

**From:** [Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX](#)  
**To:** [Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Cougar Response Matrix - Nov2edit (2)Nov 12 kvedit  
**Date:** Thursday, November 12, 2015 1:48:19 PM  
**Attachments:** [Cougar Response Matrix - Nov2edit \(2\)Nov 12 kvedit.docx](#)

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Mike, good work on getting this matrix to the place it is at, I have provided a few comments that should be easy to change.

Thanks

**Kevin Van Damme**

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Conservation Officer Service | Ministry of Environment  
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		Reported Cougar Activities						
		<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>	<u>Level 5</u>	<u>Level 6</u>	<u>Level 7</u>
		Unconfirmed sighting	Confirmed sighting	Confined or treed	Habituated or day time sighting	Follow or stalk a person	Attack or kill pets or livestock	Attack on a person
Location / Public Risk	<u>Level A</u> Wilderness setting – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy
	<u>Level B</u> Rural setting – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level C</u> Fringe habitat – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level D</u> Wilderness setting – Human presence HIGH	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level E</u> Rural setting – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level F</u> Fringe habitat – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level G</u> Urban setting – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy

In any incident where an imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised (sick, injured, emaciated, etc.) euthanization will be considered.

If the option exists, orphaned kittens may be transferred to a CAZA accredited zoo. Otherwise they will be euthanized.

With all incidences relating to livestock depredation, husbandry practices should be assessed and communicated by responding officer.

Dispersing juveniles are a potential elevated risk as they roam widely in search of unoccupied territory and have poorly developed hunting skills. This is when cougars are most likely to conflict with humans.

A cougar will demonstrate various levels of behavior throughout any given day depending on many different variables. These behaviors are often not reported nor observed by humans however may be taken into account if presented within a report.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Monitor** – Provide advice regarding attractants and appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter. Continue to monitor for further reports. An officer may attend to investigate the reliability of the report.

**Comment [VKE1]:** We provide advice on  
1 Attractant management  
2 Personal safety tips when encountering a cougar  
3 cougar behavior

**Manage** – Gather further information by contacting complainant or directly responding to the complainant. Manage based on assessment of risk to public safety. All options may be considered (educate, manage attractants/cougar/people/site, destroy).

**Manage Attractants:** ensure that all attractants are secured at the conflict site or stored in a wildlife-proof manner (such that cougar or cougar prey species cannot access them).

**Comment [VKE2]:** Typically we use the language "night time containment of livestock" when we provide messaging to the public

**Manage Cougar:** Provide space to allow the cougar to move away from people or busy urban areas, preferably back to a natural area or continuous cougar habitat.

**Comment [VKE3]:** Not sure if we need to keep cougar prey away from attractants...

**Manage People:** ensure that people are aware of cougar safety and cougar conflict reduction information.

**Manage Site:** this may include closing the area, with signage and/or barriers or moving a kill that is being defended.

**Destroy** – The animal is considered a high risk to public safety, pets or livestock and must be destroyed.

## **EXAMPLES OF NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (LOW RISK) - LEVELS 1-3**

- Viewing from a distance
- Flight or hiding
- Lack of attention, various movements not directed towards a human
- Ears up, intent attention, shifting of positions, following behaviours.

**Comment [VKE4]:** Remove hiding as this is a concerning behavior – also hiding is included in moderate risk

## **Examples**

Subject is walking in wildland/rural area, subject observed a cougar, the cougar observed subject, the cougar moves off.

Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

#### **EXAMPLES OF MODERATELY THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (MODERATE RISK) – LEVELS 4-5**

- Day active in the presence of people
- Intense staring, following, and hiding
- Hissing, snarling, and other vocalizations

##### **Examples**

**Urban:** cougar is sighted in a town, residential development, including any green belt or public area adjacent to or within this identified environment or other areas that are not within the specific urban setting, such as a large park, river valley or golf course.

**Rural:** where a cougar is observed in amongst the vicinity of residences, farmyards, livestock or other domestic animals.

**Defensive encounters:** a cougar is on a kill, it defends the kill site and does not retreat or leave area when human presence is known.

**Backcountry:** a cougar follows a person when they are out hiking or working.

#### **EXAMPLES OF THREATENING OR ATTACK BEHAVIOUR (HIGH RISK) – LEVEL 6-7**

- Crouching, tail twitching, intense staring, ears flattened like wings, body low to the ground, head is up
- Crouching, tail twitching, body and head low to the ground, rear legs "pumping", fur standing out

##### **Examples**

**Human safety:** A cougar attacks and kills or injures a person.

**Domestic livestock and pet, property loss:** A cougar attacks and kills or injures domestic livestock or pets.

#### **MORE DEFINITIONS**

**Confined:** cougar is in fringe habitat or urban area with no immediate escape route.

**Euthanasia:** following Canada Council on Animal Care Guidelines, the animal will be euthanized by the most humane and expedient method and where possible, away from public scrutiny.

**Fringe habitat:** the interface between wilderness/rural and urban settings, usually dominated by medium-sized properties such as acreages and/or small hobby farms.

**Habituated:** when a cougar approaches humans or remains in human frequented areas, and displays behaviors that are a cause for public safety concerns (ie. day time sightings) and fails to avoid humans or human frequented locations and structures.

**Natural Area:** an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural Foods:** native or non-native prey species that occur naturally/wild in an area (wild not domestic).



**Non-natural Foods:** Domestic animals (pets/livestock), that may attract a cougar.

**Nuisance:** a cougar the repeatedly frequents and is observed in residential areas or areas of high human use, or a cougar that has attempted to attack pets or livestock.

**Rural setting:** an area dominated by very large land holdings and commercial agricultural use.

**Urban setting:** a densely populated human-use area in a community.

**Wilderness setting:** an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

DRAFT

**From:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX  
**To:** Craig, Kate ENV:EX; Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX; Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX; Liedtke, Michael ENV:EX; York, Ben A ENV:EX  
**Cc:** Harrison, Scott FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Large Predator Procedure Working Group  
**Date:** Monday, November 9, 2015 3:08:00 PM

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Hi everyone,

I did another edit of the procedure and made further changes to resolve remaining outstanding comments. I then accepted all the changes and saved the most recent copy as a final so you can review a clean document. It can be found at:

[https://spc-flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy\\_Unit/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/4-7-04.01.1%20Preventing%20and%20Responding%20to%20Conflicts%20with%20Large%20Carnivores.docx](https://spc-flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy_Unit/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/4-7-04.01.1%20Preventing%20and%20Responding%20to%20Conflicts%20with%20Large%20Carnivores.docx)

If you want to review the previous draft with comments and tracked changes intact you can find it here:

[https://spc-flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy\\_Unit/\\_vti\\_history/10/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/4-7-04.01.1%20Preventing%20and%20Responding%20to%20Conflicts%20with%20Large%20Carnivores.docx](https://spc-flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy_Unit/_vti_history/10/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/4-7-04.01.1%20Preventing%20and%20Responding%20to%20Conflicts%20with%20Large%20Carnivores.docx)

I also made amendments to the cougar and bear conflict response matrices as discussed:

[https://spc-](https://spc-flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy_Unit/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/Cougar%20Response%20Matrix%20-%20Nov2edit.docx)

[flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy\\_Unit/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/Cougar%20Response%20Matrix%20-%20Nov2edit.docx](https://spc-flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy_Unit/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/Cougar%20Response%20Matrix%20-%20Nov2edit.docx)

[https://spc-](https://spc-flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy_Unit/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/Bear%20Response%20Matrix%20-%20Aug%2027edit.docx)

[flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy\\_Unit/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/Bear%20Response%20Matrix%20-%20Aug%2027edit.docx](https://spc-flnr.gov.bc.ca/FWHMBMT/Policy_Unit/Shared%20Documents/02%20Procedures/Bear%20Response%20Matrix%20-%20Aug%2027edit.docx)

Please review and have comments back to me by Friday this week.

Thanks

Mike

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**From:** Craig, Kate FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 4, 2015 12:08 PM  
**To:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX; Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX; Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX; Liedtke, Michael ENV:EX; York, Ben A ENV:EX  
**Cc:** Harrison, Scott FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Large Predator Procedure Working Group

Hi all,

Here are action items and document links from today's meeting.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

1. Review canid predation control section
  - Ensure wording is up to date and general to issue as program is in flux
  - Timeline: immediately
  - Member: **Mike Badry**
2. Review cougar section
  - Add wording that allows for decision making to be made through matrix
  - Maintain wording that translocations are not recommended
  - Include wording about immobilizing and removing animal for assessment off-site if deemed appropriate?
  - Timeline: immediately
  - Member: **Mike Badry**
3. Review bear cub content in both documents
  - Provide technical advice on what should stay in LP Procedure and what should go into separate orphan bear cub procedure and standard
  - Timeline: immediately
  - Member: **Helen Schwantje**
4. Final technical review by group
  - All members complete one final review of document
  - Timeline: Friday November 13, 2015

- Member: **all**
5. Send out document for review by regional biologists
    - Send to Sean Pendergast, Brent Gurd and Bill Jex
    - Send after final technical review and edit
    - Send out at same time to Ministry reps (see #6)?
    - Provide timeline for review and comment (2 weeks?)
    - Timeline: review & comments by end of November
    - Member: **Mike Badry & Kate Craig**
  6. Send out document for review by all Ministry higher ups (managers, directors, PLT, etc.)
    - Send after final technical review and edit
    - Provide timeline for review and comment (2 weeks?)
    - Timeline: review & comments by end of November
    - Member: **all**
  7. Develop orphan bear cub procedure
    - Use detailed information removed from LP procedure
    - Review bear content within existing Possession of Live Wildlife Procedure
    - Timeline: end of December 2015 (likely mid-late January bc of holidays)
    - Member: **all but specifically Kate Craig, Helen Schwantje and Tony Hamilton**
  8. Develop orphan bear cub standard
    - Timeline: to be determined
    - Member: **Helen Schwantje and Tony Hamilton**

#### DOCUMENT LINKS

[4-7-04.01.1 Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores.docx](#)  
[British Columbia Orphan Bear Care Standard.docx](#)  
[4-7-04.01.1 - Flow Chart - Preventing and Responding to Large Carnivores.docx](#)  
[Bear Response Matrix - Aug 27edit.docx](#)  
[Cougar Response Matrix - Nov2edit.docx](#)  
[4-7-12.05 - Possession of Live Wildlife - 1993.pdf](#)

#### NEXT MEETING

Thursday December 3 @ 2pm (invites sent)

#### Kate Craig

Senior Wildlife Policy Analyst

Fish and Wildlife Branch | Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

T: 250.387.9789 | E: [kate.craig@gov.bc.ca](mailto:kate.craig@gov.bc.ca)



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Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores			

## This Procedure Replaces:

4-7-04.01.1 - Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores (2001)

## Staff and Organizations Affected:

Director of Fish and Wildlife  
Regional Wildlife Managers  
Wildlife Management Staff  
Ministry of Environment, BC Parks and Conservation Officer Service Division

## Policy Manual Cross-References:

Ministry Policy Manual, Volume 4, Section 7  
Subsection: 04.01.3 Control of Species

## Procedure Manual Cross-References:

Ministry Procedure Manual, Volume 4, Section 7  
Subsection: 13.02 Translocations of Wildlife and Non-Native Species

## Other Cross-References:

British Columbia Ministry of Environment. 2015. Provincial Red and Blue Lists.  
(<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/red-blue.html>). Accessed 28 September 2015.

British Columbia Ministry of Environment. 2015. British Columbia's Bear Smart Community Program. (<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/bearsmart/>). Accessed 28 September 2015.

Hopkins, J.B., S. Herrero, R.T. Shideler, K.A. Gunther, C.C. Schwarz, and S.T. Kalinowski. 2010. A proposed lexicon of terms and concepts for human–bear management in North America. *Ursus* 21(2):154–168.

Hunt, C. L., et. al. 2003. Wind River Bear Institute - Bear Shepherding Guidelines For Safe and Effective Treatment of Human-Bear Conflicts. Wind River Bear Institute, "Partners-In-Life" Program, Heber City, Utah. January 2003.

IUCN. 2013. Guidelines for reintroductions and other conservation translocations. Version 1.0. Gland, Switzerland. 72 pp.

## Appendices:

Appendix 1 Human - Bear Conflict Response Matrix  
Appendix 2 Human - Cougar Conflict Response Matrix

PREPARED BY		AUTHORIZATION	
NAME	NAME	SIGNATURE	
Kate Craig	Dan Peterson		
POSITION	POSITION		
Wildlife Policy Analyst	Director of Wildlife		
			DATE EFFECTIVE



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## Purpose:

This procedure outlines recommended actions to be followed when responding to conflicts between large carnivores and people that threaten human health, safety or property.

The following principles will be used to guide the prevention of and response to conflicts with large carnivores:

1. Human safety is the first priority.
2. There are many variables that can influence the response to conflicts with large carnivores and officer discretion is not superseded by policy or procedure. An officer must be prepared to rationalize their decision-making when it varies from this procedure.
3. The conservation value of the animal(s).
4. Animal care should meet or exceed accepted standards, including methods of animal capture, immobilization, handling, and transportation, release, and during delivery of any method of hazing or aversive conditioning.
5. Where appropriate and timely, conflict responses are accompanied by clear articulation of provincial legislation regarding the provision of attractants and the consequences to wildlife, and the delivery of appropriate prevention and mitigation techniques.
6. Timely, accurate and readily accessible records, summaries and maps.

