Cougar Proviso

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Legislative Proviso

- 2021 Legislature included a proviso concerning cougar management issues:
- Requesting a report, due in January 2022, of the following:
  - Number of removals by other statewide law enforcement agencies

  - Training opportunities provided

  - Impacts of local agency cougar removals to Department Management strategies

- Provided funding for the Agency to assist local jurisdictions in responding to cougar related public safety issues

Cougar Management:

Within amounts appropriated in this section, the department, in coordination with statewide law enforcement agencies, must provide a report to the legislature by January, 2022 on the number of cougars reported to the department as harvested by local government law enforcement agencies, training opportunities provided to local law enforcement agencies, and how cougar removals by local enforcement agencies impact the department's cougar management strategies.

Cougar Control Assistance

$50,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2022 and $50,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 are provided solely for the department to assist local jurisdictions in responding to cougar related public safety issues. The funding is available to a local jurisdiction if they have a signed agreement with the department that recognizes cougar management authority is vested in the department and provides criteria to determine if a cougar creates an actionable public safety risk eligible for financial assistance. For the purposes of this subsection, a cougar presence on private property alone does not create an actionable public safety risk.

Developing Program

Enforcement and Wildlife Programs are discussing options pertaining to implementation of this program.

We are considering using a statewide law enforcement group for dissemination of information, allowing us to broadly communicate and ask agencies if they are interested in participating.

Questions?