
SENATE BILL 5100

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senators Sheldon, Schoesler, and Cleveland

Prefiled 01/08/19. Read first time 01/14/19. Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks.

1 AN ACT Relating to a pilot program for cougar control; adding new
2 sections to chapter 77.12 RCW; and providing expiration dates.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1)(a) The department, in cooperation and
5 collaboration with the county legislative authorities of Ferry,
6 Stevens, Pend Oreille, Chelan, Okanogan, Mason, and Klickitat
7 counties, shall recommend rules to establish a five-year pilot
8 program within select game management units of these counties, to
9 pursue or kill cougars with the aid of dogs.

10 (b) Dangerous wildlife task teams must be developed in each
11 county comprised of representatives from the county and the
12 department. A pursuit season and a kill season with the aid of dogs
13 must be established through the commission's rule-making process,
14 utilizing local dangerous wildlife task teams. The dangerous wildlife
15 task teams shall also develop a more effective and accurate dangerous
16 wildlife reporting system to ensure a timely response.

17 (c) The pilot program's primary goals are to provide for public
18 safety, to protect property, and to assess, conserve, and manage
19 cougar populations.

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

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

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

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

9 (d) Consistent with any applicable recommendations emerging from
10 research on cougar population dynamics in a multiprey environment
11 funded in whole or in part by the department.

12 (3) The department may authorize five seasons in which cougars
13 may be pursued or killed with dogs, subject to the other conditions
14 of the pilot program. The seasons are authorized to aid the
15 department in the gathering of information necessary to formulate a
16 recommendation to the legislature regarding whether a permanent
17 program is warranted and, if so, what constraints, goals, and
18 objectives should be included in a permanent program.

19 (4) This section expires July 1, 2024.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) A county legislative authority may
21 request inclusion in the pilot project authorized by section 1 of
22 this act after taking the following actions:

23 (a) Adopting a resolution that requests inclusion in the pilot
24 project;

25 (b) Documenting the need to participate in the pilot program by
26 identifying the number of cougar/human encounters and livestock and
27 pet depredations;

28 (c) Developing and agreeing to the implementation of an education
29 program designed to disseminate to landowners and other citizens
30 information about predator exclusion techniques and devices and other
31 nonlethal methods of cougar management; and

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

36 (2) This section expires July 1, 2024.

37 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) By September 1, 2023, the department
38 must deliver to the legislature, consistent with RCW 43.01.036, a

1 progress report summarizing the pilot program authorized in section 1
2 of this act. The report must include information relating to how the
3 program has been used to assess cougar population levels and protect
4 public safety and property. The report may also include any
5 recommendations as to how cougar management policies may be changed
6 in the future to achieve more effective or efficient management.

7 (2) This section expires July 1, 2024.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 through 3 of this act are each
9 added to chapter 77.12 RCW.

--- END ---