

PROJECT COYOTE

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Talking Points on Petition for Regulation Changes to Address the Incidental Killing of Nevada Mountain Lions

We strongly support the suggested changes to trapping regulations requested by petitioners, Nevada Wildlife Alliance, WildEarth Guardians, and the Mountain Lions Foundation. These changes include:

- Shortening the trap-check time from 96 hours (the longest in the West) to 24 hours.
- Limiting trap sizes and requiring mandatory trapper education.
- Prohibiting harmful practices like attaching traps to movable objects (also known as “drags”).
- Improving the collection of non-target trapping data to better monitor compliance of Nevada trappers with regulations

In support of this petition, highlight the following talking points:

- Trapping is inherently cruel, dangerous, and indiscriminate. No method of trapping for recreation, commerce, or nuisance/damage control (1) can avoid inflicting some level of pain and suffering before death; (2) is currently supported by credible scientific data or evidence as serving a legitimate wildlife management or conservation objective that cannot be accomplished through more humane alternatives.
- Approximately one in every six or seven lions examined by agency staff in the last 20 years displayed abnormalities—such as issues with toes, paws, or teeth—indicative of prior encounters with traps or snares. A University of Nevada, Reno Ph.D. student conducting research on collared mountain lions, published [a study](#) which documented high rates of mountain lions negatively impacted by traps. This research found that adult female cougars caught in foothold traps lowers their chances of survival. This happens both directly, through injuries that may lead to death, and indirectly, by making them more vulnerable to other causes of mortality.
- No method of trapping for recreation, commerce, or nuisance/damage control can avoid the potential of capturing, with the risk of injuring or killing, non-target animals (including endangered species and domestic animals).
- Nevada has some of the worst trapping regulations in the American West, including a 96-hour trap check window which is longer than even Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana.

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- Nevada currently does not require any trapper education, which is likely increasing the high rates of incidental take of non-target species such as mountain lion.
- Trappers are allowed to use traps that are too big for targeted species, which threatens larger, non-target species like mountain lions
- Nonselective killing of native wildlife such as mountain lions and other ecologically valuable predator species degrades ecosystem quality and biodiversity by undermining the ecological benefits these species have on ecosystems.
- Nevada's wildlife is managed in trust for all Nevadans. Allowing individuals to wantonly trap incidental wildlife is a grave violation of the state's duty in this regard.