This policy does **not** apply to the control of large carnivores for conservation of red or blue-listed species.

There are three sections to this procedure:

### **1 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **2 Preventing Conflicts with Large Carnivores**

- 2.1 Prevention of Conflicts
- 2.2 Bear Smart Communities
- 2.3 Carcass Redistribution
- 2.4 Enforcement
- 2.5 Agriculture and Industry

### **3 Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores**

- 3.1 Conflict Response Priorities
- 3.2 Non-lethal Responses Outside of Bear Smart Communities

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- 3.3 Lethal Responses
- 3.4 Methods of Control
- 3.5 Wolves and Coyotes
- 3.6 Relocation
- 3.7 Orphan Bears

## Definitions:

**authorized rearing facility** – a wildlife rehabilitation centre that is authorized by the province to rear and release orphaned bears.

**aversive conditioning** – the training of an animal through the consistent delivery of unpleasant stimuli (deterrents and repellents) until the animal ceases to engage in undesirable activities (Hunt 2003).

**Bear Smart Community** – as defined by the British Columbia Ministry of Environment, a community that has successfully met the requirements of the Bear Smart Community Program and that has been formally designated by the Ministry of Environment as a Bear Smart Community. The Bear Smart Community Program is a voluntary, preventative conservation measure that encourages communities, businesses and individuals to work together. The goal is to address the root causes of bear/human conflicts, thereby reducing the risks to human safety and private property, as well as the number of bears that have to be destroyed each year.

**blue-listed species** – as defined by the British Columbia Ministry of Environment, includes any ecological community, and indigenous species and subspecies considered to be of special concern (formerly vulnerable) in British Columbia. Elements are of special concern because of characteristics that make them particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events. Blue-listed elements are at risk, but are not extirpated, endangered or threatened.

**Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC)** – the ECC manages the “RAPP” Program, a toll free tip-line and web-based service that allows the public to report wildlife-human interactions where public safety may be at risk and known or suspected violations of fisheries, wildlife, or environmental protection laws.

**carcass redistribution** – moving road-killed carcasses or dead livestock to areas where large carnivores can feed on them temporarily to avoid being drawn into proximity with people or livestock.

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**Conflict Management Plan** – a plan that outlines measures industry will take on-site to avoid and reduce risks of potential negative human-large predator interactions and provides recommendations and options for managing industrial facilities and human action within those facilities.

**Conservation Officer** – as defined in the *Environmental Management Act*, a person described in section 106(2)(a) or (b) and includes, in relation to a specific power or duty, an auxiliary conservation officer and a special conservation officer who has been authorized under section 106 (3)(b)(iv) to exercise the power or perform the duty.

**control** – (a) killing of wildlife by shooting, trapping or poisoning, (b) hazing or aversive conditioning of wildlife by use of pepper spray, noise makers, rubber bullets, dogs, etc., or (c) capture and release.

**dangerous wildlife** – as defined in the *Wildlife Act*, means (a) bear, cougar, coyote or wolf, or (b) a species of wildlife that is prescribed as dangerous wildlife.

**grizzly bear population unit (GBPU)** – identified areas that define individual Grizzly Bear populations for the purposes of management and conservation.

**harassment of livestock** – the act of worrying, stalking or chasing after livestock but not an actual attack on livestock resulting in death or injury; it does not mean the mere presence of wildlife near livestock.

**hazing** – random, inconsistent, or one-time application of a repellent/deterrent to cause an animal to alter its behaviour at that moment (Hunt 2003).

**large carnivore** – for the purposes of this procedure, large carnivore means bear, cougar, wolf, or coyote.

**large carnivore conflict** – an incident involving a large carnivore that threatens human safety or property.

**livestock** – as defined in the *Livestock Act* means cattle, goats, horses, sheep, swine and game and includes any other animal designated by regulation.

**Officer** – as defined in the *Wildlife Act*, (a) a constable, a conservation officer, the director, an assistant director or a regional wildlife manager, (b) a park ranger appointed under the *Park Act*, or (c) an employee of the government designated by name or position as an officer, by regulation of the minister.

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**red-listed species** – as defined by the British Columbia Ministry of Environment includes any ecological community and indigenous species and subspecies that is extirpated, endangered or threatened in British Columbia.

**relocation** – the deliberate capture, transport and release of individuals or groups of wild or captive-bred animals within the animal's home range (Hopkins *et al.* 2010).

**threatened GBPU** – a Grizzly Bear Population Unit (GBPU) whose population estimate is less than 50% of the area's estimated minimum habitat capability.

**translocation** – the deliberate capture, transport, and release of individuals or groups of wild or captive-bred animals beyond the animal's home range (Hopkins *et al.* 2010) and includes:

- a. **reintroduction** – the intentional movement and release of an organism inside its indigenous range from which it has disappeared (IUCN 2013).
- b. **reinforcement or supplementation** – the intentional movement and release of an organism into an existing population of conspecifics (IUCN 2013).
- c. **conservation introductions** – the intentional movement and release of an organism outside its indigenous range to avoid extinction of populations of the focal species or to perform a specific ecological function (IUCN 2013).

**wildlife monitor** – synonymous with "Bear Guard" and defined for the purposes of this procedure as a person who has been hired to keep resource workers safe by (a) increasing wildlife safety awareness and education, and (b) acting as a field monitor which watches for potentially dangerous wildlife, recognizes potentially dangerous situations with wildlife, acts to pre-emptively avoid dangerous situations, and deals effectively with dangerous wildlife situations when encounters do occur.

## Procedures:

### 1 Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.1 The Ministry of Forest, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO), Fish and Wildlife Branch (F&W) and the Ministry of Environment (MOE), Ecosystems Branch provide science-based direction regarding wildlife management to prevent or reduce negative effects of human-wildlife encounters including risks to public safety and damage to property.
- 1.2 The Conservation Officer Service (COS) takes actions to minimize the risk that conflicts with large carnivores pose to public safety and property through conflict prevention outreach, training, enforcement and both non-lethal and lethal response.

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## 2 Preventing Conflicts with Large Predators

### 2.1 Prevention of Conflicts

- (a) The emphasis of government efforts will be to prevent or reduce conflicts with large carnivores and will include encouraging and promoting agricultural standards of good husbandry, management of attractants, community planning, and the delivery of public education.

### 2.2 Bear Smart Communities

- (a) Priority is given to conflict prevention in order to increase public safety and maximize the protection of property and the protection of the wildlife resource. Preventive methods include encouraging communities and residents to become "Bear Smart".
- (b) The Ministry of Environment designates communities as "Bear Smart" based on the recommendation of the Provincial Wildlife Conflicts Prevention Coordinator.
- (c) Once a community has been designated as "Bear Smart", the ministry is committed to working with local governments, other law enforcement agencies and stakeholder groups, to develop a response plan for human-bear conflicts. The response plan must take into consideration:
  - i) Available resources and partnerships with other agencies (i.e. Parks Canada, RCMP, local government, etc.),
  - ii) Non-lethal control of bears including short distance relocation (i.e. <10km, within home range), hazing, aversive conditioning and on-site soft and hard release will primarily be used in communities that have been formally designated as "Bear Smart". Officers must be trained and equipped to deliver non-lethal control. Long distance, outside of home range translocation of conflict animals, is not supported,
  - iii) All short distance, within home range relocations should satisfy the criteria in Section 3.6 in terms of risk of future conflicts, and
  - iv) All bears being considered for non-lethal control should be evaluated from the perspective of the conflict history of the bear.

### 2.3 Carcass Redistribution

- (a) In cases involving high conservation value animals (e.g. female Grizzly Bears in threatened GBPU's) where the local circumstances indicate that carcass redistribution could be effective in temporarily reducing conflict, the

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regional wildlife manager and regional inspector can authorize such a program on a case by case basis.

## 2.4 Enforcement

- (a) In situations that involve the intentional or negligent feeding or attraction of dangerous wildlife, charges may be laid under Section 33.1 of the *Wildlife Act*. This does not apply to farm operations, as defined in Section 1 of the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*, to people that operate a facility for the disposal of waste, that is operated in accordance with the *Environmental Management Act* by a municipality, or to people hunting or trapping wildlife in accordance with all other applicable provisions of the *Wildlife Act* and regulations.
- (b) In situations where a Conservation Officer suspects that dangerous wildlife is, or may be, attracted to any land or premises, other than a private dwelling, the officer may conduct the necessary investigation and issue a dangerous wildlife protection order if warranted under Section 88.1 of the *Wildlife Act*.

## 2.5 Agriculture and Industry

- (a) Crops
  - i) Reports of crop damage by large predators (e.g. Black Bears in grain, blueberry or orchard crops) should be referred to the Ministry of Agriculture for information regarding conflict prevention and compensation.
- (b) Livestock
  - i) Unless evidence warrants otherwise, property (livestock) damage complaints alleged to be by large carnivores will be investigated as soon as possible on-site by the Conservation Officer Service, giving consideration to other priority duties and the availability of partners to take on this responsibility.
  - ii) In situations where large carnivore harassment or attack cannot be confirmed through field investigation and, in the opinion of the investigating officer, predation did not take place, then no further action will be taken.
  - iii) Large carnivores feeding on dead livestock will not be considered as evidence of large carnivore attack or harassment unless other evidence confirms that large carnivores caused the death of the animal.

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- iv) In situations where faulty or negligent husbandry practices (e.g. carcasses not removed, remote and uncontrolled lambing/calving grounds, obvious malnutrition of livestock) encourage large carnivore harassment or attack on livestock, control may be denied by the investigating officer until the situation is corrected.
- v) Where the investigating officer requires more information about the adequacy of husbandry practices or the cause of death of livestock than can be obtained above, the investigator will consult with the Wildlife Veterinarian, local or regional office of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Range Division of the Forest Service, and/or a private veterinarian for assessment of the livestock and advice on what constitutes good husbandry practices in the particular situation (whichever is appropriate).
- vi) In situations where improved husbandry is difficult to achieve or is refused by the complainant or offending producer, and where this causes a continuing threat from large carnivores to neighbouring farming operations, the matter may be referred to local livestock organizations (where present) and to the Regional Wildlife Conflicts Advisory Committee (where present) for review and advice.
- vii) In areas where chronic large carnivore/livestock or large carnivore/property problems arise from conflicting land use practices, the matter is discussed as soon as possible by the Regional Wildlife Conflicts Advisory Committee, and, if necessary, referred to appropriate government agencies for assessment and possible action.

## (c) Industry

- i) The Environment Assessment Office may require human wildlife conflict management plans to be developed for projects. The conflict management plan should focus on the risks to large carnivores and their populations, and large carnivores as a potential hazard to humans or human property, and describe proactive management strategies and actions to be taken on site to avoid and reduce risks of potential negative human-wildlife interactions that could lead to human injury or property damage or the destruction or relocation of large carnivores.
- ii) Industry may utilise wildlife monitors to train field workers and monitor large carnivore activity at the field site. Wildlife monitors must be properly trained and must be permitted through FLNRO to carry loaded firearms while conducting this activity.

## 3 Responding to Conflicts with Large Predators

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## 3.1 Conflict Response Priorities

- (a) An officer assigned wildlife control duties will respond to wildlife actions that threaten human safety as their first priority.
- (b) All other human-wildlife conflicts, including wildlife actions that threaten property or have caused property damage, will be responded to in accordance with:
  - i) Other work priorities,
  - ii) Available time,
  - iii) Available resources (manpower, funding, equipment, etc.), and
  - iv) Regional and provincial wildlife conservation and management priorities as per annual program and business plans.
- (c) Decisions regarding response to conflicts with bears and cougars will consider Appendix 1 Human-Bear Conflict Response Matrix and Appendix 2 Human-Cougar Conflict Response Matrix of this procedure.

## 3.2 Non-lethal Responses Outside of Bear Smart Communities

- (a) There may be limited opportunities to deliver the full spectrum of non-lethal responses to a large carnivore conflict in areas that are not designated as "Bear Smart" communities. Hazing, short distance, within-home range relocation, on-site capture and hard release, and other effective means of preventing the escalation of conflict behaviours may be warranted in the circumstances outlined below.
- (b) Non-lethal responses to conflict may be appropriate where:
  - i) Officers are trained and equipped to deliver non-lethal response,
  - ii) High conservation value animals are identified (e.g. female Grizzly Bears in threatened GBPU's),
  - iii) Animals are deemed healthy and vigorous individuals that are not injured, malnourished, or otherwise compromised,
  - iv) Early contact, has occurred with low level conflict animals or situations, and
    - There is no long history of conflict with humans, property or livestock, and
    - It has been determined that there is potential to reverse the conflict behaviour through management intervention.

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- v) There is an immediate need to ensure human safety and lethal methods are not practicable.

