

GAME, FISH, AND PARKS COMMISSION ACTION PROPOSAL

Mountain Lion Hunting Season Chapter 41:06:61

Commission Meeting Dates:	Proposal	January 9-10, 2025	Pierre
	Public Hearing	March 6, 2025	Pierre
	Finalization	March 6-7, 2025	Pierre

SEASON INFORMATION

Duration of Recommendation: Beginning in 2025

Season Dates: Black Hills Fire Protection District:
 December 26, 2024 – April 30, 2025
 December 26, 2025 – April 30, 2026

Outside Black Hills Fire Protection District:
 December 26, 2024 - Dec. 25, 2025
 December 26, 2025 – Dec.25, 2026

Open unit: Statewide

Licenses: Unlimited (1 license per individual), residents only

Harvest Limit: Black Hills Fire Protection District: 60 mountain lions or 40 female mountain lions (includes Custer State Park)

Requirements and Restrictions:

1. No person may harvest more than one (1) mountain lion in a season.
2. No person may hunt mountain lions with the aid of traps or bait.
3. Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.
4. No mountain lion with a spotted coat (kitten) and no mountain lion accompanying another mountain lion may be harvested.
5. A person may use an electronic call to hunt mountain lions.
6. All firearms, muzzleloaders, and archery equipment must meet the same minimum requirements as established in administrative rule for deer hunting.
7. The Game, Fish and Parks Commission, by resolution, may authorize the mountain lion season to extend beyond April 30.
8. The use of dogs to hunt mountain lions is only allowed during those specified hunting intervals in Custer State Park that allow for the use of dogs, and year-round outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District on private land with permission of the landowner or lessee. However, pursuit of a mountain lion by dogs that originates on private land may cross over or culminate on private land, with permission from the landowner or lessee, or on public land, unless expressly prohibited by the managing entity.
9. In Custer State Park, a person using dogs shall attempt to harvest the first legal mountain lion they have a reasonable opportunity to harvest, except under the condition where the lion pursued shows obvious signs of lactation.
10. Licensed hunters must accompany the dog handler when the dogs are released and must continuously participate in the hunt thereafter until the hunt is completed.
11. Custer State Park is closed to mountain lion hunting except for 75 mountain lion licensees who possess a valid mountain lion license and a temporary access permit structured to include:
 - (a) Four hunting intervals each having 15 access permits in which hunting with dogs is not allowed.

- (b) Five hunting intervals each having three access permits in which hunting with dogs is allowed.
 - (c) Hunting in Custer State Park shall begin with an interval that allows the use of dogs and rotate every 14 days with an interval that does not allow the use of dogs until the lion season closes in the Black Hills Fire Protection District. The temporary access permits are issued free-of-cost and may be issued by a random drawing.
12. All mountain lions harvested within the Black Hills must be presented to a department representative at the Rapid City Regional Office or Custer State Park Headquarters within 24 hours of harvest for inspection. Any person who harvests a mountain lion outside of the Black Hills region must present the mountain lion to a department representative within 24 hours of harvest.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

1. Modify § 41:06:06 to allow the initiation of the pursuit of a mountain lion with dogs outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District to occur anywhere, where permitted by the landowner.

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

The rule change would allow more mountain lion hunting opportunity on the prairie because the restriction of where the pursuit may initiate outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District will be removed. This may result in increased harvest of mountain lions on the prairie of South Dakota.

DRAFT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE CHANGES

41:06:61:06. Application requirements -- License and season restrictions -- Special conditions -- Carcass check-in procedures. The following requirements, restrictions, special conditions, and procedures apply to all applications for license and to all licenses issued under this chapter:

- (1) Only residents of the state may apply for a license;
- (2) No person may harvest more than one mountain lion in a season;
- (3) No person may harvest or attempt to harvest a mountain lion with a spotted coat or any mountain lion accompanying another mountain lion;
- (4) No person may hunt mountain lions with the aid of traps or bait;
- (5) The use of dogs to hunt mountain lions is allowed only during those specified hunting intervals in Custer State Park that allow the use of dogs; and year-round outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District ~~when on private land, with permission of the landowner or lessee. However, a pursuit of a mountain lion by dogs that originates on private land may cross over or culminate on private land, with permission from the landowner or lessee, or on public land, unless expressly prohibited by the managing entity;~~
- (6) No person may release dogs on tracks indicating multiple mountain lions traveling together;
- (7) In Custer State Park, a person using dogs shall attempt to harvest the first legal mountain lion the person has a reasonable opportunity to harvest, except under the condition in which the lion pursued shows obvious signs of lactation;
- (8) Licensed hunters must accompany the dog handler when the dogs are released and must continuously participate in the hunt until the hunt is completed;
- (9) A person may use any firearm, muzzleloader, or bow and arrow established by statute or administrative rule as legal implements for the taking of deer;
- (10) Wind Cave National Park, Jewel Cave National Park, and Mount Rushmore National Memorial are closed to mountain lion hunting; and
- (11) All mountain lions harvested must be presented to a department representative within 24 hours of harvest for inspection.

RESIDENT/NONRESIDENT CRITERIA

1. The Issue – NA
2. Historical Considerations – Historically, mountain lion hunting outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District was established to mitigate mountain lion depredation on private land and there was concern with hounds originating on public land potentially causing conflict with other users.
3. Biological Considerations – More mountain lions may be harvested because pursuit of mountain lions can initiate anywhere on the prairie, with permission.
4. Social Considerations – NA
5. Financial considerations – NA

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, REACTIVATION (R3) CRITERIA

1. Does the regulation or fee inhibit a user's ability to participate? NA
2. Does the regulation increase the opportunity for new and existing users? The change will remove restrictions where a chase for hunting lions may initiate.
3. How does the regulation impact the next generation of hunters, anglers, trappers, and outdoor recreationists? NA
4. Does the regulation enhance the quality of life for current and future generations by getting families outdoors? NA

FISCAL IMPACT

None

APPROVE _____ MODIFY _____ REJECT _____ NO ACTION _____