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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1756**

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**State of Washington**

**60th Legislature**

**2007 Regular Session**

**By** House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Kretz, Upthegrove, B. Sullivan, Blake, Takko and VanDeWege)

READ FIRST TIME 02/14/07.

1       AN ACT Relating to the department of fish and wildlife's hound  
2 hunting cougar season pilot project; amending 2004 c 264 s 1  
3 (uncodified); and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5       **Sec. 1.** 2004 c 264 s 1 (uncodified) is amended to read as follows:

6       (1) The department of fish and wildlife, in cooperation and  
7 collaboration with the county legislative authorities of Ferry,  
8 Stevens, Pend Oreille, Chelan, and Okanogan counties, shall recommend  
9 rules to establish a three-year pilot program within select game  
10 management units of these counties, to pursue or kill cougars with the  
11 aid of dogs. A pursuit season and a kill season with the aid of dogs  
12 must be established through the fish and wildlife commission's rule-  
13 making process, utilizing local dangerous wildlife task teams comprised  
14 of the two collaborating authorities. The two collaborating  
15 authorities shall also develop a more effective and accurate dangerous  
16 wildlife reporting system to ensure a timely response. The pilot  
17 program's primary goals are to provide for public safety, to protect  
18 property, and to assess cougar populations.

1 (2) Any rules adopted by the fish and wildlife commission to  
2 establish a pilot project allowing for the pursuit or hunting of  
3 cougars with the aid of dogs under this section only must ensure that  
4 all pursuits or hunts are:

5 (a) Designed to protect public safety or property;

6 (b) Reflective of the most current cougar population data;

7 (c) Designed to generate data that is necessary for the department  
8 to satisfy the reporting requirements of section 3 of this act; and

9 (d) Consistent with any applicable recommendations emerging from  
10 research on cougar population dynamics in a multiprey environment  
11 conducted by Washington State University's department of natural  
12 resource sciences that was funded in whole or in part by the department  
13 of fish and wildlife.

14 (3) The department of fish and wildlife may authorize one  
15 additional season in which cougars may be pursued or killed with dogs,  
16 subject to the other conditions of the pilot project. This additional  
17 season is authorized to avoid a lag in cougar management and  
18 conditioning between the end of the third pilot cougar season and the  
19 time needed for the 2008 legislature to consider the report provided  
20 under section 3, chapter 264, Laws of 2004, and is not intended to be  
21 considered as part of the study period.

22 NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A county legislative authority may request  
23 inclusion in the fourth and final year of the cougar control pilot  
24 project authorized by chapter 264, Laws of 2004 after taking the  
25 following actions:

26 (1) Adopting a resolution that requests inclusion in the pilot  
27 project;

28 (2) Documenting the need to participate in the pilot project by  
29 identifying the number of cougar/human encounters and livestock and pet  
30 depredations; and

31 (3) Demonstrating that existing cougar depredation permits, public  
32 safety cougar hunts, or other existing wildlife management tools have  
33 not been sufficient to deal with cougar incidents in the county.

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