

September 13, 2019

I am Kelly Forney speaking on behalf of the Umpqua Chapter of Oregon Hunter's Association. I am a board member with the chapter and a Volunteer Agent for ODFW. I have extensive experience with cougars, having worked on the Harcombe cougar study in the 1970's, the Jackson Creek cougar study in the 1990's, the North Umpqua cougar study in the 2000's, the cougar Administrative Removal of 2016-2018 and provide volunteer predator control using trained hounds for livestock owners. I am a lifelong resident of Douglas County, OR.

Today I bring a request from the Umpqua Chapter of Oregon Hunter's Association for a maintenance program extension to the administrative cougar removal that was conducted in the East Umpqua area of Douglas County. A 3 year administrative removal was completed 2016-2018 to reduce livestock damage and human safety issues related to cougars.

Using the 2006 Cougar Plan, with its Zone B Density of 11.7 cougars per 100 sq. miles, there was an estimated 180 cougars in a 1508 sq. mile area east of I-5 within the checkerboard BLM landownership in Douglas County. The goal of the administrative removal was to remove 50% or 90 cougars over three years using ODFW Volunteer Agents. The results were as follows:

2016- 18 weeks to meet objective of 30 lions
2017- 41 weeks to meet objective of 30 lions (weather limited access)
2018- 24 weeks to meet objective of 30 lions
Total cost \$32,269

It is our observation that cougars are rapidly disbursing back into the East Umpqua area as well as reproducing quickly there. We propose a 15 cougar per year removal for the next 3 years (2020-2022) to maintain the reduced level of cougars and not lose the benefits realized in the 3 year administrative removal.

Benefits of the administrative cougar removal are:
Reduced livestock damage (see attached letter from the Douglas County Livestock Association)
Reduced human safety issues
Increase reported by hunters in visible ungulate population

The 6 volunteers that completed the administrative removal have agreed to complete the proposed maintenance removal without any compensation from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife or any public agency, using their own time and vehicles. The removal would be done under the supervision of District Biologist Tod Lum.

We ask that you grant an extension to the successful administrative cougar removal program and maintain the gains that have been made.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Forney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kelly" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Forney".

Kelly Forney
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Douglas County Livestock Ass.
PO Box 1489
Roseburg, Oregon 97470

September 10, 2019

To the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission,

The 240 ranching and farming families that are members of the Douglas County Livestock Association would like to first thank the commission for their efforts in decreasing the number of damage and public safety cougars in the area east of Roseburg and I-5. This effort has helped our members and public greatly.

The efforts by Oregon Fish and Wildlife commission have proven that the cougar population on the valley floor and on our farms and ranches was substantial. Land owners and general public are continuing to have issues with cougars, posing a threat to the public and killing livestock. That is why DCLA is writing you today.

Our membership believes without a maintenance program the removal of cougars will have been a short-term relief. A maintenance harvest should be considered to keep the population in check. Farmers and ranchers have witnessed some relief to livestock predation from cougars and would advise the commission to adopt a further maintenance program for our producers who face many other predator concerns along with cougars.

As producers and stewards of the land farmers and ranchers know that cougars have a place on the landscape but when so many of our producers are affected by cougar predation, we ask for your help. Having a level of cougars that is safe for our public and livestock producers has great value. With your help our producers and the safety of our public can thrive.

Dan Dawson

Douglas County Livestock Association Predator Control Committee Chair
Douglas County Predator Control Advisory Board Vice Chair