

# Cougar (877) 950-5466-Zone Closure/Harvest Hotline

## Over-the-Counter Licenses

### General Information

To hunt cougar, all residents and nonresidents first must purchase a **Game-hunting** or **Game-hunting and Fishing License** before purchasing an Over-the-Counter Cougar License.

### License Fees

**Resident \$43 Nonresident \$290**

A Habitat Stamp is required for hunting, fishing and trapping on U.S. Forest Service and BLM lands and must be purchased separately. A Habitat Management and Access Validation must be purchased separately.

An over-the-counter Cougar License with valid carcass tag may be purchased from license vendors, Department offices, online or by mail using Form 3. One carcass tag comes with each license (NOTE: Licenses and carcass tags purchased online will be mailed within two weeks of purchase). Hunters must purchase a Cougar License AT LEAST TWO DAYS BEFORE HUNTING.

### Cougar Season

**Public land season is Oct. 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013.**

**Private land cougar season is April 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013.** All cougar mortalities on public and private lands shall count against the sustainable mortality and/or the female sub-limits for that zone. All cougar hunting will cease for zones that have met sustainable and/or female sub-limits.

### Harvest Limits for All Zones

The state is divided into 19 Cougar Management Zones. This allows the Department to better manage cougar populations on a regional basis. All zones have two different harvest limits.

The harvest limit for each Cougar Management Zone is listed in the chart on this page. The first number indicates the total number of cougars that may be harvested in each zone followed by the number of female cougars that may be harvested. **All Cougar Management Zones will close when the harvest is within 10% of either the sustainable mortality limit or female sub-limit, whichever comes first. This measure is taken to avoid exceeding sustainable harvest of the resource.**

### Zone Closure

**BEFORE HUNTING**, hunters **MUST** call (877) 950-5466 toll-free or check our website [www.wildlife.state.nm.us](http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us) to ensure that the zone is open.

### Mandatory Cougar Identification course

The Department requires that all cougar hunters successfully complete a cougar identification course. In the field, a over-the-counter license shall be valid only with the possession of a cougar identification course number. This number will be issued upon successful completion of the cougar ID course offered on the Department's website.

### 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. In the Sandia Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest in Units 8 and 14, only bows and crossbows may be used. Electronic calls may be used statewide.

### Livestock Damage

Landowners, lessees 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. The person taking such action **MUST** report it to the Department within 24 hours. Pelts, claws and other parts of depredating animals taken under the provisions listed are the property of the State of New Mexico and must be turned in to the Department.

### Use of Dogs

Dogs may be used in hunting cougars. NOTE: When dogs are used in hunting cougar, the licensed hunter intending to harvest the cougar must be present continuously once 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.

### Bag Limit

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

### Tagging of Cougar Hides

Cougars must be tagged with both a carcass and a pelt tag. The carcass tag, which is received with the purchase of the license, must be attached immediately after the animal is taken by the hunter. The hunter then must present the license and hide for pelt tagging to any District Conservation Officer or any Department office within five days of taking the cougar or before taking the hide out of New Mexico, whichever comes first. The pelt tag must remain attached to the hide until the hide is processed. Improperly tagged hides may be seized by the Department. **A hunter who takes a FEMALE cougar IS REQUIRED to present the unfrozen skull with the mouth fixed open, to any Department office for removal of a premolar tooth.**

## Zones and Season Limits

Zone	Open Units	Sustainable Mortality	Female Sub-limit
A	Units 2 and 7	42	13
B	Units 5, 50 and 51	28	8
C	Units 43, 45, 46, 48, 49 and 53	85	43
D	Units 41, 42, 47 and 59	23	12
E	Units 9 and 10	50	15
F	Unit 6	46	23
G	Units 13 and 17	73	37
H	Units 19 and 20	24	12
I	Units 18 and 36-38	37	11
J	Units 15, 16, 21 and 25	89	27
K	Units 22-24	66	33
L	Units 26 and 27	19	10
M	Units 31-33, 39 and 40	31	9
N	Units 4 and 52	15	5
O	Unit 12	21	6
P	Units 56, 57 and 58	10	3
Q	Units 28-30 and 34	35	11
R	Units 54 and 55	26	8
S	Units 8 and 14	25	13

**All Wildlife Management Areas are closed unless specifically open to hunting.**

**Proof of Sex**

The male cougar's testicles, penis, or baculum; or the female cougar's vulva must remain attached to the hide of any cougar taken and remain visible to the Department's tagging official. **The Department 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 Department for tagging without proof of sex attached may be seized.**

**Baiting and Trapping**

Cougar baiting is not legal in New Mexico. Trapping is not a legal method of taking cougar except on private land as permitted by the Department. Any private land owner wishing to use traps or snares on their property, **MUST** contact the Department's Wildlife Management Division at (505) 476-8038. Anyone who accidentally traps a cougar or other protected animal must either release it or call the Department for assistance in its release.

**What You Must Know Before You Hunt**

**Grapevine Canyon, McGregor Range Buffer Zone:** This area in Unit 34 is accessible by military permission only. **Blaze Orange Clothing:** Hunters must wear at least 244 square inches of blaze orange while hunting on military property. Fort Bliss/McGregor Range require all hunters to wear a blaze orange hat and a blaze orange hunting vest. **Closed Areas:** San Andres National Wildlife Refuge and the Valle Vidal/Greenwood areas are closed to cougar hunting. All Wildlife **Management Areas are closed unless specifically** open to hunting. **Restricted Areas:** Hunters may use only bows and crossbows to hunt cougar in the Sandia Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest in Units 8 and 14. **Units 10, 13, 18, 19 and 20:** These units are subject to closure by the U.S. Forest Service and/or the military during military operations. **Unit 25, Florida Mountains Hunt Area:** Cougar hunting is closed in the Florida Mountains Hunt Area during any ibex season, except by licensed ibex hunters who must adhere to the allowed sporting arm type and season dates specified on their ibex license.

