

COUGAR HUNTING SEASONS AND RULES



Photo by R. Beausoleil



Effective through March 31, 2010 (date inclusive)

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ANNUAL LICENSE FEES

See page 12 in the 2009 Big Game Hunting Seasons and Regulations Pamphlet.

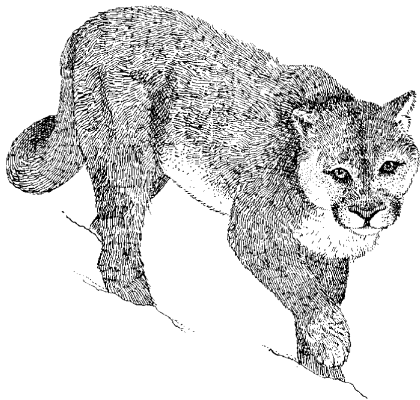
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Commission Phone (360) 902-2267

SUMMARY

This pamphlet is a summary of the hunting seasons and regulations (Chapters 232-12, 232-16 and 232-28 of the Washington Administrative Code) adopted by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission. This pamphlet does not contain nor is it intended to contain all department regulations. Regulations specific to the cougar seasons described in this pamphlet are found in Sections 232-28-272, 232-28-285, 232-28-287, and 232-12-243 of the Washington Administrative Code. This pamphlet is NOT inclusive of all rules pertaining to big game hunting but rather is a summary. Rules found in the general big game pamphlet must be adhered to. Caution: Emergency regulation changes may occur while seasons described in this pamphlet are in effect and will supersede information contained herein. Area news media will be informed of changes as they occur.



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COUGAR HUNTING SEASON WITH THE USE OF DOGS

Kill Quotas: The cougar season uses a kill quota system, where hunters may hunt and kill cougar until the allotted numbers of cougar (see page 4) have been killed from each hunt zone or March 31, 2010, whichever occurs first. Kill quotas start September 1 and include all cougar killed during seasons with and without the aid of dogs, as well as depredation permits, landowner kill permits, and WDFW kills.

Cougar Permit Season: Cougars may be hunted from **December 19, 2009** until the female zone quota has been killed, the total zone quota has been killed, or March 31, 2010, whichever occurs first (EXCEPT the season opens January 1, 2010 in GMUs 101, **105, 204**). **Night hunting is prohibited.**

Pursuit-Only Season: If either the total cougar zone or the female zone quota is reached prior to March 31, 2010, cougar may be pursued with dogs in all or portions of that zone until March 31, 2010. Hunters selected for a kill permit may participate in a pursuit-only season. If a quota is reached, the Department may also issue pursuit-only permits to hunters drawn at random from the unselected pool of applicants. Hunters may not kill cougar during a pursuit-only season.

Bag Limit: One (1) cougar during the 2009-2010 permit season. It is illegal to kill or possess spotted cougar kittens or an adult cougar accompanied by spotted kittens.

License/Tag Required: A valid big game hunting license which includes cougar as a species option is required to hunt cougar.

Dog Handlers: Up to three dog handlers may accompany a permittee while hunting or pursuing cougar; "accompany" means the dog handler and permit hunter must be in the physical presence of each other at the time dogs are released from a leash or unrestrained or starting a cougar track. Once dogs are in the act of tracking a cougar, the permit hunter and handler may separate, but work together while listening to locate the dog(s). However, the permit hunter and handler must be in the physical presence of each other if the handler is at a treed cougar. Transporting a dog(s) in a motorized vehicle or walking a dog on a leash is not pursuit. Each permit hunter will be issued three dog handler ID cards and vehicle placards, and each dog handler must have these in their possession while participating in a cougar hunt. **Dog handlers must possess a Washington hunting license.**

Who May Apply: **Anyone who is a Washington resident.** If a quota is not reached in a hunt zone by February 15, then the Department may issue permits to additional hunters (hunters will be drawn at random from the unselected pool of applicants).

