

R657. Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources.

R657-10. Taking Cougar.

R657-10-1. Purpose and Authority.

(1) Under authority of Sections 23-14-18 and 23-14-19, the Wildlife Board has established this rule for taking and pursuing cougar.

(2) Specific dates, areas, number of permits, limits, and other administrative details which may change annually are published in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

R657-10-2. Definitions.

(1) Terms used in this rule are defined in Section 23-13-2.

(2) In addition:

(a) "Canned hunt" means that a cougar is treed, cornered, held at bay or its ability to escape is otherwise restricted for the purpose of allowing a person who was not a member of the initial hunting party to arrive and take the cougar.

(b) "Compensation" means anything of economic value in excess of \$100 that is paid, loaned, granted, given, donated, or transferred to a dog handler for or in consideration of pursuing cougar for any purpose.

(c) "Cougar" means Puma concolor, commonly known as mountain lion, lion, puma, panther or catamount.

~~[(d) "Cougar control permit" means a harvest objective permit that authorizes a person to take a second cougar on harvest objective units that have an unlimited quota.]~~

~~[(e)~~

(d) "Cougar pursuit permit" means a permit that authorizes a person to pursue cougar during designated seasons.

~~[(f)e]~~ "Dog handler" means the person in the field that is responsible for transporting, releasing, tracking, controlling, managing, training, commanding and retrieving the dogs involved in the pursuit. The owner of the dogs is presumed the dog handler when the owner is in the field during pursuit.

~~[(g)f]~~ "Evidence of sex" means the sex organs of a cougar, including a penis, scrotum or vulva.

~~[(h)g]~~ "Green pelt" means the untanned hide or skin of any cougar.

(h) "Harvest objective" means an identified limit on the number of cougars that may be harvested during the season on a particular unit.

(i) "Harvest objective ~~[hunt]~~ permit" means any ~~[hunt]~~ permit that can be obtained without entering a drawing and is ~~[identified as harvest objective in the hunt table of the guidebook for taking cougar.]~~

~~[(j) "Harvest objective permit" means any permit.]~~ valid on ~~[harvest objective]~~ all units ~~[-, including -]~~ during non-limited ~~[-]~~ entry ~~[permits for split units after the split-unit transition date]~~ seasons. A person may use dogs to hunt cougars with this permit.

~~[(k)l]~~ "Immediate family member" means a livestock owner's spouse, child, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepchild and grandchild.

~~[(l)k]~~ "Kitten" means a cougar that has obvious spots on its sides or its back or has obvious leg barring coloration.

(~~m~~) "Limited entry ~~[hunt]~~season" means any ~~[hunt]~~season listed in the hunt tables of the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar, which is identified as limited entry and ~~[does not include harvest objective hunts]~~a person must draw a permit to hunt that season.

(~~n~~) "Limited entry permit" means any permit obtained for a limited entry ~~[hunt]~~season by any means, including conservation permits and sportsman permits. Limited entry permits may only be used on the specific unit they are issued for during the limited entry season. Limited entry permits may be used on any unit open to cougar hunting once the limited entry season for which the permit is valid ends.

(n) "Location of Harvest" means the exact location that the cougar is killed. GPS coordinates are preferred.

(o) "Private lands" means any lands that are not public lands, excluding Indian trust lands.

(p) "Public lands" means any lands owned by the state, a political subdivision or independent entity of the state, or the United States, excluding Indian trust lands, that are open to the public for purposes of engaging in pursuit.

(q) "Pursue" means to chase, tree, corner or hold a cougar at bay.

(r) ~~"[Split unit] means a cougar hunting unit that begins as a limited entry unit then transitions into a harvest objective unit."~~Spot-and-stalk permit" means a cougar permit available over the counter for seasons and units designated by the Division Director as per Statute 23-16-10. A hunter who obtains this permit may not use dogs to take a cougar.

