

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 7, 2006

LIVING WITH LIONS: Does sport hunting mountain lions reduce attacks on people and livestock?

State wildlife agencies across the American West must re-examine their mountain lion management strategies, following a study released today by the Mountain Lion Foundation.

Although wildlife agencies often argue that sport hunting is necessary to reduce mountain lion attacks, the study found no evidence to support this belief.

The study compared the relative numbers of mountain lion attacks on people and livestock in states with mountain lion sport hunting to the number of attacks in California -- a state without mountain lion sport hunting.

"If sport hunting actually reduced attacks," said Christopher Papouchis, conservation biologist and author of the study, "then states with sport hunting should have had relatively fewer attacks than California. That was not the case."

The study found there were fewer attacks on people and livestock in California than in many states where lions are sport hunted, relative to number of people, livestock and square miles of mountain lion habitat.

Further, the study found California kills the fewest mountain lions of all states with viable mountain lion populations.

California's hunting ban provided an excellent case-study, under real-life situations over a period of 34 years, to examine the relationship of sport hunting to attacks on humans and livestock, according to the study's author.

Although some state wildlife agencies and hunting groups have claimed that sport hunting reduces mountain lion attacks, this study found otherwise.

While the study's author and mountain lion conservation advocates acknowledge this study cannot absolutely "prove" that sport hunting is not an effective conflict-reduction strategy, they argue the evidence certainly forces wildlife agencies to look for proven strategies.

"From this point forward," says Lynn Sadler, President of the Mountain Lion Foundation, "any state agency that claims sport hunting is anything more than the random shooting of mountain lions for fun will have to prove it."

The full study can be found at www.pumaconservation.org.

The Mountain Lion Foundation is a national non-profit wildlife conservation and education organization, dedicated since 1986 to Saving America's Lion™. The Mountain Lion Foundation is a leading authority on the conservation of mountain lions and their habitat.

#

CONTACT:

Karen Cotton 916-442-2666 ext 110
916-248-3884 cell