How to Apply: Permit applications may be purchased at any hunting and fishing license dealership, by calling toll-free 1-866-246-9453, or online at fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov. Permit applications go on sale starting August 3, 2009. The cost of an application for a special hunt permit is \$5.50. Once an application is purchased, there are two ways to submit an application for a cougar permit. You may either call the toll-free permit application submission telephone number 1-877-945-3492 or visit the Internet website at fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov. See page 70 in the 2009 Big Game Hunting Seasons and Regulations pamphlet for more information on how to apply.

Application Deadline: Midnight, August 31, 2009.

Notification: Individuals selected will be notified by October 5, 2009 by telephone, email, or mail. Permits may not be sold or reassigned by the hunter.

Hunter Training: Successful applicants must complete a training program prior to participating in a permit season with the aid of dogs. The training program is comprised of printed materials on cougar sex identification, species identification (i.e., lynx, bobcat, black bear, and grizzly bear), and hunt season rules. Individuals selected for a cougar permit must sign and return the affidavit indicating they read the materials.

Contact Information

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Wildlife Program – Cougar Hunt
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA 98501-1091
Phone: (360) 902-2515

Disqualifications: A permit will not be issued to any person who has been convicted of unlawful use of dogs under RCW 77.15.245 within the five year period prior to December 1, 2004. Any person issued a permit who is subsequently convicted of any wildlife offense while participating in a pursuit-or-kill or pursuit-only season, or who violates any condition of the permit, will have the permit revoked and will be ineligible to participate in the remainder of the pilot program.

Mandatory Reporting: All hunters must report their hunting activity (whether they harvest a cougar or not)

using the toll-free quota hotline (1-866-364-4868). Hunters who harvest a cougar must notify the department within 24 hours of kill (excluding legal state holidays) and provide the hunter's name, Wild ID, date and Game Management Unit of kill, and sex of animal. **Permit hunters who purchased a cougar transport tag but did not hunt or harvest a cougar must report their cougar hunting activity by [April 10, 2010](#).**

The raw pelt of the cougar (with proof of sex naturally attached) must be sealed by an authorized department employee within five days of the kill. Any person who takes a cougar must present the cougar skull in such a manner that teeth and biological samples can be

extracted to an authorized department employee at the time of sealing. Please call a regional office (page 2) to make arrangements to have a cougar checked.

Quota Hotline: All cougar hunters must call the cougar quota hotline within 24 hours prior to each day hunting cougar to determine if the zone quota has been reached and the zone is closed.