(s) ~~"[Unlimited quota]Predator management unit" means a [harvest objective]unit managed under direction of DWR W1AG-4 to reduce cougar densities. This type of unit[that] does not have a limit on the number of [cougar]cougars that may be harvested during the [open-]season.~~

(t) "Waiting period" means a specified period of time that a person who has obtained a cougar permit must wait before applying for any other limited entry cougar ~~[permit]season.~~

(u) "Written permission" means written authorization from the owner or person in charge to enter upon private lands and must include:

- (i) the name and signature of the owner or person in charge;
- (ii) the address and phone number of the owner or person in charge;
- (iii) the name of the dog handler given permission to enter the private lands;
- (iv) a brief description of the pursuit activity authorized;
- (v) the appropriate dates; and
- (vi) a general description of the property.

R657-10-3. Permits for Taking Cougar.

(1)(a) To harvest a cougar, a person must first obtain a valid limited entry cougar permit, harvest-objective cougar permit, or ~~[cougar control]~~spot and stalk permit, for the specified management units as provided in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(b) Any person who obtains a limited entry cougar season permit, harvest objective cougar permit, or ~~[cougar control]~~spot and stalk permit, may pursue cougar ~~[on]~~during the ~~[unit]~~season for which the permit is valid.

- (2) A person may not apply for or obtain more than one cougar permit for the same season, except:
- (a) as provided in Subsection R657-10-25(3);
 - (b) as provided in ~~[Subsection]~~[Section](#) R657-10-33;
 - (c) if the person is unsuccessful in the limited entry drawing, the person may purchase a harvest objective or ~~[cougar control]~~[spot and stalk](#) permit; or
 - (d) a person may acquire and use a permit issued pursuant to Utah Code Section 23-16-10 in addition to another lawfully acquired cougar permit.
- (3) Any cougar permit purchased after the season opens is not valid until three days after the date of purchase.
- (4) To obtain a cougar limited entry permit, harvest objective permit, ~~[cougar control]~~[spot and stalk](#) permit, or pursuit permit, a person must possess a Utah hunting or combination license.

R657-10-4. Permits for Pursuing Cougar.

- (1)(a) To pursue cougar without a limited entry, harvest objective~~[-, or cougar control]~~ permit, the dog handler must:
- (i) obtain a valid cougar pursuit permit from a division office; or
 - (ii) possess the documentation and certifications required in [Subsection](#) R657-10-25(2) to pursue cougar for compensation.
- (b) A cougar pursuit permit or exemption there from does not allow a person to kill a cougar.
- (2) Residents and nonresidents may purchase cougar pursuit permits consistent with the requirements of this rule and the guidebooks of the Wildlife Board.
- (3) To obtain a cougar pursuit permit, a person must possess a Utah hunting or combination license.

R657-10-6. Firearms, Archery Equipment, Crossbows, and Airguns.

- (1) ~~[For cougar hunt identified in the Wildlife Board's guidebook for taking cougar that allow harvest of a cougar, a]~~A person may only use ~~[the following]~~[weapons identified in Subsection R657-5-8 \(Taking Big Game\)](#) to take cougar~~[:]~~
- ~~[(a) any firearm not capable of being fired fully automatic, except a firearm using rimfire cartridge;]~~
 - ~~[(b) archery equipment meeting the following requirements:]~~
 - ~~[(i) the minimum bow pull is 30 pounds at the draw or the peak, whichever comes first;]~~
 - ~~[(ii) arrowheads used have two or more sharp cutting edges that cannot pass through a 7/8 inch ring;]~~
 - ~~[(iii) expanding arrowheads cannot pass through a 7/8 inch ring when expanded; and]~~
 - ~~[(iv) arrows must be a minimum of 20 inches in length from the tip of the arrowhead to the tip of the nock;]~~
 - ~~[(c) a crossbow meeting the following requirements:]~~
 - ~~[(i) a minimum draw weight of 125 pounds;]~~
 - ~~[(ii) a positive mechanical safety mechanism; and]~~
 - ~~[(iii) an arrow or bolt that is at least 16 inches long with;]~~

