

# PROJECT COYOTE

F O S T E R I N G   C O E X I S T E N C E



The two proposed mountain lion regulations are below.

## 1. Canned Hunts:

From TPWD: *Currently, Texas law does not prohibit canned hunting, meaning the capture and later release of a mountain lion for the purpose of hunting. TPWD is proposing prohibiting canned hunts in Texas.*

Talking Points:

- The practice of canned hunting of Mountain Lions is extremely rare, but still exists in Texas. Canned hunting occurs when a lion is trapped and later released for a hunter to pursue and kill. This practice is cruel and inhumane and condemned by the general public.
- Canned hunting is antithetical to all hunting organizations' guides for fair chase.
- According to the TPWD code 62.101, canned hunts in Texas are currently prohibited for an African or Asiatic lion, tiger, leopard, cheetah, hyena, bear, elephant, wolf, or rhinoceros, or any species, subspecies or hybrid of these animals - but not for a mountain lion.
- Canned hunting is damaging to the reputation of trappers and hunters and we urge conservation-minded hunters to support putting a legal end to this endeavor.

## 2. 36 Hour Trap Check:

From TPWD: *Texas does not require traps set for mountain lions to be checked. Concerns have been raised that some mountain lions are left to perish in traps, which many consider to be inhumane and potentially damaging to the reputation of trapping and hunting.*

*TPWD is proposing a regulation requiring trappers to ensure that lions are not kept alive in traps or snares for more than 36 hours. Traps that cannot restrain a lion or are immediately lethal would not be subject to the regulation.*

*The proposal also provides a blanket exemption to the 36-hour requirement for traps that have a breakaway device allowing a cable snare to disassemble when subjected to a force of 285 pounds or less. Mountain lions are likely able to pull with 285 pounds of force or more. Conversely, coyotes typically can pull on snares with only 192-250 pounds of force.*

### Talking Points:

- It is currently legal for trappers to leave mountain lions in traps for days or weeks on end until they die from dehydration and exposure.
- These proposed rules would update mountain lion regulations to be consistent with current Texas furbearer regulations and standard trapping regulations.
- This proposal is mountain lion specific.
- Regularly checking traps reduces the amount of fatalities and injuries for non-target species, such as the state-protected black bear and other protected species as well as companion animals.
- In a 2022 Texas A&M University survey [Texas Residents' Attitudes Toward Mountain Lions and Their Management](#) of >700 Texans, 75% supported trap checks of 36 hrs or less. Domestic animal owners and hunters were as supportive of this measure as nonhunters and people who did not own livestock.

### Background information:

- Mountain Lions were once found across Texas and the United States. In the last two centuries, their range has been reduced by half nationwide due to predator eradication efforts. In Texas today, they are found in the Trans-Pecos, the western hill country, and western south Texas. Several multi-year mountain lion studies have been conducted and all of the research has shown that Texas lions experience very high human-induced mortality. For example, in a Big Bend Ranch State Park study of 16 mountain lions, 1 was shot and the remaining 15 were trapped.
- Despite the high mortality, Texas mountain lions continue to persist due to their wary nature and because many landowners want to conserve them. However, their continued persistence should not be taken for granted because Texas is experiencing rapid land fragmentation and human population growth. There are many unknowns. There is anecdotal evidence for population increases in some areas, and decreasing or extirpated populations in other areas. The varying anecdotal evidence underscores the need for more research and harvest reporting to better understand mountain lion distribution and population trends. While these regulatory changes don't directly impact the conservation of the species, they are a step in the right direction in acknowledging the mountain lion as an important part of the Texas culture that is worthy of treating respectfully.