Quota Hotline

Toll-free **1-866-DOG-HUNT** (1-866-364-4868) or (509) 625-4700

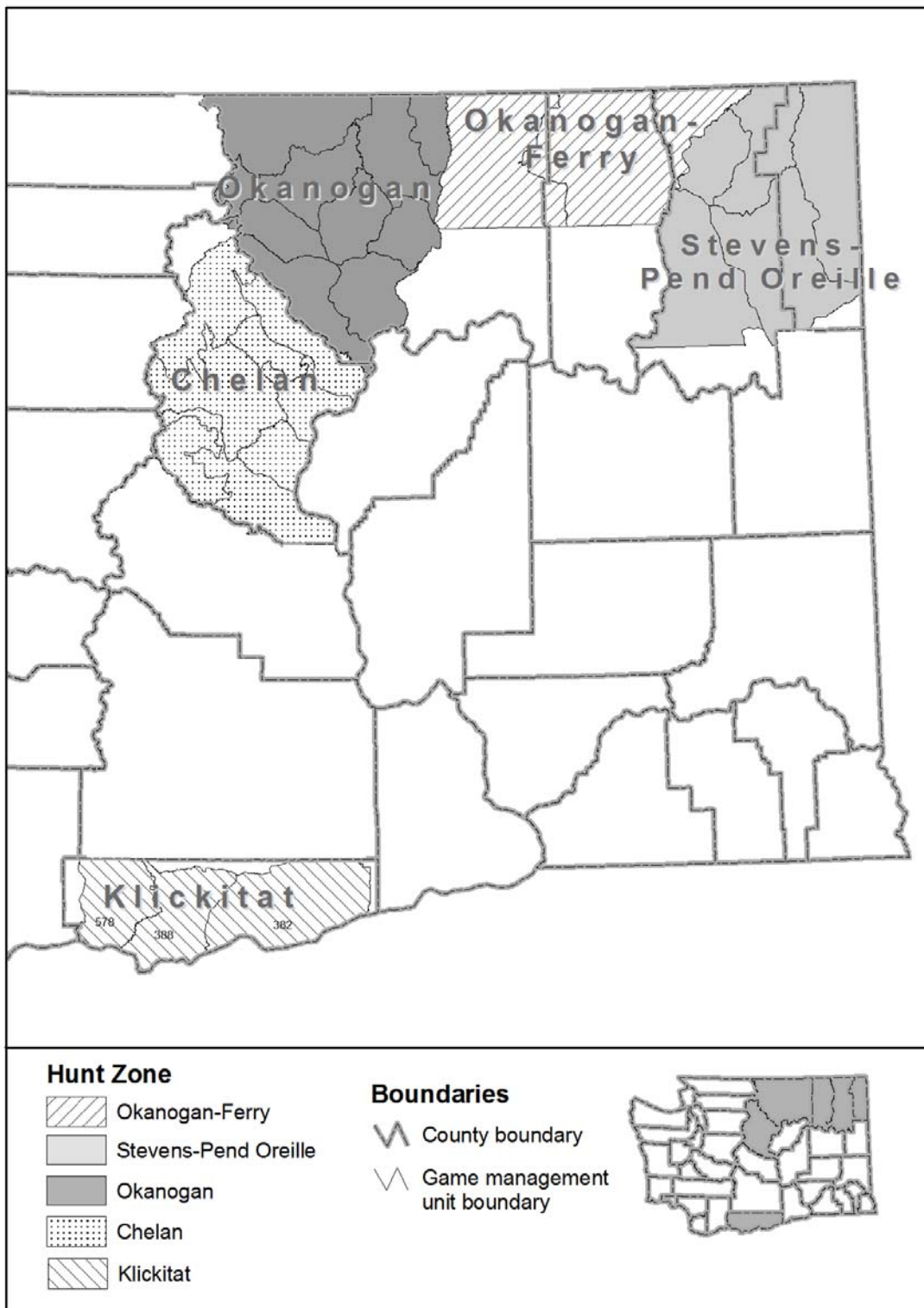
COUGAR PERMIT SEASONS WITH THE USE OF DOGS

Hunt Choice	Hunt Zone	Area Description	QUOTA		2009-10 Permits	Season Dates
			Total	Female		
9010	Okanogan ^a	Those portions of GMUs 203, 209, 215, 218, 233, 224, 231, 239, and 242 within Okanogan County	17	7	17	Dec. 19, 2009-Mar. 31, 2010
9011	Chelan ^a	Those portions of GMUs 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 249, 250, and 251 within Chelan County	6	2	6	Dec. 19, 2009-Mar. 31, 2010
9012	Ferry-Okanogan	GMUs 101, 105, 204	20	8	20	Jan. 1-Mar. 31, 2010
9013	Stevens-Pend Oreille ^a	Those portions of GMUs 108, 111, 113, 117, 121 within Stevens and Pend Oreille counties	19	7	19	Dec. 19, 2009-Mar. 31, 2010
9014	Klickitat ^a	Those portions of GMUs 382, 388, and 578 within Klickitat County	6	2	12	Dec. 19, 2009-Mar. 31, 2010

^a Overlap between permit hunts with dogs and permit hunts without the use of dogs from Dec. 19-31, 2009