### 3.3 Lethal Responses

- (a) Where human-made changes in the environment (livestock, orchards, etc.) have caused unusually high concentrations of large carnivores, emphasis should be placed on the use of licensed hunters and trappers to harvest carnivores during open seasons. Open seasons, bag limits and other regulations should be adjusted, either in regulation, or by Minister's Order, to allow for effective harvesting where that action is deemed appropriate or where public consultation suggests that these actions would be effective in reducing high populations of carnivores.
- (b) Provisions of Section 3.3(a) above will not be used to create a permanent large carnivore-free area in any part of the province excluding the localized and temporary vacuum created through the removal of large carnivores involved in conflicts.
- (c) Large carnivores shall be destroyed under any of the following conditions:
- i) The animal is aggressive towards humans,
  - ii) There is reason to conclude that the animal has gone through the food-conditioning process to an extent that, if moved, would attempt to return to human activity areas,
  - iii) The animal presents a threat to humans, other animals or the environment due to significant infectious disease(s) (e.g. rabies, bovine tuberculosis). Where the investigating officer requires more information regarding infectious disease, the investigator will consult with the Wildlife Veterinarian.
  - iv) The chances for survival in a natural habitat are low and it is considered inhumane to leave in situ, e.g. animal is in very poor body condition, is exhibiting very abnormal behaviour, or has an obvious and severe injury or illness;
  - v) Local conditions prevent the safe capture, transport and release of the animal and available capture methods may even increase human safety hazards; or
  - vi) Areas for safe and humane release are not available.
- (d) Officer actions in this regard will, at all times, take officer and public safety into consideration.

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- (e) Wherever the situation permits, ministry staff in the field shall inform the public present of the method to be used to resolve the conflict, briefly explain the reasons, the likely causes of conflict, appropriate behaviour to avoid conflict, and encourage the public to leave the immediate area for reasons of safety. Where immobilizing equipment is used to capture bears and cougars, the presence of back-up personnel capable of ensuring officer and public safety is required.
- (f) All uses of immobilization chemicals must be recorded by the responding officer(s) and reported, as requested, to the Wildlife Veterinarian.
- (g) Each Grizzly Bear and Cougar that is destroyed must be recorded on a compulsory inspection (CI) data sheet and the number of that CI recorded on the human-wildlife conflict report form.

## 3.4 Methods of Control

- (a) Control action by an officer, where warranted, will immediately follow confirmation of a large carnivore conflict wherever possible. All control must be directed to the effective removal, hazing or aversive conditioning of individual large carnivores (or groups) involved in conflicts while taking precautions to minimize harm or risk to non-target species (including people) and the environment.
- (b) Control actions can include the deliberate trapping of large carnivores involved in conflicts prior to their destruction, using culvert traps and other live-holding traps and snares.
- (c) In all situations in which it is necessary to destroy individual large carnivores involved in conflicts, shooting is preferred. Kill trapping will only be used for control of Wolves and Coyotes.
- (d) Where it is determined that large carnivore control is necessary it will be conducted by the safest and most efficient method suitable to the local circumstances.
- (e) The reported presence of large carnivores in grazing areas will not be considered as a reason for control except as allowed under Section 3.4(f) below.
- (f) Notwithstanding Section 3.4(e), the control of large carnivores in response to confirmed harassment reports might be affected in the absence of confirmed livestock kills or injury.
- (g) Large carnivores found threatening human life, or attacking livestock on private lands (includes leased land) may be destroyed through shooting or

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trapping by the landowner or manager of the stock or their employees as per the *Wildlife Act* Section 2(4) and Section 26(2). Where wildlife is destroyed in this manner it remains the property of the Crown unless the individual (employee, owner or manager) takes the animal during hunting or trapping seasons under licence. An individual that kills wildlife in defence of life or property must promptly report the killing to an officer (*Wildlife Act* Section 75).

- (h) Land leased from the Crown for the purpose of raising livestock is considered as private property for the purposes of this policy; grazing permit areas are not considered as private property.

## 3.5 Wolves and Coyotes

- (a) Producers are required to follow best management practices for cattle and sheep to reduce the risk of conflict with Wolves, Coyotes and other large carnivores. Good agriculture practices are preferred over control actions.
- (b) Where a conflict caused by a wolf pack has been confirmed the pack may be removed.
- (c) Denning Wolves or Coyotes (adults and young of the year) can only be removed if the den is established within an area actively used by livestock during the spring and summer seasons, and where livestock losses and harassment of livestock by these animals is confirmed.
- (d) Where circumstances prevent the immediate removal of Wolves or Coyotes (individuals or packs) involved in conflicts, control is permitted within a 12 month period following the livestock loss, in response to confirmed harassment reports within the same area. Whenever possible, officers should try to remove individuals or packs identified as involved in the conflict.

## 3.6 Relocation

- (a) Decisions to relocate large carnivores in response to conflict with humans should be made by the regional FLNRO office in consultation with the Wildlife Veterinarian.
- (b) Capture and relocation of Cougars and Wolves will not occur, other than juveniles that may be taken into permanent captivity, if appropriate. Capture and relocation of conflict bears should be considered only in a few, limited circumstances. Adult bears will not be moved outside of their natural home ranges, or, in the case of dispersing subadult males, they will only be moved within distances that approximate their natural dispersal distances

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from natal home ranges. Bears will only be relocated short distances where all of the following conditions are met:

- i) There is no or very limited indication of food-conditioning and no indication of aggressiveness. Animals considered to be dangerous to the public will not be relocated,
  - ii) The animal appears healthy, in good condition, and is not expected to need parental care to survive if relocated without its female parent,
  - iii) Dependant young animals are relocated with the female parent, and
  - iv) Animals that are handled and released are marked with an ear tag, permanent electronic tag, tattoo (lip and groin) and, preferably, a VHS or GPS transmitter. Those animals relocated under recovery programs will be outfitted with a radio transmitter and assigned to a monitoring program in accordance with standards prescribed by FLNRO and under an approved capture permit or by government staff only.
- (c) Factors that may improve the success of within home range relocation include:
- i) The presence of natural, alternative forage,
  - ii) Security and thermal cover (e.g. climb trees for females with young),
  - iii) Lower than saturation densities of native, resident bears,
  - iv) Low levels of human habituation and no food conditioning history, and
  - v) Attractant issues that may have led to the within home range relocation are resolved.

## 3.7 Orphan Bears

### (a) Grizzly Bears

- i) All suitable orphan Grizzly Bear young of the year in British Columbia may enter a collaborative pilot program between the Province and an authorized rearing facility.
- ii) Only young of the year are candidates for the program. Orphaned yearling Grizzly Bears will be left in the wild.
- iii) The authorized rearing facility must have a valid permit in place that permits housing Grizzly Bear young of the year for rearing and release.

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- iv) Any Grizzly Bear young of the year found without its mother must not be assumed to be orphaned and should be given every reasonable opportunity, or 48 hours, to re-join its mother.
- v) When an orphaned or injured Grizzly Bear young of the year is reported to or found by staff, the closest FLNRO regional office must be notified immediately. FLNRO will subsequently notify the Large Carnivore Specialist and an authorized rearing facility.
- vi) If the authorized rearing facility receives knowledge from the public or a wildlife rehabilitation facility about an orphaned/injured Grizzly Bear, they must immediately contact the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) and the regional FLNRO office.
- vii) As soon as possible after capture, the animal should be transferred to the authorized rearing facility after an initial health assessment and treatment of any urgent issues by a veterinarian, including euthanasia if warranted after consultation with the Wildlife Veterinarian. Further evaluation of the young of the year's health will take place at authorized rearing facility by staff in consultation with the local, and/or the Wildlife Veterinarian. This assessment will determine the initial suitability of the animal as a candidate for the project.
- viii) If treatment is necessary, it should be done in consultation with the Wildlife Veterinarian.
- ix) Evaluation of any orphaned Grizzly Bear for entry into the pilot project must involve discussion of the following criteria and will include input from the Wildlife Veterinarian, FLNRO regional and/or headquarters biologists, and someone experienced in rearing orphaned bears. Ideally, these criteria should be met before an orphaned Grizzly Bear is admitted into the pilot project. However, discretion may be used based on the knowledge and experience of those involved in the evaluation:
  - Young of the year must not have any obvious injuries or disabilities preventing a reasonable chance of recovery and post-release survival.
  - Any treatable medical conditions or injuries must not create irresolvable pain or other inhumane conditions nor result in conditioning to human presence through increased handling.
  - Bears from the wild with no known previous experience with people will have priority over bears that have become food conditioned or exhibit imprinting behaviour.

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- Preference will be given to more than one young of the year to enable socialization between animals.
  - Young of the year that are unsuitable candidates for rearing may be brought to an authorized rearing facility as a companion for suitable young of the year if there is a need and if there are no demands for that young of the year from a Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) approved captive facility.
- x) If a young of the year is judged to be unsuitable for initial or continued rearing, the disposition of Grizzly Bear young of the year will be determined by FLNRO and may include:
- Possible transfer to CAZA accredited facilities for display in British Columbia,
  - Possible export from British Columbia to a CAZA accredited facility for display in Canada (or equally accredited facilities in the U.S.),
  - Transfer to an authorized rearing facility as a companion for suitable rearing candidates, and
  - Euthanasia.
- (b) Black Bears
- i) Provided that permitted rearing facilities can provide adequate facilities to rear, release and monitor bears, consideration should be given to the rearing and release of orphaned Black Bear young of the year that are considered suitable candidates.
- ii) In order to be considered as candidates for rearing and release:
- Any Black Bear young of the year found without its mother must not be assumed to be orphaned and should be given every reasonable opportunity, or 48 hours, to re-join its mother.
  - Only young of the year are candidates. Orphaned yearling Black Bears will be left in the wild.
  - Young of the year must be in good health (of adequate size with no serious injuries or obvious illnesses), and
  - Young of the year must not display high levels of habituation to humans or conditioning to human food sources. If there are any questions regarding the condition of the bear the Wildlife Veterinarian will be contacted for input.

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- iii) Young of the year that are brought to rearing centres must be examined by a veterinarian, after which FLNRO in discussion with the facility will decide whether the young of the year should be euthanized or reared by the rearing facility for eventual release.
- iv) Adequate and suitable facilities must be available at a rehabilitation centre that meet provincial standards for the rearing of bear young of the year for release into the wild.

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## Appendix 1 Human - Bear Conflict Response Matrix

		Level of Conflict/ Bear Behavior					
		<u>Level 1</u> Wary of human (leaves on approach)	<u>Level 2</u> Habituated (indifferent to presence of humans)	<u>Level 3</u> Assertive behavior or causes property damage (including livestock and pets)	<u>Level 4</u> Follows/ bluff charges humans (threatening behavior) or is fed by humans	<u>Level 5</u> Causes human injury (defensive/ surprise attack) or enters unoccupied building	<u>Level 6</u> Predatory or non-defensive attack or enters occupied buildings
Habitat Type and Feeding Source	<u>Level A</u> Bear is feeding on natural foods in natural area or continuous bear habitat	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Manage	Destroy
	<u>Level B</u> Bear is feeding on natural foods in area adjacent to continuous bear habitat	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Remove	Remove	Destroy
	<u>Level C</u> Bear is feeding on natural foods in sub-urban or residential area with immediate escape route	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Remove	Remove	Destroy
	<u>Level D</u> Bear is occasionally feeding on non-natural foods in remote area (camps, etc.)	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Remove	Remove	Destroy
	<u>Level E</u> Bear is frequently feeding on non-natural foods in residential area with immediate escape route	Manage	Manage	Remove	Remove	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level F</u> Bear is frequently feeding on non-natural foods in confined/urban areas with no immediate escape route or enters an occupied building	Manage	Remove	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy

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In any incident where an imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular bear is determined to be compromised (sick, injured, emaciated, etc.) euthanization will be considered.

See Section 3.7 of the Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores procedure regarding response to orphaned bear cubs.

Long-distance translocation of bears will not normally occur. Under some circumstances, immobilizing and removing animals off-site for assessment may be appropriate.

With all incidences relating to livestock depredation, husbandry practices should be assessed and communicated by responding officer.

## LEVELS 1-2 LOW RISK

### EXAMPLES OF WARY OR INDIFFERENT BEHAVIOUR

- Leaves on approach/presence of a human
- Stands ground on approach but then leaves
- Leaves after yelling, honking, firecrackers, bear bangers, etc.
- Stands ground after yelling, honking, firecrackers, bear bangers, etc. but then leaves

## LEVELS 3-4 MODERATE RISK

### EXAMPLES OF ASSERTIVE OR THREATENING BEHAVIOUR

- Stays and approaches after yelling, honking, firecrackers, bear bangers, etc.
- Stays and (bluff) charges after yelling, honking, firecrackers, bear bangers, etc.

## LEVELS 5-6 HIGH RISK

### EXAMPLES OF DEFENSIVE OR PREDATORY BEHAVIOUR

- Confrontations as a result of a sudden encounter with a bear protecting its space, cubs or food.
- Continues to approach, follow, disappear and reappear, or displays other stalking behaviors. Attacks a person that is in a tent or other structure.

## DEFINITIONS

**Monitor** – Provide advice regarding attractants, appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter, safety advice if a person did encounter a bear, and bear behavior. Continue to monitor for further reports. An officer may attend to investigate the reliability of the report.

**Manage** – Provide advice regarding attractants and appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter. Non-lethal management (hazing) may be delivered in appropriate circumstances. May include:

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**Manage Attractants** – ensure that all non-natural foods are removed from the conflict site or stored in a bear-proof manner (such that the bear cannot access them).

**Manage Bear** – use non-lethal tactics (bear aversion; hazing) to move the bear away from the conflict site to suitable cover or a more desirable location away from people or busy urban areas, preferably back to a natural area or bear habitat.

**Manage People** – ensure that people in the area of conflict are kept a safe distance from the bear; educate people as necessary to ensure the circumstances that lead to the conflict aren't repeated.

