

SSB 6118 - H AMD

By Representatives Sump & Upthegrove

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

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

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

21 (1) Designed to protect public safety or property;

22 (2) Reflective of the most current cougar population data;

23 (3) Designed to generate data that is necessary for the
24 department to satisfy the reporting requirements of section 3 of
25 this act; and

26 (4) Consistent with any applicable recommendations emerging
27 from research on cougar population dynamics in a multi-prey
28 environment conducted by Washington State University's department
29 of natural resource sciences that was funded in whole or in part by
30 the department of fish and wildlife.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A county legislative authority may
2 request inclusion in the pilot project authorized by this act after
3 taking the following actions:

4 (1) Adopting a resolution that requests inclusion in the pilot
5 project;

6 (2) Documenting the need to participate in the pilot program by
7 identifying the number of cougar/human encounters and livestock and
8 pet depredations; and

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

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** After the culmination of the pilot
14 project authorized by this section, the department of fish and
15 wildlife must report to the fish and wildlife commission and the
16 appropriate committees of the legislature:

17 (1) Recommendations for the development of a more effective and
18 accurate dangerous wildlife reporting system, a summary of how the
19 pilot project aided the collection of data useful in making future
20 wildlife management decisions, and a recommendation as to whether
21 the pilot project would serve as a model for effective cougar
22 management into the future. The report required by this subsection
23 must be completed in collaboration with the counties choosing to
24 participate in the pilot program.

25 (2) Recommendations for a new and modern cougar management
26 system that focuses on altering the behavior of wild cougars, and
27 not solely on controlling cougar population levels. These
28 recommendations must include at a minimum suggestions for wildlife
29 management techniques aimed at modifying cougar behavior, the
30 identification of non-lethal ways to minimize interactions between
31 cougars and humans, and an analysis of opportunities for minimizing
32 interactions between cougars and humans by controlling the
33 abundance and location of cougar prey species."

34 Correct the title.

EFFECT: Requires that all rules adopted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission for the cougar hunting pilot project ensure that the hunting is done to protect public safety or property, is reflective of the most current cougar population information, is consistent with a study on cougar populations being conducted by Washington State University, and generates information that is useful in developing a required report. Removes references to dates. Allows additional counties to participate if they take certain actions. Requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to prepare certain reports to the Legislature and to the Fish and Wildlife Commission.