~~[(A) a fixed broadhead that is at least 7/8 inch wide at the widest point; or]
[(B) an expandable, mechanical broadhead that is at least 7/8 inch wide at the widest point when the broadhead is in the open position; and]
[(d) an airgun used to hunt cougar must:
[(i) be pneumatically powered;
[(ii) be pressurized solely through a separate charging device; and]
[(iii) may only fire a bolt or arrow:]
[(A) no less than 16 inches long;]
[(B) with a fixed or expandable broadhead at least 7/8 inch wide at its widest position; and]
[(C) traveling no less than 400 feet per second at the muzzle.]
(2) Arrows and bolts carried in or on a vehicle where a person is riding must be in an arrow quiver or a closed case.]
(3) A cougar hunt authorized pursuant to Utah Code Section 23-16-10 does not constitute a centerfire rifle hunt for the purposes of hunter orange requirements on any overlapping big game hunt in the area].~~

R657-10-7. Traps and Trapping Devices.

(1) Cougar may not be taken with a trap, snare or any other trapping device, except as authorized by the Division of Wildlife.

(2) Cougar accidentally caught in any trapping device must be released unharmed, and must not be pursued or taken.

(3)(a) ~~[Written permission]~~[Authorization](#) must be obtained from a division representative to remove the carcass of a cougar from any trapping device.

(b) The carcass shall remain the property of the state of Utah and must be surrendered to the division.

R657-10-9. Prohibited Methods.

(1) Cougar may be taken or pursued only during open seasons and using methods prescribed in this rule and the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar. Otherwise, under the Wildlife Resources Code, it is unlawful for any person to pursue, possess, capture, kill, injure, drug, rope, trap, snare or in any way harm or transport cougar.

(2)(a) A person may not pursue a single cougar in repeated pursuits such that it renders the cougar physically unable to escape.

(b) After a cougar has been pursued, chased, treed, cornered or held at bay, a person may not, in any manner, restrict or hinder the animal's ability to escape.

(c) A person must make reasonable efforts to call dogs off of a cougar that has been cornered or held at bay.

(3) A person may not engage in a canned hunt.

(4) A person may not take any wildlife from an airplane or any other airborne vehicle or device or any motorized terrestrial or aquatic vehicle, including snowmobiles and other recreational vehicles.

(5) Electronic locating equipment may not be used to locate ~~[cougar]~~[cougars](#) wearing electronic radio devices.

R657-10-21. Livestock Depredation and Human Health and Safety.

(1) If a cougar is harassing, chasing, disturbing, harming, attacking or killing livestock, or has committed such an act within the past 96 hours:

(a) in depredation cases, the livestock owner, an immediate family member or an employee of the owner on a regular payroll, and not hired specifically to take cougar, may kill the cougar;

(b) a landowner or livestock owner may notify the division of the depredation or human health and safety concerns, who shall authorize a local hunter to take the offending cougar or notify a USDA, Wildlife Services specialist; or

(c) the livestock owner may notify a USDA, Wildlife Services specialist of the depredation who may take the depredating cougar.

(2) Depredating cougar may be taken at any time by a USDA, Wildlife Services specialist, supervised by the Wildlife Services program, while acting in the performance of the person's assigned duties and in accordance with procedures approved by the division.

(3)(a) A depredating cougar may be taken by those persons authorized in Subsection (1)(a) with:

(i) any weapon authorized for taking cougar; or

(ii) with the use of snares only with written authorization from the director of the division and subject to each condition and restriction set out in the written authorization.

(b) The option in Subsection (3)(~~b~~a)(ii) may only be authorized in the case of a chronic depredation situation where numerous livestock have been killed by a depredating cougar and must be verified by Wildlife Services or division personnel.

(4)(a) The division may issue depredation permits to take cougar on specified private lands and public land grazing allotments with a chronic depredation situation where numerous livestock have been killed by cougar.

(b) The division may:

(i) issue one or more depredation permits to the affected livestock owner or a designee, provided the livestock owner does not receive monetary consideration from the designee for the opportunity to use the depredation permit;

(ii) determine the legal weapons and methods of take allowed; and

(iii) specify the area and season that the permit is valid.

(5)(a) Any cougar taken under Subsection (1)(a) or (4)(a) shall remain the property of the state and must be ~~delivered~~reported to a division office or employee within 96 hours.

(b) The division may issue a cougar damage permit to a person who has killed a depredating cougar under Subsection (1)(a) that authorizes the person to keep the carcass.