**Manage Site** – this may include stopping traffic or heavy equipment while a bear is being shepherded away from the site; or if conflicts are expected to reoccur at this site, this may require closing the area, with signage and/or barriers.

**Remove** – The animal is considered a risk to public safety and must be removed. There may be an option to relocate following Section 3.2 of the Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores procedure. Otherwise the animal must be destroyed.

**Destroy** – The animal is considered a high risk to public safety and must be destroyed.

**Bear habitat** – an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

**Confined urban area** – a heavily populated human-use area in a city.

**Defensive attack** – A bear that makes full physical contact by either swatting or biting and has exhibited defensive behaviour prior to contact.

**Escape route** – a clear route free of obstacles.

**Natural area** – an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural foods** – native or non-native species plants (or their parts i.e. roots, fruit, seeds, nuts) that grow naturally/wild in an area (not landscaped plants); insects; fish and small mammals (wild not domestic).

**Non-defensive attack** – a bear that attacks exhibiting offensive aggressive behaviour.

**Non-natural foods** – garbage, human food and other odorous products that have attracted a bear (not including fruit trees, crops etc.).

**Occupied building** – A four-sided structure in which people live/work.

**Predatory attack** – A bear that attacks a person with predacious interest or intent.

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## Appendix 2 Human - Cougar Conflict Response Matrix

		Level of Conflict/Reported Cougar Activities						
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7
		Unconfirmed sighting	Confirmed sighting	Confined or treed	Habituated or day time sighting	Follow or stalk a person	Attack or kill pets or livestock	Attack on a person
Location and Public Risk	Level A Wilderness setting- Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy
	Level B Rural setting- Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	Level C Front country habitat- Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	Level D Wilderness setting- Human presence HIGH	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	Level E Rural setting- Human presence HIGH	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	Level F Front country habitat- Human presence HIGH	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	Level G Urban setting- Human presence HIGH	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy

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In any incident where an imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised (sick, injured, emaciated, etc.) euthanization will be considered.

If the option exists, orphaned kittens may be transferred to a CAZA accredited zoo. Otherwise they will be euthanized.

Translocation of cougars will not normally occur. Under some circumstances, immobilizing and removing animals off-site for assessment may be appropriate.

With all incidences relating to livestock depredation, husbandry practices should be assessed and communicated by responding officer.

Dispersing juveniles are a potential elevated risk as they roam widely in search of unoccupied territory and have poorly developed hunting skills. This is when cougars are most likely to conflict with humans.

A cougar will demonstrate various levels of behavior throughout any given day depending on many different variables. These behaviors are often not reported nor observed by humans however may be taken into account if presented within a report.

## LEVELS 1-3 LOW RISK EXAMPLES OF NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOUR

- Viewing from a distance
- Flight
- Lack of attention, various movements not directed towards a human
- Ears up, intent attention, shifting of positions, following behaviours

### Examples

Subject is walking in wildland/rural area, subject observed a cougar, the cougar observed subject, the cougar moves off.

Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

## LEVELS 4-5 MODERATE RISK EXAMPLES OF MODERATELY THREATENING BEHAVIOUR

- Day active in the presence of people
- Intense staring, following and hiding
- Hissing, snarling and other vocalizations

### Examples

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Urban: cougar is sighted in a town, residential development, including any green belt or public area adjacent to or within this identified environment or other areas that are not within the specific urban setting, such as a large park, river valley or golf course.

Rural: where a cougar is observed in amongst the vicinity of residences, farmyards, livestock or other domestic animals.

Defensive encounters: a cougar is on a kill, it defends the kill site and does not retreat or leave area when human presence is known.

Backcountry: a cougar follows a person when they are out hiking or working.

## LEVEL 6-7 HIGH RISK

### EXAMPLES OF THREATENING OR ATTACK BEHAVIOUR

- Crouching, tail twitching, intense staring, ears flattened like wings, body low to the ground, head is up
- Crouching, tail twitching, body and head low to the ground, rear legs "pumping", fur standing out

#### Examples

Human safety: A cougar attacks and kills or injures a person.

Domestic livestock and pet, property loss: A cougar attacks and kills or injures domestic livestock or pets.

## DEFINITIONS

**Monitor** – Provide advice regarding attractant management, appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter, safety tips when a cougar is encountered, and cougar behavior. Continue to monitor for further reports. An officer may attend to investigate the reliability of the report.

**Manage** – Gather further information by contacting complainant or directly responding to the complaint. Manage based on assessment of risk to public safety. All options may be considered (educate, manage attractants/cougar/people/site, destroy). May include:

**Manage Attractants** – ensure that all attractants are secured at the conflict site or stored in a wildlife-proof manner, including night-time containment of livestock.

**Manage Cougar** – provide space to allow the cougar to move away from people or busy urban areas, preferably back to a natural area or continuous cougar habitat.

**Manage People** – ensure that people are aware of cougar safety and cougar conflict reduction information.

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**Manage Site** – this may include closing the area, with signage and/or barriers or moving a kill that is being defended.

**Destroy** – the animal is considered a high risk to public safety, pets or livestock and must be destroyed.

**Confined** – cougar is in fringe habitat or urban area with no immediate escape route.

**Euthanasia** – following Canada Council on Animal Care Guidelines, the animal will be euthanized by the most humane and expedient method and where possible, away from public scrutiny.

**Front country habitat** – the interface between wilderness/rural and urban settings, usually dominated by medium-sized properties such as acreages and/or small hobby farms.

**Habituated** – when a cougar approaches humans or remains in human frequented areas, and displays behaviors that are a cause for public safety concerns (e.g. daytime sightings) and fails to avoid humans or human frequented locations and structures.

**Natural area** – an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural foods** – native or non-native prey species that occur naturally/wild in an area (wild not domestic).

**Non-natural foods** – domestic animals (pets and livestock), that may attract a cougar.

**Nuisance** – a cougar the repeatedly frequents and is observed in residential areas or areas of high human use, or a cougar that has attempted to attack pets or livestock.

**Rural setting** – an area dominated by very large land holdings and commercial agricultural use.

**Urban setting** – a densely populated human-use area in a community.

**Wilderness setting** – an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

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## Reported Cougar Activities

		<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>	<u>Level 5</u>	<u>Level 6</u>	<u>Level 7</u>
		Unconfirmed sighting	Confirmed sighting	Confined or treed	Habituated or day time sighting	Follow or stalk a person	Attack or kill pets or livestock	Attack on a person
<b>Location / Public Risk</b>	<u>Level A</u> Wilderness setting – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy
	<u>Level B</u> Rural setting – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level C</u> Front country habitat – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level D</u> Wilderness setting – Human presence HIGH	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level E</u> Rural setting – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level F</u> Front county habitat – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level G</u> Urban setting – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy

In any incident where an imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised (sick, injured, emaciated, etc.) euthanization will be considered.

If the option exists, orphaned kittens may be transferred to a CAZA accredited zoo. Otherwise they will be euthanized.

Translocation of cougars will not normally occur. Under some circumstances, immobilizing and removing animals off-site for assessment may be appropriate.

With all incidences relating to livestock depredation, husbandry practices should be assessed and communicated by responding officer.

Dispersing juveniles are a potential elevated risk as they roam widely in search of unoccupied territory and have poorly developed hunting skills. This is when cougars are most likely to conflict with humans.

A cougar will demonstrate various levels of behavior throughout any given day depending on many different variables. These behaviors are often not reported nor observed by humans however may be taken into account if presented within a report.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Monitor** – Provide advice regarding attractant management, appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter, safety tips when a cougar is encountered, and cougar behavior. Continue to monitor for further reports. An officer may attend to investigate the reliability of the report.

**Manage** – Gather further information by contacting complainant or directly responding to the complaint. Manage based on assessment of risk to public safety. All options may be considered (educate, manage attractants/cougar/people/site, destroy).

**Manage Attractants:** ensure that all attractants are secured at the conflict site or stored in a wildlife-proof manner, including night-time containment of livestock.

**Manage Cougar:** Provide space to allow the cougar to move away from people or busy urban areas, preferably back to a natural area or continuous cougar habitat.

**Manage People:** ensure that people are aware of cougar safety and cougar conflict reduction information.

**Manage Site:** this may include closing the area, with signage and/or barriers or moving a kill that is being defended.

**Destroy** – The animal is considered a high risk to public safety, pets or livestock and must be destroyed.

## **EXAMPLES OF NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (LOW RISK) - LEVELS 1-3**

- Viewing from a distance
- Flight
- Lack of attention, various movements not directed towards a human
- Ears up, intent attention, shifting of positions, following behaviours.

### **Examples**

Subject is walking in wildland/rural area, subject observed a cougar, the cougar observed subject, the cougar moves off.

Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

#### **EXAMPLES OF MODERATELY THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (MODERATE RISK) – LEVELS 4-5**

- Day active in the presence of people
- Intense staring, following, and hiding
- Hissing, snarling, and other vocalizations

##### **Examples**

Urban: cougar is sighted in a town, residential development, including any green belt or public area adjacent to or within this identified environment or other areas that are not within the specific urban setting, such as a large park, river valley or golf course.

Rural: where a cougar is observed in amongst the vicinity of residences, farmyards, livestock or other domestic animals.

Defensive encounters: a cougar is on a kill, it defends the kill site and does not retreat or leave area when human presence is known.

Backcountry: a cougar follows a person when they are out hiking or working.

#### **EXAMPLES OF THREATENING OR ATTACK BEHAVIOUR (HIGH RISK) – LEVEL 6-7**

- Crouching, tail twitching, intense staring, ears flattened like wings, body low to the ground, head is up
- Crouching, tail twitching, body and head low to the ground, rear legs "pumping", fur standing out

##### **Examples**

Human safety: A cougar attacks and kills or injures a person.

Domestic livestock and pet, property loss: A cougar attacks and kills or injures domestic livestock or pets.

#### **MORE DEFINITIONS**

**Confined:** cougar is in fringe habitat or urban area with no immediate escape route.

**Euthanasia:** following Canada Council on Animal Care Guidelines, the animal will be euthanized by the most humane and expedient method and where possible, away from public scrutiny.

**Front country habitat:** the interface between wilderness/rural and urban settings, usually dominated by medium-sized properties such as acreages and/or small hobby farms.

**Habituated:** when a cougar approaches humans or remains in human frequented areas, and displays behaviors that are a cause for public safety concerns (ie. day time sightings) and fails to avoid humans or human frequented locations and structures.

**Natural Area:** an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural Foods:** native or non-native prey species that occur naturally/wild in an area (wild not domestic).

**Non-natural Foods:** Domestic animals (pets/livestock), that may attract a cougar.

**Nuisance:** a cougar the repeatedly frequents and is observed in residential areas or areas of high human use, or a cougar that has attempted to attack pets or livestock.

**Rural setting:** an area dominated by very large land holdings and commercial agricultural use.

**Urban setting:** a densely populated human-use area in a community.

**Wilderness setting:** an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

## Reported Cougar Activities

		<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>	<u>Level 5</u>	<u>Level 6</u>	<u>Level 7</u>
		Unconfirmed sighting	Confirmed sighting	Confined or treed	Habituated or day time sighting	Follow or stalk a person	Attack or kill pets or livestock	Attack on a person
<b>Location / Public Risk</b>	<u>Level A</u> Wilderness setting – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy
	<u>Level B</u> Rural setting – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level C</u> Fringe habitat – Human presence MINIMAL	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level D</u> Wilderness setting – Human presence HIGH	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level E</u> Rural setting – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level F</u> Fringe habitat – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level G</u> Urban setting – Human presence HIGH.	Monitor	Manage	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy

In any incident where an imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised (sick, injured, emaciated, etc.) euthanization will be considered.

If the option exists, orphaned kittens may be transferred to a CAZA accredited zoo. Otherwise they will be euthanized.

Translocation of cougars will not normally occur. Under some circumstances, immobilizing and removing animals off-site for assessment may be appropriate.

With all incidences relating to livestock depredation, husbandry practices should be assessed and communicated by responding officer.

Dispersing juveniles are a potential elevated risk as they roam widely in search of unoccupied territory and have poorly developed hunting skills. This is when cougars are most likely to conflict with humans.

A cougar will demonstrate various levels of behavior throughout any given day depending on many different variables. These behaviors are often not reported nor observed by humans however may be taken into account if presented within a report.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Monitor** – Provide advice regarding attractants and appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter. Continue to monitor for further reports. An officer may attend to investigate the reliability of the report.

**Manage** – Gather further information by contacting complainant or directly responding to the complaint. Manage based on assessment of risk to public safety. All options may be considered (educate, manage attractants/cougar/people/site, destroy).

**Manage Attractants:** ensure that all attractants are secured at the conflict site or stored in a wildlife-proof manner (such that cougar or cougar prey species cannot access them).

**Manage Cougar:** Provide space to allow the cougar to move away from people or busy urban areas, preferably back to a natural area or continuous cougar habitat.

**Manage People:** ensure that people are aware of cougar safety and cougar conflict reduction information.

**Manage Site:** this may include closing the area, with signage and/or barriers or moving a kill that is being defended.

**Destroy** – The animal is considered a high risk to public safety, pets or livestock and must be destroyed.

## **EXAMPLES OF NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (LOW RISK) - LEVELS 1-3**

- Viewing from a distance
- Flight or hiding
- Lack of attention, various movements not directed towards a human
- Ears up, intent attention, shifting of positions, following behaviours.

### **Examples**



Subject is walking in wildland/rural area, subject observed a cougar, the cougar observed subject, the cougar moves off.

Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

#### **EXAMPLES OF MODERATELY THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (MODERATE RISK) – LEVELS 4-5**

- Day active in the presence of people
- Intense staring, following, and hiding
- Hissing, snarling, and other vocalizations

##### **Examples**

Urban: cougar is sighted in a town, residential development, including any green belt or public area adjacent to or within this identified environment or other areas that are not within the specific urban setting, such as a large park, river valley or golf course.

Rural: where a cougar is observed in amongst the vicinity of residences, farmyards, livestock or other domestic animals.

Defensive encounters: a cougar is on a kill, it defends the kill site and does not retreat or leave area when human presence is known.

Backcountry: a cougar follows a person when they are out hiking or working.

#### **EXAMPLES OF THREATENING OR ATTACK BEHAVIOUR (HIGH RISK) – LEVEL 6-7**

- Crouching, tail twitching, intense staring, ears flattened like wings, body low to the ground, head is up
- Crouching, tail twitching, body and head low to the ground, rear legs "pumping", fur standing out

##### **Examples**

Human safety: A cougar attacks and kills or injures a person.

Domestic livestock and pet, property loss: A cougar attacks and kills or injures domestic livestock or pets.

#### **MORE DEFINITIONS**

**Confined:** cougar is in fringe habitat or urban area with no immediate escape route.

**Euthanasia:** following Canada Council on Animal Care Guidelines, the animal will be euthanized by the most humane and expedient method and where possible, away from public scrutiny.

**Fringe habitat:** the interface between wilderness/rural and urban settings, usually dominated by medium-sized properties such as acreages and/or small hobby farms.

**Habituated:** when a cougar approaches humans or remains in human frequented areas, and displays behaviors that are a cause for public safety concerns (ie. day time sightings) and fails to avoid humans or human frequented locations and structures.

**Natural Area:** an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural Foods:** native or non-native prey species that occur naturally/wild in an area (wild not domestic).

**Non-natural Foods:** Domestic animals (pets/livestock), that may attract a cougar.

**Nuisance:** a cougar the repeatedly frequents and is observed in residential areas or areas of high human use, or a cougar that has attempted to attack pets or livestock.

**Rural setting:** an area dominated by very large land holdings and commercial agricultural use.

**Urban setting:** a densely populated human-use area in a community.

**Wilderness setting:** an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

DRAFT

<b>Cougar Behavior/Level of Conflict (toward humans)</b>							
		<b>Level 1</b> Wary of human (flees or hides on approach)	<b>Level 2</b> Indifferent (lack of attention, movements not directed toward people)	<b>Level 3</b> Curiosity (ears up, shifting body positions, intent attention)	<b>Level 4</b> Assessing success of attack (intense staring, following and hiding behavior)	<b>Level 5</b> Defensive (hissing, snarling vocalizations)	<b>Level 6</b> Pre-attack (crouching, ears flat, tail twitching, intense staring, body low, rear legs pumping) or attack
<b>Habitat Type and Prey Source</b>	<b>Level A</b> Cougar is in natural area or continuous cougar habitat	Manage	Manage	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Destroy
	<b>Level B</b> Cougar is in area adjacent to continuous cougar habitat (interface)	Manage	Manage with option to remove.	Manage with option to remove.	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<b>Level C</b> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with immediate escape route	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<b>Level D</b> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with no immediate escape route or in high risk area (i.e. school or playground)	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<b>Level E</b> Cougar attacking livestock/pets in agricultural or semi-urban areas	Destroy/ DWPO	Destroy/ DWPO	Destroy/ DWPO	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<b>Level F</b> Cougar attacking livestock/pets in urban areas	Destroy/ DWPO	Destroy/ DWPO	Destroy/ DWPO	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy

**In any incident where imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised through actions taken, euthanization will be considered.**

1. Comparing behavior with habitat type and feeding source causes several challenges with respect to missing important risk factors such as history of the individual cougar, habituation, and age/health of the cougar. These factors are equally important when we assess risk to determine response options.
2. In Level E and F the matrix moves directly to destroy. This may not be the case if the husbandry is poor. We may issue a DWPO and force the producer to fix the problem and not kill the cougar.
3. Feeding is the wrong language to use in Level E and F. We would not take action to destroy if the cougar is feeding only but not responsible for killing pets or livestock.
4. There is no language around attacking pets or livestock, we respond to dozens of these complaints yearly after a cougar has a failed attack on livestock or pets. Often these cougars are young, old or sick.
5. Following behavior in Level 3 needs to be moved to Level 4, this is a moderate risk behavior.
6. There is no language around a cougar defending a kill. This type of complaint causes the behavior to elevate. In this case we would remove the kill rather than destroy the cougar.
7. I would rather use euthanasia instead of destroy.
8. There is no mention of day time sightings vs night time sightings, this is important when a risk assessment is completed.
9. How are we managing orphaned kittens? (there is a humane aspect to this issue - 0-6 months they have a .03% chance of survival and only a zoo will take them in) it should state that rehab is not an option. 6-10 months survival increases but if in conflict these young animals are often starving and desperate. After 10 months cougar is of dispersal age and the circumstances must be assessed to determine our action.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Manage** – Provide advice regarding attractants and appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter. Non-lethal management may be delivered in appropriate circumstances. May include:

**Manage Attractants:** ensure that all attractants are secured at the conflict site or stored in a wildlife-proof manner (such that cougar or cougar prey species cannot access them).

**Manage Cougar:** Provide space to allow the cougar to move away from people or busy urban areas, preferably back to a natural area or continuous cougar habitat.

**Manage People:** ensure that people are aware of cougar safety and cougar conflict reduction information.

**Manage Site:** this may include closing the area, with signage and/or barriers.

**Manage with option to remove** – Gather further information by contacting complainant or directly responding to the complaint. Manage based on assessment of risk to public safety. All options may be considered (educate, manage attractants/cougar/site, destroy).

**Destroy/DWPO** – If the conflict is a result of poor animal husbandry a DWPO may be issued, compelling the producer to fix the problem and the cougar would not be destroyed.

**Destroy** – The animal is considered a high risk to public safety, pets or livestock and must be destroyed.

### **EXAMPLES OF NON-AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR (LOW RISK) - LEVELS 1-3**

- Viewing from a distance
- Flight or hiding
- Lack of attention, various movements not directed towards a human
- Ears up, intent attention, shifting of positions, following behaviours.

#### Examples

Subject is walking in wildland/rural area, subject observed a cougar, the cougar observed subject, the cougar moves off.

Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

### **EXAMPLES OF MODERATE AGGRESSIVE OR THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (MODERATE RISK) – LEVELS 4-5**

- Intense staring, following, and hiding
- Hissing, snarling, and other vocalizations

#### Examples

Urban: cougar is sighted in a town, residential development, including any green belt or public area adjacent to or within this identified environment or other areas that are not within the specific urban setting, such as a large park, river valley or golf course.

Rural: where a cougar is observed in amongst the vicinity of residences, farmyards, livestock or other domestic animals.

Defensive encounters: a cougar is on a kill, it defends the kill site and does not retreat or leave area when human presence is known.

Backcountry: a cougar follows a person when they are out hiking or working.

### **EXAMPLES OF AGGRESSIVE OR ATTACK BEHAVIOUR (HIGH RISK) – LEVEL 6**

- Crouching, tail twitching, intense staring, ears flattened like wings, body low to the ground, head is up
- Crouching, tail twitching, body and head low to the ground, rear legs "pumping", fur standing out

#### Examples

**Human safety:** A cougar attacks and kills or injures a person.

**Domestic livestock and pet, property loss:** A cougar attacks and kills or injures domestic livestock or pets.

**Provoked attack:** when a human based on their presence, use of scents, calls or other attractants causes a cougar to make physical contact and immediately break off the encounter.

**Unprovoked attack:** a cougar attacks a dog and a person grabs the cougar and is attacked by the cougar as the cougar attempts to kill the dog or flee the human.

### **MORE DEFINITIONS**

**Agricultural area:** an area dominated by very large land holdings and commercial agricultural use.

**Cougar Habitat:** an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

**Escape Route:** a clear route free of obstacles.

**Euthanasia:** following Canada Council on Animal Care Guidelines, the animal will be euthanized by the most humane and expedient method and where possible, away from public scrutiny.

**Habituated:** when a cougar approaches humans or remains in human frequented areas, and displays behaviors that are a cause for public safety concerns (ie. day time sightings) and fails to avoid humans or human frequented locations and structures.

**Natural Area:** an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural Foods:** native or non-native prey species that occur naturally/wild in an area (wild not domestic).

**Non-natural Foods:** Domestic animals (pets/livestock), that may attract a cougar.

**Nuisance:** a cougar the repeatedly frequents and is observed in residential areas or areas of high human use, or a cougar that has attempted to attack pets or livestock.

**Preventative Action:** cougars have known behavioral patterns that, when combined with location, time and other factors, may indicate that an incident is highly probable. In such situations, direct preventive action is designed to reduce/alleviate conflict. A cougar's history and behavioral patterns dictate these actions. The following represents preventive actions that are to be considered:

- Assess situation/monitor
- Close area
- Provide advice – education including cougar behavior assessment and safety tips to avoid conflict.

- Husbandry modification – use of proper containment of livestock etc
- DWPO issued to ensure preventative measures are taken to avoid conflicts

**Semi-urban or suburban area:** an area dominated by larger properties such as acreages and/or small hobby farms.

**Urban or residential area:** a densely populated human-use area in a community.

1. There is no definitions consistent with the training that COS officers receive. E.g. Euthanasia, habituated, nuisance, prevention options, dangerous wildlife protection orders, husbandry, provoked, and unprovoked.
2. Age categories need to be defined, orphaned, kitten, sub adult, and adult.

High risk to public safety- there is evidence that a cougar has attacked a human, or presented a threat to human safety.

High risk to loss of property- there is evidence that a cougar has attacked a pet or livestock.

Risk to public safety – there is evidence that a cougar presents a threat to human safety or has acted unnaturally without provocation.

Risk to loss of property – there is evidence that a cougar is an immediate threat to pets or livestock.

Provoked- a response by a cougar to a human action as determined by the behavior of the cougar.

Unprovoked- a cougar's response to human provocation as determined by the behavior of the cougar.

**From:** [Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX](#)  
**To:** [Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Canuel, Aaron ENV:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Cougar Conflict Matrix comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2015 8:11:00 AM

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Hi Kevin,

I left another message on your voice mail. I am in the office all morning. If we don't get a chance to talk today it can wait till you get back. I won't present the options to PLT till we have had a chance to discuss.

Mike

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**From:** Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, September 28, 2015 5:28 PM  
**To:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX  
**Cc:** Canuel, Aaron ENV:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Cougar Conflict Matrix comments

Mike, as I will be away for a week and a half I would like to discuss this further before you present it to the PLT. I have discussed this with Jared Connatty and the Wildlife Conflict Instructor group who would like to assist you in getting this decision tool as useful as possible. I may be available first thing in the morning before I am out of cell coverage for a week.

Thanks

Kevin Van Damme

Acting Sergeant

Thompson Fraser Zone

**Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP)**

[1-877-952-RAPP \(7277\)](tel:1-877-952-RAPP) or [www.rapp.bc.ca](http://www.rapp.bc.ca)

Sent from my I-phone

On Sep 24, 2015, at 8:08 PM, Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX <[Kevin.Vandamme@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Kevin.Vandamme@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Hi Mike,

Thanks for adjusting the matrix. I do have a few concerns that I would like to discuss, please call when you are back.

Thanks

Kevin Van Damme

Acting Sergeant

Thompson Fraser Zone

**Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP)**

[1-877-952-RAPP \(7277\)](tel:1-877-952-RAPP) or [www.rapp.bc.ca](http://www.rapp.bc.ca)

Sent from my I-phone

On Sep 23, 2015, at 2:57 PM, Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX <[Mike.Badry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Mike.Badry@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Thanks for the quick response Kevin.



I spoke with Aaron today regarding the conflict matrices to get some clarity on where the COS would like to go with them as part of our large carnivore policy. It is difficult to include every conceivable situation and variable into something like this and still keep it somewhat coherent and useable.

After speaking to Aaron I made some further revisions to the original matrix based on your and Aaron's comments (attached) and I will present this to the PLT along with your concerns regarding training and decision-making in the field. I will also present the Alberta matrix as another direction to go, using age/health and a description of the conflict. PLT can then provide direction.

I'm not in the office tomorrow but will back Friday and all next week. If you have a chance let's discuss.

Mike

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**From:** Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, September 18, 2015 2:13 PM  
**To:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX  
**Cc:** Canuel, Aaron ENV:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Cougar Conflict Matrix comments  
Mike,

Thank you for attempting to address my many concerns in the first draft. My motivation is to ensure we have a document that relates to decisions that field staff as well as managers can lean on during difficult situations like the Calgary Hospital cougar shooting that went viral in 2014.

Unfortunately, the matrix as it stands does not assist in decision making due to the factors it is assessing on the two axis's. The top axis assess "Cougar behavior/Level of conflict towards human" while the left axis assesses "Habitat type and prey source". There are some merit to this assessment tool but it misses the mark on many fronts and uses assessments that we do not use. I propose that the assessment compares the activity of the cougar to the health and the age of the cougar as these are the factors that we use on ever call.