Quota Hotline and Reporting Requirements	
Before going hunting	After going hunting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Permit hunters must call the cougar quota hotline before going hunting to find out if the hunt zone is open or closed for killing a cougar. ▪ Call toll-free 1-866-DOG-HUNT (1-866-364-4868) or (509) 625-4700. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If a permit hunter kills a cougar, he or she must notify WDFW within 24 hours of the kill. ▪ Please call the quota hotline or any WDFW Regional office list on page 2 to report a kill. ▪ Hunters also must present the cougar skull and pelt (with proof of sex naturally attached) to WDFW within 5 days of the kill for sealing. ▪ Present the skull and hide so that teeth and biological samples can be taken. ▪ Placing a stick or wedge in the cougar's mouth after harvesting it aids in the removal of teeth.
<p>No one may possess an open WDFW seal for cougar unless the seal has been cut by a licensed taxidermist or fur dealer who has received and invoiced the pelt for processing.</p>	

Cougar hunt zones – Permit Seasons with the use of dogs



COUGAR PERMIT SEASON WITHOUT THE USE OF DOGS

See pages 50-51 in 2009 Big Game Hunting Seasons & regulations pamphlet for additional information on general cougar seasons and permit only seasons

Hunt Choice	Hunt Zone/Name	Hunt Area	Permits	Season Dates
9001	South Cascades	GMUs 503, 505, 510-520, 524, 550-574, 653, 654, 667	40	Jan. 1-Mar. 31
9002	Blue Mountains	GMUs 145-154, 162-186	40	Jan. 1-Mar. 31
9003	Kittitas-Yakima	GMUs 328-368	30	Jan. 1-Mar. 31
9004	Spokane	GMUs 124-133	30	Jan. 1-Mar. 31
9005	Chelan ^a	Those portions of GMUs 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 249, 250, and 251 within Chelan County	40	Dec. 1-31
9006	Okanogan ^a	Those portions of GMUs 203, 209, 215, 218, 233, 224, 231, 239, and 242 within Okanogan County	40	Dec. 1-31
9007	Okanogan-Ferry	GMUs 101,105, 204	20	Dec. 1-31
9008	Stevens-Pend Oreille ^a	Those portions of GMUs 108, 111, 113, 117, 121 within Stevens and Pend Oreille counties	30	Dec. 1-31
9009	Klickitat ^a	Those portions of GMUs 382, 388, 578 within Klickitat County	20	Dec. 1-31

^a Overlap between permit hunts with dogs and permit hunts without the use of dogs from Dec. 19-31, 2009

License/Tag Required: A valid big game hunting license which includes cougar as a species option is required to hunt cougar.

Bag Limit: One (1) cougar during the 2009-2010 general hunting season, **excluding public safety cougar removals**. It is illegal to kill or possess spotted cougar

kittens or an adult cougar accompanied by spotted kittens.

Hunting Method: Any legal weapon. Cougar may also be hunted with a 22 caliber or larger centerfire rifle. Rimfire 22 caliber is illegal.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Q. Do I have to own dogs to apply for a permit season where dogs are lawful to hunt cougar?
 A. No, starting in 2009 you do not have to own dogs to apply for a permit season where dogs are lawful to hunt cougar.
- Q. Can a dog handler pursue cougar?
 A. Yes, but the permit hunter must be in the physical presence of the handler when dogs are unleashed, unrestrained, or starting a cougar track. Once dogs are in the act of tracking a cougar, the permit hunter and handler may separate, but work together while listening to locate the dogs. However, the permit hunter must be in the physical presence of the handler at a treed cougar. A dog handler can walk a dog on a leash or transport a dog in a motorized vehicle when he/she is not in the physical presence of the permit hunter.
- Q. During a cougar permit hunt, can a designated dog handler harvest a cougar?
 A. No, only the permit hunter may harvest a cougar.
- Q. What is included in the training program for permit cougar hunts with the aid of dogs?
 A. The training program is comprised of printed materials on cougar sex identification, species identification (i.e., lynx, bobcat, black bear, and grizzly bear), and hunt season rules. Individuals selected for a cougar permit must sign and return an affidavit indicating they read the materials.

For more information, please contact: WDFW, Wildlife Program, 600 Capitol Way North Olympia, WA 98501-1091; phone (360) 902-2515; <http://wdfw.wa.gov>