(c) A person that takes a cougar under Subsection (1)(a) or (4)(a) may acquire and use a limited entry permit or harvest objective cougar permit in the same year.

(d) Notwithstanding Subsections (5)(b) and (5)(c), a person may retain no more than one cougar annually taken with a cougar depredation permit.

(6)(a) A hunter interested in taking depredating cougar as provided in Subsection (1)(b) may contact the division.

(b) Hunters will be contacted by the division to take depredating cougar as needed.

R657-10-23. Taking Cougar.

(1)(a) For each permit issued, a person may only take one cougar during the season and from the area specified on the permit.

(b) A limited entry permit may be obtained by following the application procedures provided in this rule and the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(c) A harvest-objective permit may be purchased on a first-come, first-served basis as provided in guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

~~[(d) A cougar control permit may be purchased as provided in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.]~~

(2) A person may not:

(a) take or pursue a female cougar with a kitten; or

(b) repeatedly pursue, chase, tree, corner, or hold at bay, the same cougar during the same day after the cougar has been released.

(3) Any cougar may be taken during the prescribed seasons, except a kitten or any cougar accompanied by one or more kittens.

(4) A person may not take a cougar wearing a radio or gps collar on any unit identified in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar as being closed to the take of collared animals.

(5) The division may authorize a hunter who has obtained a valid cougar permit to take cougar in a specified area of the state in the interest of protecting wildlife from depredation.

(6) Season dates, closed areas, harvest objective~~[permit]~~ areas, ~~[unlimited quota]~~predator management units, and limited entry ~~[permit]~~season areas are published in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(7)(a) A person who obtains a limited entry cougar permit~~[on a split unit]~~ may hunt on all ~~[harvest objective]~~open units after the end date ~~[split units transition into harvest objective units. The split unit transition date is]~~of the limited entry season. Limited entry season dates are provided in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(b) A person who obtains a limited entry cougar permit~~[on a split unit]~~ and chooses to hunt on any ~~[harvest objective]~~open unit after the transition date is subject to all harvest objective unit closure requirements provided in ~~[Sections]~~Section R657-10-29.

R657-10-25. Cougar Pursuit.

(1)(a) Except as provided in ~~[rule]~~Subsection R657-10-3(1)(b) and Subsection (2), cougar may be pursued only by persons who have obtained a cougar pursuit permit.

(b) The cougar pursuit permit does not allow a person to:

(i) kill a cougar; or

(ii) pursue cougar for compensation.

(c) A person may pursue cougar for compensation only as provided in Subsection (2).

(d) To obtain a cougar pursuit permit, a person must possess a Utah hunting or combination license.

(2)(a) A person may pursue cougar on public lands for compensation, provided the dog handler:

- (i) receives compensation from a client or customer to pursue cougar;
- (ii) is a licensed hunting guide or outfitter under Title 58, Chapter 79 of the Utah Code and authorized to pursue cougar;
- (iii) possesses on his or her person the Utah hunting guide or outfitter license;
- (iv) possesses on his or her person all permits and authorizations required by the applicable public lands managing authority to pursue cougar for compensation; and
- (v) is accompanied by the client or customer at all times during pursuit.

(b) A person may pursue cougar on private lands for compensation, provided the dog handler:

- (i) receives compensation from a client or customer to pursue cougar;
- (ii) is accompanied by the client or customer at all times during pursuit; and
- (iii) possesses on his or her person written permission from all private landowners on whose property pursuit takes place.

(c) A person who is an employee or agent of the Division of Wildlife Services may pursue cougar on public lands and private lands while acting within the scope of their employment.

(3) A pursuit permit is not required to pursue cougar under Subsection (2).

(4)(a) A person pursuing cougar for compensation under subsections (2)(a) and (2)(b) shall comply with all other requirements and restrictions in statute, rule and the guidebooks of the Wildlife Board regulating the pursuit and take of cougar.

(b) Any violation of, or failure to comply with the provisions of Title 23 of the Utah Code, this rule, or the guidebooks of the Wildlife Board may be grounds for suspension of the privilege to pursue cougar for compensation under this subsection, as determined by a division hearing officer.