To further detail my concerns I will try to explain my opposition to the present matrix lay out. The top axis compares "*Cougar Behavior/Level of Conflict (towards humans)*". Specifically, Level 1 (Wary of human (flees or hides on approach). Level 2 Indifferent (lack of attention, movements not directed toward people). Level 3 Curiosity (ears up, shifting body positions, intent attention) Level 4 Defensive (hissing, snarling vocalizations) May be defending a kill. Level 5 Assessing success of attack (intense staring, following and hiding behavior). Level 6 Pre-attack (crouching, ears flat, tail twitching, intense staring, body low, rear legs pumping) or attack. Rarely, will a CO have this information available to assess when deciding how to respond. Furthermore, CO's are not making a response decision based on a cougar behavior we assess what the cougar is doing or what the cougar has done. We always know that each of the behaviors listed from level 1 to level 6 play out daily in a cougars life as they achieve level 5 and 6 every time they stalk prey. To kill a cougar on the edge of town due to the fact that it killed a deer and is protecting the kill is an incorrect response by COS.

The left axis compares, "*Habitat type and Prey Source*" Level A Cougar is in

natural area or continuous cougar habitat. Level B Cougar is in area adjacent to continuous cougar habitat (interface). Level C Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with immediate escape route. Level D Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with no immediate escape route or in high risk area (i.e school or playground) Level E Cougar attacking livestock/pets in agricultural or semi-urban areas. Level F Cougar attacking livestock/pets in urban areas. These factors are often considered when a CO makes his assessment although I believe there is a disconnect from level A to Level E and Level F as the habitat and the prey seem to be a challenging fit on the same axis.

My recommendation is to compare, "What the cougar is doing" with "the age/health of the cougar". These factors are the key factors that we use and that we teach at WCLEA.

The top axis could have sighting in natural habitat; sighting near people; confined in a tree near people; habituated and seen near people during the day; killing/attacking pets or livestock; following people; attacking people. This axis should be compared to, "the age and health of the cougar". In this axis you would need to have orphaned kitten, pre-dispersal age (multiple sub adults seen together); dispersing sub adult, emaciated; Family unit and possibly healthy adult.

For example if an orphaned kitten or a starving cougar is reported it would not matter what behavior or habitat factors are related as the matrix should identify that the animal is euthanized unless for a kitten a CAZA accredited Zoo was looking for a kitten.

I apologize for my short response as I have had little time to put these ideas together. I also have comments on the matrix re the use of Kill and the use of Kill/DWPO. I will attach the Alberta matrix which use type of cougar (age as a factor) as well as identifying three types of conditions including

A: sighting and chance encounter;

B: human habituation , provoked physical contact, pet and livestock attacks;

C: unprovoked human contact

Lastly, before a final draft is presented I would ask that the Wildlife Conflict Instructor group has a chance to review. Sorry to throw a wrench in this but I want it to work as an assessment tool that we all can lean on in tough times.

Thanks

**Kevin Van Damme**

Acting Sergeant, Thompson Fraser Zone  
Conservation Officer Service | Ministry of Environment  
1259 Dalhousie Drive, Kamloops BC, V2C 5Z5  
Phone: 250.371.6331 Fax: 250.371.6318

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**From:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, September 18, 2015 11:55 AM  
**To:** Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Cougar Conflict Matrix comments

Hi Kevin,

I have made revisions to the cougar matrix based on your comments. It

was difficult to incorporate everything and still keep it relatively simple and straight forward. Some of the changes include:

- I switched level 4 and 5 on the behavior axis and added “defending a kill” to level 4.
- Changed the term “Destroy” to “Kill” (the working group did not want to use Euthanize because the definition does not fit).
- Added a new response option (Kill/DWPO) and changed some response options (changed “Kill” to “Manage with option to remove” under Level 4 in two spots).
- Added a disclaimer to the bottom to cover off imminent public safety threat and health of the cougar (I used “euthanization” there as I think it fits).
- Changed “feeding on” to “attacking” in level E and F on the Habitat axis.

I added some of your definitions as well and made other changes to try and reflect your comments.

Some things that are not in there include:

- Defining age categories ( orphaned, kitten, sub adult, and adult). I wasn’t sure how to incorporate that.
- Definitions for provoked and unprovoked attacks. Also wasn’t sure how to factor this in.

I am hoping you can take another look and see if it works. Sorry it took so long for me to get around to these changes.

Thanks.

Mike

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**From:** Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2015 11:12 AM

**To:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX; Smith, Jennifer FLNR:EX; Ashworth, Darrell ENV:EX; CSNR R Victoria 2975 Jutland 1st Fl RM 1-2 (seats 9) CSNR:EX; Morgan, Jeff A FLNR:EX; York, Ben A ENV:EX; Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX; Nixon, Kevin B ENV:EX; Craig, Kate FLNR:EX; Hagel, Lynn J FLNR:EX; Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX; Ahern, Terry FLNR:EX; Ancil, Tim ENV:EX; Trudgian, Jack ENV:EX

**Subject:** Cougar Conflict Matrix comments

Hi Mike, sorry I have taken this long to have a look at this document. I do apologize for my presentation of the information as this review was done with little time to put together a better package for you to review.

I do have a few concerns with the way in which the document is presented as I feel it misses many of the key factors that we use daily to assess our response to cougar conflicts. This matrix was suggested following a conflict on Black Mountain in Kelowna which led the officer to euthanize the cougar following his public safety risk assessment. In this case the media criticized the officer. My fear is that this document, as it reads, will enable the media and the public to attack officers and the agency following a decision like the one made on Black Mountain. When I apply this matrix to that incident it comes up in the green category (manage with no option to euthanize). This causes me great concern as

the matrix does not include important factors like age of the cougar, health of the cougar, and complaint history (habituation/nuisance). In the Black Mountain case the officers assessment was based on 25 years of responding to cougar conflicts and he made a sound assessment to euthanize the cougar.

I have attached my comments in yellow to this document. I believe we need to further discuss this as a group before we implement this into our policy.

I have presented this document to the COS Wildlife Conflict Instructor team consisting of eight CO Instructors from around the province. This group of officers have developed cougar response lesson plans and course training standards both for COS (PRO) and WCLEA. I am able to work with this group and yourself to ensure officers have a tool that is consistent with the sound humane conflict resolution decisions that we strive for daily.

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Conservation Officer Service | Ministry of Environment  
1259 Dalhousie Drive, Kamloops BC, V2C 5Z5  
Phone: 250.371.6331 Fax: 250.371.6318

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**From:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX

**Sent:** Friday, January 9, 2015 4:34 PM

**To:** Smith, Jennifer FLNR:EX; Ashworth, Darrell ENV:EX; CSNR R Victoria 2975 Jutland 1st Fl RM 1-2 (seats 9) CSNR:EX; Morgan, Jeff A FLNR:EX; York, Ben A ENV:EX; Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX; Nixon, Kevin B ENV:EX; Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX; Craig, Kate FLNR:EX; Hagel, Lynn J FLNR:EX; Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX; Ahern, Terry FLNR:EX; Anctil, Tim ENV:EX; Trudgian, Jack ENV:EX

**Subject:** HWCSC Meeting

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Dial-in 1-877-353-9184

Participant Conference ID: 6414937 #

Mike

**From:** [Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX](#)  
**To:** [Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Canuel, Aaron ENV:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Cougar Conflict Matrix comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 23, 2015 2:57:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Cougar Response Matrix - Sep23edit.docx](#)

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Thanks for the quick response Kevin.

I spoke with Aaron today regarding the conflict matrices to get some clarity on where the COS would like to go with them as part of our large carnivore policy. It is difficult to include every conceivable situation and variable into something like this and still keep it somewhat coherent and useable.

After speaking to Aaron I made some further revisions to the original matrix based on your and Aaron's comments (attached) and I will present this to the PLT along with your concerns regarding training and decision-making in the field. I will also present the Alberta matrix as another direction to go, using age/health and a description of the conflict. PLT can then provide direction.

I'm not in the office tomorrow but will back Friday and all next week. If you have a chance let's discuss.

Mike

---

**From:** Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, September 18, 2015 2:13 PM  
**To:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX  
**Cc:** Canuel, Aaron ENV:EX  
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The left axis compares, "*Habitat type and Prey Source*" Level A Cougar is in natural area or continuous cougar habitat. Level B Cougar is in area adjacent to continuous cougar habitat (interface). Level C Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with immediate escape route. Level D Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with no immediate escape route or in high risk area (i.e school or playground) Level E Cougar attacking livestock/pets in agricultural or semi-

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My recommendation is to compare, "What the cougar is doing" with "the age/health of the cougar". These factors are the key factors that we use and that we teach at WCLEA.

The top axis could have sighting in natural habitat; sighting near people; confined in a tree near people; habituated and seen near people during the day; killing/attacking pets or livestock; following people; attacking people. This axis should be compared to, "the age and health of the cougar". In this axis you would need to have orphaned kitten, pre-dispersal age (multiple sub adults seen together); dispersing sub adult, emaciated; Family unit and possibly healthy adult.

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Lastly, before a final draft is presented I would ask that the Wildlife Conflict Instructor group has a chance to review. Sorry to throw a wrench in this but I want it to work as an assessment tool that we all can lean on in tough times.

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- I switched level 4 and 5 on the behavior axis and added "defending a kill" to level 4.
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I am hoping you can take another look and see if it works. Sorry it took so long for me to get around to these changes.

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		<b>Cougar Behavior/Level of Conflict</b> <b>(toward humans)</b>					
		<b>Level 1</b> Wary of human (flees or hides on approach)	<b>Level 2</b> Indifferent (lack of attention, movements not directed toward people)	<b>Level 3</b> Curiosity (ears up, shifting body positions, intent attention)	<b>Level 4</b> Defensive (hissing, snarling vocalizations) May be defending a kill	<b>Level 5</b> Assessing success of attack (intense staring, following and hiding behavior)	<b>Level 6</b> Pre-attack (crouching, ears flat, tail twitching, intense staring, body low, rear legs pumping) or attack
<b>Habitat Type and Prey Source</b>	<b>Level A</b> Cougar is in natural area or continuous cougar habitat	Manage	Manage	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Destroy
	<b>Level B</b> Cougar is in area adjacent to continuous cougar habitat (interface)	Manage	Manage with option to remove.	Manage with option to remove.	Manage with option to remove.	Destroy	Destroy
	<b>Level C</b> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with immediate escape route	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Destroy	Destroy
	<b>Level D</b> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with no immediate escape route or in high risk area (i.e. school or playground)	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<b>Level E</b> Cougar attacks livestock/pets in agricultural or semi-urban areas	Kill / Improve Husbandry	Kill / Improve Husbandry	Kill / Improve Husbandry	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<b>Level F</b> Cougar attacks livestock/pets in urban areas	Kill / Improve Husbandry	Kill / Improve Husbandry	Kill / Improve Husbandry	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy

In any incident where an imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised (sick, injured, emaciated, etc.) euthanization will be considered.

If the option exists, orphaned kittens may be transferred to a CAZA accredited zoo. Otherwise they will be euthanized.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Manage** – Take preventative action. Provide advice regarding attractants and appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter. Non-lethal management may be delivered in appropriate circumstances. May include:

**Manage Attractants:** ensure that all attractants are secured at the conflict site or stored in a wildlife-proof manner (such that cougar or cougar prey species cannot access them).

**Manage Cougar:** Provide space to allow the cougar to move away from people or busy urban areas, preferably back to a natural area or continuous cougar habitat.

**Manage People:** ensure that people are aware of cougar safety and cougar conflict reduction information.

**Manage Site:** this may include closing the area, with signage and/or barriers or moving a kill that is being defended.

**Manage with option to remove** – Gather further information by contacting complainant or directly responding to the complaint. Manage based on assessment of risk to public safety. All options may be considered (educate, manage attractants/cougar/site, destroy).

**Destroy/Improve Husbandry** – If the conflict is a result of poor animal husbandry steps should be taken to compel the producer to fix the problem. The cougar would not be destroyed.

**Destroy** – The animal is considered a high risk to public safety, pets or livestock and must be destroyed.

## **EXAMPLES OF NON-AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR (LOW RISK) - LEVELS 1-3**

- Viewing from a distance
- Flight or hiding
- Lack of attention, various movements not directed towards a human
- Ears up, intent attention, shifting of positions, following behaviours.

### **Examples**

Subject is walking in wildland/rural area, subject observed a cougar, the cougar observed subject, the cougar moves off.

Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

## **EXAMPLES OF MODERATE AGGRESSIVE OR THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (MODERATE RISK) – LEVELS 4-5**

- Intense staring, following, and hiding
- Hissing, snarling, and other vocalizations

### **Examples**

Urban: cougar is sighted in a town, residential development, including any green belt or public area adjacent to or within this identified environment or other areas that are not within the specific urban setting, such as a large park, river valley or golf course.

Rural: where a cougar is observed in amongst the vicinity of residences, farmyards, livestock or other domestic animals.

Defensive encounters: a cougar is on a kill, it defends the kill site and does not retreat or leave area when human presence is known.

Backcountry: a cougar follows a person when they are out hiking or working.

### **EXAMPLES OF AGGRESSIVE OR ATTACK BEHAVIOUR (HIGH RISK) – LEVEL 6**

- Crouching, tail twitching, intense staring, ears flattened like wings, body low to the ground, head is up
- Crouching, tail twitching, body and head low to the ground, rear legs "pumping", fur standing out

#### Examples

Human safety: A cougar attacks and kills or injures a person.

