

WAC 220-415-100 Cougar hunting seasons and regulations. (1) As used in this section and in the context of general cougar hunting seasons, "cap" is based on the best available estimate of cougar density and growth rate. Currently those parameters are estimated at 2.3 cougars per 100 square kilometers and 13 percent intrinsic growth rate. The cap includes all known human-related independent-aged cougar mortality (including harvested cougars, cougars killed in response to conflicts, and any other form of human-caused cougar mortality).

(2) General cougar season is September 1st to March 31st. Hunters can use any legal weapon to hunt cougars.

(3) In PMUs that reach the 13 percent cap prior to the recreational hunting season starting, the cap will be increased to 20 percent of the population to provide hunting opportunity in those PMUs. When all known human-related independent-aged cougar mortalities in those PMUs meet or exceed 20 percent of the population, the season shall close in those PMUs. Additionally, if opened, the season shall close within 72 hours of that number being reached.

Cap:

Population Management Unit (PMU)	Hunt Area	13 percent Cap	20 percent
1	GMU 101	8	13
2	GMU 105	2	3
3	GMUs 108, 111	6	8
4	GMU 113	5	8
5	GMU 117	7	11
6	GMU 121	6	8
7	GMUs 124, 127, 130	8	12
8	GMUs 133, 136, 139, 142, 248, 254, 260, 262, 266, 269, 272, 278, 284, 290, 330, 334, 371, 372, 373, 379, 381	None	None
9	GMUs 149, 154, 162, 163	4	5
10	GMUs 145, 166, 175, 178	5	7
11	GMUs 169, 172, 181, 186	3	5
12	GMU 203	5	8
13	GMU 204	7	11
14	GMUs 209, 215	4	6
15	GMUs 218, 231	5	8
16	GMU 224	2	4
17	GMUs 233, 239	4	6
18	GMUs 242, 243	5	8
19	GMUs 244, 246, 247	6	9
20	GMUs 245, 250	6	9
21	GMUs 249, 251	6	9
22	GMUs 328, 329, 335	7	10
23	GMUs 336, 340, 342, 346	6	9
24	GMUs 352, 356, 360, 364, 368	6	9
25	GMUs 382, 388	3	5
26	GMU 407	None	None
27	GMUs 418, 426, 437	13	20
28	GMUs 448, 450	11	17

Population Management Unit (PMU)	Hunt Area	13 percent Cap	20 percent
29	GMU 454	None	None
30	GMU 460	6	9
31	GMUs 466, 485, 490	3	4
32	GMUs 501, 504, 506, 530	9	13
33	GMUs 503, 505, 520, 550	7	11
34	GMUs 510, 513	3	5
35	GMU 516	4	6
36	GMUs 524, 554, 556	3	4
37	GMU 560	5	8
38	GMU 564	1	2
39	GMU 568	2	4
40	GMU 572	3	5
41	GMUs 574, 578	4	6
42	GMUs 601, 602, 603, 612	6	9
43	GMUs 607, 615	4	6
44	GMUs 618, 636, 638	5	7
45	GMUs 621, 624, 627, 633	None	None
46	GMUs 642, 648, 651	7	11
47	GMUs 652, 666	None	None
48	GMUs 653, 654	5	8
49	GMUs 658, 660, 663, 672, 673, 681, 684, 699	11	16
50	GMU 667	4	6

(a) In hunt areas with a cap, the cougar hunting season shall close in one or more PMUs if cougar mortality meets or exceeds the cap.

(b) In hunt areas with a cap, cougar hunters may hunt cougar until the hunt area cap has been met, and the department has notified licensed cougar hunters by posting the hunt area closure on the department's website and on the toll-free cougar hunting hotline, or March 31st, whichever occurs first.

(4) Cap system:

(a) The cap includes all known human-related independent-aged cougar mortality (including harvested cougars, cougars killed in response to conflicts, and any other form of known human-caused cougar mortality). The counting of mortalities will commence on April 1st and conclude on March 31st of the following year.

(b) Individual problem cougar will continue to be killed on an as-needed basis utilizing depredation permits, landowner kill permits, and WDFW depredation authority regardless of cap.

(c) It is each cougar hunter's responsibility to verify if the cougar hunting season is open or closed in hunt areas with a cap. Cougar hunters can verify if the season is open or closed by calling the toll-free cougar hunting hotline or visiting the department's website.

(d) The department may close hunting in any PMU prior to the cap being reached, upon consideration of factors such as disease, suspected additional mortality, or any other issue affecting the cougar population.

(5) Cougar hunting season requirements and special restrictions.

(a) A valid big game hunting license which includes cougar as a species option is required to hunt cougar.

(b) The statewide bag limit is one cougar per license year state-wide; excluding removals authorized under WAC 220-440-030. One cougar transport tag is included with a big game hunting license that has cougar as a species option. It is unlawful to kill or possess spotted cougar kittens or adult cougars accompanied by spotted kittens.

(c) The use of dogs to hunt cougar is prohibited; except by a commission authorized permit (WAC 220-440-030 and 220-412-130).

(d) Any person who takes a cougar must comply with the notification and sealing requirements in WAC 220-400-050.

(e) A special cougar permit is required to hunt cougar in GMU 485.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.08.030, 77.15.240, 77.15.280, and 77.15.410. WSR 24-16-056 (Order 24-07), § 220-415-100, filed 7/31/24, effective 8/31/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, and 77.08.030. WSR 22-16-031 (Order 2022-11), § 220-415-100, filed 7/26/22, effective 8/26/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, and 77.04.055. WSR 20-11-020 (Order 20-67), § 220-415-100, filed 5/12/20, effective 6/12/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.020, 77.12.040, 77.12.047, 77.12.150, 77.12.210, 77.12.240, 77.12.320, 77.12.570, 77.12.800, 77.15.245, 77.32.007, 77.32.050, 77.32.070, 77.32.090, 77.32.370, and 77.32.530. WSR 18-11-061 (Order 18-76), § 220-415-100, filed 5/11/18, effective 6/11/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-415-100, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.150, 77.12.240, 77.12.800, 77.32.090, and 77.32.155. WSR 16-12-087, § 232-28-297, filed 5/31/16, effective 7/1/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.150, and 77.12.240. WSR 15-10-066 (Order 15-99), § 232-28-297, filed 5/1/15, effective 6/1/15. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, and 77.15.245. WSR 13-16-056 (Order 13-180), § 232-28-297, filed 8/1/13, effective 9/1/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. WSR 12-11-005 (Order 12-70), § 232-28-297, filed 5/2/12, effective 6/2/12.]