## Tagging of Cougar Hides

Harvested cougars must be accompanied by a license and have a pelt tag attached. The license must be properly blacked out or punched immediately after the animal is killed by the hunter. The hunter must then present the license and hide for pelt tagging to any District Conservation Officer or NMDGF office within five days of killing the cougar or before transporting the hide outside New Mexico—whichever comes first. **All hunters who appoint a designee to bring the harvested cougar to get pelt tagged are required to contact a conservation officer prior to inspection and pelt tagging.**

For any cougar killed, **hunters are required** to present to any NMDGF office the unfrozen skull with mouth fixed open for removal of a premolar tooth. The pelt tag must remain attached to the hide until the hide is processed. Improperly tagged hides may be seized by NMDGF.

## Proof of Sex

The testicles, penis and/or baculum of a male, or the vulva of a female, must remain attached to the hide and be visible to the NMDGF's tagging official. NMDGF will only pelt tag a harvested cougar if proof of sex is attached to the hide and readily visible to the tagging official. Cougar hides presented to the NMDGF for tagging without proof of sex attached may be seized.

## Livestock Damage

Landowners, lessees and/or their regular employees may without a license kill any cougar that has killed domestic livestock or presents an immediate threat to human life or property. Any person taking such action **must report the incident** to NMDGF within 24 hours. Pelts, claws and other parts of depredating animals taken under this provision are the property of the State of New Mexico and must be delivered to NMDGF.

## Use of Dogs

Dog use is **not allowed** during any September archery season. Dog use is **not allowed** on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) or to pursue cougars during archery seasons. Dogs use is **allowed** to hunt cougars elsewhere during hunts for any legal sporting arm. When dogs are used to hunt cougars, the licensed hunter that harvests the cougar must be present continuously from the time any dog is released. Dogs may only be released during legal hunting hours. There is no "pursuit" or "training" season outside the regular open season.

## Cougar Management Zones

Cougar Management Zone locations in New Mexico are designated in the map on page 119.

## Zones and Season Limits

Zone	Open Unit(s)	Total Limit / Total Female
A	. 2, 7	. 42 / 13
B	. 5, 50, 51	. 28 / 8
C	. 43, 45, 46, 48, 49, 53	. 85 / 43
D	. 41, 42, 47, 59	. 23 / 12
E	. 9, 10	. 50 / 15
F	. 6	. 46 / 23
G	. 13, 17	. 73 / 37
H	. 18–20	. 37 / 16
I	. 36–38	. 24 / 7
J	. 15, 16, 21, 25	. 89 / 27
K	. 22–24	. 66 / 33
L	. 26, 27	. 19 / 10
M	. 31–33, 39, 40	. 31 / 9
N	. 4, 52	. 15 / 5
O	. 12	. 21 / 6
P	. 56, 57, 58	. 14 / 7
Q	. 28–30, 34	. 35 / 11
R	. 54, 55	. 26 / 8
S	. 8, 14	. 25 / 13

## Cougar Management Zone and Game Management Unit Map