Domestic livestock and pet, property loss: A cougar attacks and kills or injures domestic livestock or pets.

### **MORE DEFINITIONS**

**Agricultural area:** an area dominated by very large land holdings and commercial agricultural use.

**Cougar Habitat:** an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

**Escape Route:** a clear route free of obstacles.

**Euthanasia:** following Canada Council on Animal Care Guidelines, the animal will be euthanized by the most humane and expedient method and where possible, away from public scrutiny.

**Habituated:** when a cougar approaches humans or remains in human frequented areas, and displays behaviors that are a cause for public safety concerns (ie. day time sightings) and fails to avoid humans or human frequented locations and structures.

**Natural Area:** an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural Foods:** native or non-native prey species that occur naturally/wild in an area (wild not domestic).

**Non-natural Foods:** Domestic animals (pets/livestock), that may attract a cougar.

**Nuisance:** a cougar the repeatedly frequents and is observed in residential areas or areas of high human use, or a cougar that has attempted to attack pets or livestock.

**Preventative Action:** cougars have known behavioral patterns that, when combined with location, time and other factors, may indicate that an incident is highly probable. In such situations, direct preventive action is designed to reduce/alleviate conflict. A cougar's history and behavioral patterns dictate these actions. The following represents preventive actions that are to be considered:

- Assess situation/monitor
- Close area
- Provide advice – education including cougar behavior assessment and safety tips to avoid conflict.
- Husbandry modification – use of proper containment of livestock etc
- DWPO issued to ensure preventative measures are taken to avoid conflicts

**Semi-urban or suburban area:** an area dominated by larger properties such as acreages and/or small hobby farms.

**Urban or residential area:** a densely populated human-use area in a community.

From: [Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX](#)  
To: [Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX](#)  
Cc: [Canuel, Aaron ENV:EX](#)  
Subject: RE: Cougar Conflict Matrix comments  
Date: Friday, September 18, 2015 2:13:28 PM  
Attachments: [aLBERTACougar Matrix AppendixCOMMITTEE Final FINAL1.xls](#)  
[Cougar Response Matrix - 20150918 kv.docx](#)

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## Cougar Behavior/Level of Conflict (toward humans)

Habitat Type and Prey Source		<b>Level 1</b> Wary of human (flees or hides on approach)	<b>Level 2</b> Indifferent (lack of attention, movements not directed toward people)	<b>Level 3</b> Curiosity (ears up, shifting body positions, intent attention)	<b>Level 4</b> Defensive (hissing, snarling vocalizations) May be defending a kill	<b>Level 5</b> Assessing success of attack (intense staring, following and hiding behavior)	<b>Level 6</b> Pre-attack (crouching ears flat, tail twitching, intense staring, bow low, rear leg pumping) or attack	
	<b>Level A</b> Cougar is in natural area or continuous cougar habitat	Manage	Manage	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Kill	<b>Comment [VKE1]:</b> Cougar behavior should not be the comparing factor in this assessment  The chart has a difficult time guiding a CO in making a decision as the CO is not using behavior to determine the action. The CO uses what the cougar is doing i.e. confined in a tree near people; habituated and seen near people during the day; killing/attacking pets or livestock; following people; attacking people
	<b>Level B</b> Cougar is in area adjacent to continuous cougar habitat (interface)	Manage	Manage with option to remove.	Manage with option to remove.	Manage with option to remove.	Kill	Kill	<b>Comment [VKE3]:</b> I would prefer euthanize, kill is rather cold for a professional organization
	<b>Level C</b> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with immediate escape route	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Kill	Kill	
	<b>Level D</b> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with no immediate escape route or in high risk area (i.e. school or playground)	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Kill	Kill	Kill	Kill	
	<b>Level E</b> Cougar attacking livestock/pets in agricultural or semi-urban areas	Kill / DWPO	Kill / DWPO	Kill / DWPO	Kill	Kill	Kill	<b>Comment [VKE2]:</b> Habitat and prey should not be the factors to assess. This axis should refer to the age and health of the cougar (kitten, predispersal age; dispersing subadult, the health of the cougar; Family unit. For example we often euthanize cougars that are starving to death in many different habitats when it is not displaying any aggressive behavior
	<b>Level F</b> Cougar attacking livestock/pets in urban areas	Kill / DWPO	Kill / DWPO	Kill / DWPO	Kill	Kill	Kill	

**In any incident where imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised through actions taken, euthanization will be considered.**



## **DEFINITIONS**

**Manage** – Take preventative action. Provide advice regarding attractants and appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter. Non-lethal management may be delivered in appropriate circumstances. May include:

**Manage Attractants:** ensure that all attractants are secured at the conflict site or stored in a wildlife-proof manner (such that cougar or cougar prey species cannot access them).

**Manage Cougar:** Provide space to allow the cougar to move away from people or busy urban areas, preferably back to a natural area or continuous cougar habitat.

**Manage People:** ensure that people are aware of cougar safety and cougar conflict reduction information.

**Manage Site:** this may include closing the area, with signage and/or barriers or moving a kill that is being defended.

**Manage with option to remove** – Gather further information by contacting complainant or directly responding to the complaint. Manage based on assessment of risk to public safety. All options may be considered (educate, manage attractants/cougar/site, destroy).

**Destroy/DWPO** – If the conflict is a result of poor animal husbandry a DWPO may be issued, compelling the producer to fix the problem and the cougar would not be destroyed.

**Kill** – The animal is considered a high risk to public safety, pets or livestock and must be destroyed.

**Comment [VKE4]:** Above you use Kill not destroy. Also I have never seen this or heard of an officer failing to take action after a cougar has killed livestock when a DWPO was issued. The fact is the cougar will continue to kill livestock therefore often officers will do both kill the conflict cougar with the learned behavior and issue a DWPO forcing a change. If you keep this in CO's will be violating this policy.

## **EXAMPLES OF NON-AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR (LOW RISK) - LEVELS 1-3**

- Viewing from a distance
- Flight or hiding
- Lack of attention, various movements not directed towards a human
- Ears up, intent attention, shifting of positions, following behaviours.

### **Examples**

Subject is walking in wildland/rural area, subject observed a cougar, the cougar observed subject, the cougar moves off.

Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

**Comment [VKE5]:** Again based on the way this matrix was developed it is not relevant to what an officer assesses to determine if a response is required. All of these behaviors are normal for a cougar at any time throughout the day depending on what it is interacting with.

## **EXAMPLES OF MODERATE AGGRESSIVE OR THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (MODERATE RISK) - LEVELS 4-5**

- Intense staring, following, and hiding
- Hissing, snarling, and other vocalizations

### **Examples**

**Comment [VKE6]:** Again these behaviors relate to the examples below – it is the examples we assess not the behavior.

Urban: cougar is sighted in a town, residential development, including any green belt or public area adjacent to or within this identified environment or other areas that are not within the specific urban setting, such as a large park, river valley or golf course.

Rural: where a cougar is observed in amongst the vicinity of residences, farmyards, livestock or other domestic animals.

Defensive encounters: a cougar is on a kill, it defends the kill site and does not retreat or leave area when human presence is known.

Backcountry: a cougar follows a person when they are out hiking or working.

#### **EXAMPLES OF AGGRESSIVE OR ATTACK BEHAVIOUR (HIGH RISK) – LEVEL 6**

- Crouching, tail twitching, intense staring, ears flattened like wings, body low to the ground, head is up
- Crouching, tail twitching, body and head low to the ground, rear legs "pumping", fur standing out

#### **Examples**

Human safety: A cougar attacks and kills or injures a person.

Domestic livestock and pet, property loss: A cougar attacks and kills or injures domestic livestock or pets.

#### **MORE DEFINITIONS**

**Agricultural area:** an area dominated by very large land holdings and commercial agricultural use.

**Cougar Habitat:** an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

**Escape Route:** a clear route free of obstacles.

**Euthanasia:** following Canada Council on Animal Care Guidelines, the animal will be euthanized by the most humane and expedient method and where possible, away from public scrutiny.

**Habituated:** when a cougar approaches humans or remains in human frequented areas, and displays behaviors that are a cause for public safety concerns (ie. day time sightings) and fails to avoid humans or human frequented locations and structures.

**Natural Area:** an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural Foods:** native or non-native prey species that occur naturally/wild in an area (wild not domestic).

**Comment [VKE7]:** These behaviors relate to what a cougar does before an attack. I can not recall a time in dealing with cougar complaints over the past 24 years that these behaviors were ever recorded or assessed to determine my response

**Non-natural Foods:** Domestic animals (pets/livestock), that may attract a cougar.

**Nuisance:** a cougar the repeatedly frequents and is observed in residential areas or areas of high human use, or a cougar that has attempted to attack pets or livestock.

**Preventative Action:** cougars have known behavioral patterns that, when combined with location, time and other factors, may indicate that an incident is highly probable. In such situations, direct preventive action is designed to reduce/alleviate conflict. A cougar's history and behavioral patterns dictate these actions. The following represents preventive actions that are to be considered:

- Assess situation/monitor
- Close area
- Provide advice – education including cougar behavior assessment and safety tips to avoid conflict.
- Husbandry modification – use of proper containment of livestock etc
- DWPO issued to ensure preventative measures are taken to avoids conflicts

**Semi-urban or suburban area:** an area dominated by larger properties such as acreages and/or small hobby farms.

**Urban or residential area:** a densely populated human-use area in a community.

DRAFT

## **APPENDIX 1 RESPONSES BY OFFICERS WHEN THE CAPTURE OF A COUGAR IS REQUIRED**

### **OFFICERS MAY USE PREVENTATIVE/CONTROL ACTIONS PRIOR TO CAPTURE IN CONDITION A or B**

TYPE OF COUGAR	CONDITION A		CONDITION B		CONDITION C
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Orphaned Young of the Year	CAP/EUTH		CAP/EUTH	EUTH	EUTH
Young of the Year	REL	EUTH/CAP	REL/CAP/EUTH	EUTH	EUTH
Sub-adult	REL	EUTH	REL/EUTH	EUTH	EUTH
Adult with offspring	REL	EUTH	REL/EUTH	EUTH	EUTH
Adult	REL	EUTH	REL/EUTH	EUTH	EUTH

Condition A - Sightings and Chance encounters

Condition B - Human Habituation, Provoked Physical contact, Confirmed attack or killing of livestock or other domestic animals/pets

Condition C - Any unprovoked human physical contact.

Young of the Year - 0 to 12 months

Sub-adult - 12 to 24 months

REL-Relocation Definition - Relocation of cougar to a suitable distance where the likelihood of return is minimized - 80 km, unless logistical situations dictate otherwise.

EUTH - Euthanized

CAP - Captivity - only to be used for orphaned Young of the Year

All captured cougars must be ear tagged before release as per TAIP procedures.

January 7/2004

Rev March 10/2004

**From:** [Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX](#)  
**To:** [Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Cougar Conflict Matrix comments  
**Date:** Friday, September 18, 2015 11:55:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Cougar Response Matrix - Sep4edit.docx](#)

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Hi Kevin,

I have made revisions to the cougar matrix based on your comments. It was difficult to incorporate everything and still keep it relatively simple and straight forward. Some of the changes include:

- I switched level 4 and 5 on the behavior axis and added “defending a kill” to level 4.
- Changed the term “Destroy” to “Kill” (the working group did not want to use Euthanize because the definition does not fit).
- Added a new response option (Kill/DWPO) and changed some response options (changed “Kill” to “Manage with option to remove” under Level 4 in two spots).
- Added a disclaimer to the bottom to cover off imminent public safety threat and health of the cougar (I used “euthanization” there as I think it fits).
- Changed “feeding on” to “attacking” in level E and F on the Habitat axis.

I added some of your definitions as well and made other changes to try and reflect your comments. Some things that are not in there include:

- Defining age categories ( orphaned, kitten, sub adult, and adult). I wasn’t sure how to incorporate that.
- Definitions for provoked and unprovoked attacks. Also wasn’t sure how to factor this in.

I am hoping you can take another look and see if it works. Sorry it took so long for me to get around to these changes.

Thanks.

Mike

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**From:** Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2015 11:12 AM  
**To:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX; Smith, Jennifer FLNR:EX; Ashworth, Darrell ENV:EX; CSNR R Victoria 2975 Jutland 1st Fl RM 1-2 (seats 9) CSNR:EX; Morgan, Jeff A FLNR:EX; York, Ben A ENV:EX; Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX; Nixon, Kevin B ENV:EX; Craig, Kate FLNR:EX; Hagel, Lynn J FLNR:EX; Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX; Ahern, Terry FLNR:EX; Anctil, Tim ENV:EX; Trudgian, Jack ENV:EX  
**Subject:** Cougar Conflict Matrix comments

Hi Mike, sorry I have taken this long to have a look at this document. I do apologize for my presentation of the information as this review was done with little time to put together a better package for you to review.

I do have a few concerns with the way in which the document is presented as I feel it misses many of the key factors that we use daily to assess our response to cougar conflicts. This matrix was suggested following a conflict on Black Mountain in Kelowna which led the officer to euthanize the cougar following his public safety risk assessment. In this case the media criticized the officer. My fear is that this document, as it reads, will enable the media and the public to attack officers and the agency following a decision like the one made on Black Mountain. When I apply this matrix to that incident it comes up in the green category (manage with no option to euthanize). This causes me great concern as the matrix does not include important factors like age of the cougar, health of the cougar, and complaint history (habituation/nuisance). In the Black Mountain case the officers assessment was based on 25 years of responding to cougar conflicts and he made a sound assessment to euthanize the cougar.