(5) A cougar pursuit permit authorizes the holder to pursue cougar with dogs on any unit open to pursuing cougar during the seasons and under the conditions prescribed by the Wildlife Board in guidebook.

(6) A person may not:

- (a) take or pursue a female cougar with a kitten;
- (b) repeatedly pursue, chase, tree, corner or hold at bay, the same cougar during the same day; ~~or~~

~~[(c) possess a firearm or any device that could be used to kill a cougar while pursuing cougar.]~~

~~[(i) The weapon restrictions set forth in the subsection do not apply to a person licensed to carry a concealed weapon in accordance with Title 53, Chapter 5, Part 7 of the Utah Code, provided the person is not utilizing or attempting to utilize the concealed weapon to injure or kill cougar.]~~

~~[(7)~~

~~[(c) If eligible, a person who has obtained a cougar pursuit permit may also obtain a limited entry ~~cougar~~ season permit, harvest objective cougar permit, or ~~cougar control~~ spot and stalk permit.~~

~~[(8)7) Cougar may be pursued ~~only~~ on ~~limited entry~~ any units ~~, harvest objective units, or unlimited quota units~~ open to cougar hunting during the dates provided in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.~~

(~~19~~8) A cougar pursuit permit is valid on a calendar year basis.

(~~140~~9) A person must possess a valid hunting or combination license to obtain a cougar pursuit permit.

R657-10-27. Harvest Objective Permit General Information.

(1) Harvest objective permits are valid only for open harvest objective management units or predator management units and for the specified seasons published in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(2) Harvest objective permits are not valid in a specified management unit after the harvest objective has been met for that unit.

R657-10-29. Units with Harvest Objective [~~Unit~~]Closures.

(1) To hunt in a unit with a harvest objective[~~unit~~], a hunter must [~~call 1-888-668-LION or~~]visit the division's website to verify that the harvest objective unit is still open. The[~~phone line and~~] website will be updated each day by 12 noon. Updates become effective the following day thirty minutes before official sunrise.

(2) [~~Harvest~~]Units with harvest objective[~~units~~] are open to hunting until:

(a) the[~~quota for that~~] harvest objective for that unit is met and the division closes the unit; or

(b) the end of the hunting season as provided in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(3) Upon closure of a unit with a harvest objective[~~unit~~], a hunter may not take or pursue cougar except as provided in Section R657-10-25.

R657-10-30. Harvest Objective Unit Reporting.

(1) Any person taking a cougar on a unit with a harvest objective[~~permit or a cougar control permit~~] must report to the division, within 48 hours, [~~where~~]the [~~cougar was taken~~]location of harvest and have a permanent tag affixed pursuant to Section R657-10-15.

(2) Failure to accurately report the correct[~~harvest objective~~] unit where the cougar was killed is unlawful.

(3) Any conviction for failure to accurately report, or aiding or assisting in the failure to accurately report as required in Subsection (1) shall be considered [~~prima facie~~]probable cause evidence of a knowing, intentional or reckless violation for purposes of permit suspension.

~~[R657-10-33. Cougar Control Permits.]~~

~~[—(1)(a) The division, with approval of the Wildlife Board, may identify a harvest objective unit as an unlimited quota unit.—]~~

~~[—(b) An individual may acquire a cougar control permit to hunt on an unlimited quota unit if they first obtain:]~~

~~[—(i) a harvest objective permit; or]~~

~~[—(ii) a limited entry permit for a split unit and the split unit has transitioned to harvest objective status.]~~

~~[(c) An individual may retain a cougar lawfully harvested under a cougar control permit regardless of whether they lawfully harvested and retained a cougar under a permit listed in Subsections (1)(b)(i) or (ii).]~~

~~[(2) An individual may only acquire one cougar control permit each season.]~~

~~[(3) Cougar control permits are only valid within the boundaries of unlimited quota units and during the dates described on the permit and in the guidebook of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.]~~

KEY: wildlife, cougar, game laws

Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: November 9, 2020

Notice of Continuation: August 1, 2016

Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: 23-14-18; 23-14-19