I have attached my comments in yellow to this document. I believe we need to further discuss this as a group before we implement this into our policy.

I have presented this document to the COS Wildlife Conflict Instructor team consisting of eight CO Instructors from around the province. This group of officers have developed cougar response lesson plans and course training standards both for COS (PRO) and WCLEA. I am able to work with this group and yourself to ensure officers have a tool that is consistent with the sound humane conflict resolution decisions that we strive for daily.

Thanks

**Kevin Van Damme**

Acting Sergeant, Thompson Fraser Zone  
Conservation Officer Service | Ministry of Environment  
1259 Dalhousie Drive, Kamloops BC, V2C 5Z5  
Phone: 250.371.6331 Fax: 250.371.6318

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**From:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX

**Sent:** Friday, January 9, 2015 4:34 PM

**To:** Smith, Jennifer FLNR:EX; Ashworth, Darrell ENV:EX; CSNR R Victoria 2975 Jutland 1st Fl RM 1-2 (seats 9) CSNR:EX; Morgan, Jeff A FLNR:EX; York, Ben A ENV:EX; Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX; Nixon, Kevin B ENV:EX; Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX; Craig, Kate FLNR:EX; Hagel, Lynn J FLNR:EX; Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX; Ahern, Terry FLNR:EX; Anctil, Tim ENV:EX; Trudgian, Jack ENV:EX

**Subject:** HWCSC Meeting

Happy New Year all!

Our Wildlife Conflict Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for this Wednesday (Jan 14) from 1-3pm. Agenda is attached.

Dial-in 1-877-353-9184

Participant Conference ID: 6414937 #

Mike

		<b>Cougar Behavior/Level of Conflict</b> <b>(toward humans)</b>					
		<b>Level 1</b> Wary of human (flees or hides on approach)	<b>Level 2</b> Indifferent (lack of attention, movements not directed toward people)	<b>Level 3</b> Curiosity (ears up, shifting body positions, intent attention)	<b>Level 4</b> Defensive (hissing, snarling vocalizations) May be defending a kill	<b>Level 5</b> Assessing success of attack (intense staring, following and hiding behavior)	<b>Level 6</b> Pre-attack (crouching, ears flat, tail twitching, intense staring, body low, rear legs pumping) or attack
<b>Habitat Type and Prey Source</b>	<b>Level A</b> Cougar is in natural area or continuous cougar habitat	Manage	Manage	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Kill
	<b>Level B</b> Cougar is in area adjacent to continuous cougar habitat (interface)	Manage	Manage with option to remove.	Manage with option to remove.	Manage with option to remove.	Kill	Kill
	<b>Level C</b> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with immediate escape route	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Kill	Kill
	<b>Level D</b> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with no immediate escape route or in high risk area (i.e. school or playground)	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Kill	Kill	Kill	Kill
	<b>Level E</b> Cougar attacking livestock/pets in agricultural or semi-urban areas	Kill / DWPO	Kill / DWPO	Kill / DWPO	Kill	Kill	Kill
	<b>Level F</b> Cougar attacking livestock/pets in urban areas	Kill / DWPO	Kill / DWPO	Kill / DWPO	Kill	Kill	Kill

**In any incident where imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised through actions taken, euthanization will be considered.**

## **DEFINITIONS**

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Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

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- Intense staring, following, and hiding
- Hissing, snarling, and other vocalizations

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**From:** [Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX](#)  
**To:** [Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX](#); [Smith, Jennifer FLNR:EX](#); [Ashworth, Darrell ENV:EX](#); [CSNR R Victoria 2975 Jutland 1st Fl RM 1-2 \(seats 9\) CSNR:EX](#); [Morgan, Jeff A FLNR:EX](#); [York, Ben A ENV:EX](#); [Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX](#); [Nixon, Kevin B ENV:EX](#); [Craig, Kate ENV:EX](#); [Hagel, Lynn J FLNR:EX](#); [Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX](#); [Ahern, Terry FLNR:EX](#); [Ancil, Tim ENV:EX](#); [Trudgian, Jack ENV:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Cougar Conflict Matrix comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 11, 2015 11:12:13 AM  
**Attachments:** [Cougar Response Matrix Kevin's comments.docx](#)

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Mike

Cougar Behavior/Level of Conflict							
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Habitat Type and Feeding Source	<u>Level A</u> Cougar is in natural area or continuous cougar habitat	Manage	Manage	Manage	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Destroy
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	<u>Level D</u> Cougar is in sub-urban or residential area with no immediate escape route or in high risk area (i.e school or playground)	Manage with option to remove	Manage with option to remove	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level E</u> Cougar is feeding on livestock/pets in agricultural or semi-urban areas	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy
	<u>Level F</u> Cougar is feeding on livestock/pets in urban areas	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy	Destroy

1. Comparing behavior with habitat type and feeding source causes several challenges with respect to missing important risk factors such as history of the individual cougar, habituation, and age/health of the cougar. These factors are equally important when we assess risk to determine response options.

2. In Level E and F the matrix moves directly to destroy. This may not be the case if the husbandry is poor. We may issue a DWPO and force the producer to fix the problem and not kill the cougar.
3. Feeding is the wrong language to use in Level E and F. We would not take action to destroy if the cougar is feeding only but not responsible for killing pets or livestock.
4. There is no language around attacking pets or livestock, we respond to dozens of these complaints yearly after a cougar has a failed attack on livestock or pets. Often these cougars are young, old or sick.
5. Following behavior in Level 3 needs to be moved to Level 4, this is a moderate risk behavior.
6. There is no language around a cougar defending a kill. This type of complaint causes the behavior to elevate. In this case we would remove the kill rather than destroy the cougar.
7. I would rather use euthanasia instead of destroy.
8. There is no mention of day time sightings vs night time sightings, this is important when a risk assessment is completed.
9. How are we managing orphaned kittens? (there is a humane aspect to this issue - 0-6 months they have a .03% chance of survival and only a zoo will take them in) it should state that rehab is not an option. 6-10 months survival increases but if in conflict these young animals are often starving and desperate. After 10 months cougar is of dispersal age and the circumstances must be assessed to determine our action.
10. There should be an Exigent Circumstances clause that reads...
  - a. In any incident where imminent threat to public safety exists, any appropriate and necessary action may be applied. In the event that the health or wellbeing of any particular cougar is determined to be compromised through actions taken, euthanization will be considered.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Manage** – Provide advice regarding attractants and appropriate behavior to avoid an encounter. Non-lethal management may be delivered in appropriate circumstances. May include:

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**Manage People:** ensure that people are aware of cougar safety and cougar conflict reduction information.

**Manage Site:** this may include closing the area, with signage and/or barriers.

**Manage with option to remove** – Gather further information by contacting complainant or directly responding to the complaint. Manage based on assessment of risk to public safety. All options may be considered (educate, manage attractants, destroy).

**Destroy** – The animal is considered a high risk to public safety, pets or livestock and must be destroyed.

1. There is no definitions consistent with the training that COS officers receive. E.g. Euthanasia, habituated, nuisance, prevention options, dangerous wildlife protection orders, husbandry, provoked, and unprovoked.
  - a. Euthanasia – following Canada Council on Animal Care Guidelines, the animal will be euthanized by the most humane and expedient method and where possible, away from public scrutiny.
  - b. Habituated – When a cougar approaches humans or remains in human frequented areas, and displays behaviors that are a cause for public safety concerns (ie. day time sightings) and fails to avoid humans or human frequented locations and structures.
  - c. Nuisance- cougar the repeatedly frequents and is observed in residential areas or areas of high human use. A cougar that has attempted to attack pets or livestock.
  - d. Preventative Action – Cougars have known behavioral patterns that, when combined with location, time and other factors, may indicate that an incident is highly probable. In such situations, direct preventive action is designed to reduce/alleviate conflict. A cougar's history and behavioral patterns dictate these actions. The following represents preventive actions that are to be considered:
    - i. Assess situation/monitor
    - ii. Close area
    - iii. Provide advice – education including cougar behavior assessment and safety tips to avoid conflict.
    - iv. Husbandry modification – use of proper containment of livestock etc
    - v. DWPO issued to ensure preventative measures are taken to avoids conflicts
  - e. High risk to public safety- there is evidence that a cougar has attacked a human, or presented a threat to human safety.
  - f. High risk to loss of property- there is evidence that a cougar has attacked a pet or livestock.
  - g. Risk to public safety – there is evidence that a cougar presents a threat to human safety or has acted unnaturally without provocation.
  - h. Risk to loss of property – there is evidence that a cougar is an immediate threat to pets or livestock.
  - i. Provoked- a response by a cougar to a human action as determined by the behavior of the cougar.
  - j. Unprovoked- a cougar's response to human provocation as determined by the behavior of the cougar.
2. Age categories need to be defined, orphaned, kitten, sub adult, and adult.

#### **EXAMPLES OF NON-AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR (LOW RISK) - LEVELS 1-3**

- Viewing from a distance
- Flight or hiding
- Lack of attention, various movements not directed towards a human

- Ears up, intent attention, shifting of positions, following behaviours.

E.g.: Subject is walking in wildland/rural area, subject observed a cougar, the cougar observed subject, the cougar moves off.

E.g.: Cougar seen crossing a paved road on the edge of a subdivision in a green belt at night.

#### **EXAMPLES OF MODERATE AGGRESSIVE OR THREATENING BEHAVIOUR (MODERATE RISK) – LEVELS 4-5**

- Intense staring, following, and hiding
- Hissing, snarling, and other vocalizations

**E.g.: Urban; cougar is sighted in a town, residential development, including any green belt or public area adjacent to or within this identified environment. Other areas that are not within the specific urban setting, such as a large park, river valley or golf course.**

Rural setting where a cougar is observed in amongst the vicinity of residences, farmyards, livestock or other domestic animals.

Defensive encounters: a cougar is on a kill, it defends the kill site and does not retreat or leave area when human presence is known.

A cougar follows a person when they are out hiking or working.

#### **EXAMPLES OF AGGRESSIVE OR ATTACK BEHAVIOUR (HIGH RISK) – LEVEL 6**

- Crouching, tail twitching, intense staring, ears flattened like wings, body low to the ground, head is up
- Crouching, tail twitching, body and head low to the ground, rear legs "pumping", fur standing out

E.g.: Human safety: A cougar attacks and kills or injures a person.

Domestic livestock and pet, property loss: A cougar attacks and kills or injures domestic livestock or pets.

Provoked attack E.g.: when a human based on their presence, use of scents, calls or other attractants causes a cougar to make physical contact and immediately break off the encounter.

Unprovoked attack: E.g. a cougar attacks a dog and a person grabs the cougar and is attacked by the cougar as the cougar attempts to kill the dog or flee the human.

#### **MORE DEFINITIONS**

**Agricultural area:** an area dominated by very large land holdings and commercial agricultural use.

**Cougar Habitat:** an area away from human development that contains suitable food sources, travel corridors, cover and denning spaces.

**Escape Route:** a clear route free of obstacles.

**Natural Area:** an area that is not landscaped, but where plants grow naturally/wild.

**Natural Foods:** native or non-native prey species that occur naturally/wild in an area (wild not domestic).

**Non-natural Foods:** Domestic animals (pets/livestock), ~~garbage/human food~~ that may attract a cougar.

**Semi-urban or suburban area:** an area dominated by larger properties such as acreages and/or small hobby farms.

**Urban or residential area:** a densely populated human-use area in a community.

DRAFT



**From:** [Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX](#)  
**To:** [MacDermott, Jerry FLNR:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX](#); [Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX](#); [Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: cougar response matrix  
**Date:** Thursday, January 22, 2015 7:55:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.jpg](#)

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Thanks Jerry!

Mike

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**From:** MacDermott, Jerry FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 21, 2015 4:40 PM  
**To:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX  
**Cc:** Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX; Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX; Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX  
**Subject:** RE: cougar response matrix  
Hi Mike, it looks good to me.

Just a thought but cougars in poor body/emaciated condition, regardless of where they are encountered, may be considered for the matrix,...they typically exhibit head rocking/bobbing (almost like on telazol), excessive fixation/staring, and twitching as well.

Their unpredictability is even further exacerbated than a cougar in good body position. They will be bolder and will take greater risks in making a kill.

Perhaps this is covered under cougar behavior/level of conflict section, in general.

These are just my thoughts.

Thank you for the opportunity,

Jerry MacDermott R.B. Tech.

Wildlife Technician | Fish & Wildlife Section

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations | West Coast Region

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**From:** Badry, Micheal J ENV:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 20, 2015 4:17 PM  
**To:** MacDermott, Jerry FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Schwantje, Helen FLNR:EX; Van Damme, Kevin ENV:EX; Hamilton, Tony ENV:EX  
**Subject:** cougar response matrix  
Hi Jerry,

At our last Human-Wildlife Conflict Steering Committee meeting we were discussing the amended policy and procedure regarding Preventing and Responding to Large Carnivore Conflicts. One of the changes being made is incorporation of a decision matrix for response to cougar conflicts.

Helen suggested that we forward the draft matrix to you for review and comment. I would appreciate any feedback you might have. The format is based on a similar matrix done for bear response and the criteria were mainly gleaned from the 2006 Cougar Management Guidelines (Beck et al).

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask.

Thanks

Mike

Mike Badry

Wildlife Conflict Manager

Conservation Officer Service | Ministry of Environment

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