



Alberta Wilderness Association  
"Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action"

April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Hon. Todd Loewen  
Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Government of Alberta  
By e-mail: [FP.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:FP.Minister@gov.ab.ca), [Todd.Loewen@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Todd.Loewen@gov.ab.ca)

Dear Minister Loewen,

Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) is writing to inquire about the recent decision to increase female cougar hunting quotas across the province from 32 to 72 for the 2023 – 2024 hunting season (a 125% increase province-wide). We are eager to understand the rationale behind this decision and the data or evidence that support the increased hunting quota.

As you know, AWA has been a steward of Alberta's wild lands and wildlife since 1965. With over 7,500 members and supporters, we seek a network of representative protected areas throughout Alberta and good stewardship of Alberta's public lands, waters, and biodiversity.

AWA believes that hunting, trapping, and fishing must be managed in ways that are humane, sustainable, and scientifically sound. These activities should be practiced when and where they can be proven, by valid scientific studies, to not harm wild populations. In keeping with the principles of science-based management and transparency of government decision-making, we are seeking to understand the factors that influenced the decision to increase female cougar hunting quotas, including any scientific studies or consultations that were considered.

Additionally, we are interested in knowing whether there are any plans in place to monitor the effects of this decision on cougar populations and the environment. As you are aware, predator species like cougars play an important role in the ecosystems they inhabit, acting as top-down controls that keep prey species in balance and thus prevent overgrazing of primary producers, which sustains the biodiversity of the ecosystem. Transparency and accountability in wildlife management are essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of Alberta's biodiversity.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response and to gaining a better understanding of the basis for the recent changes to cougar hunting quotas.

Sincerely,

ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Devon Earl', written in a cursive style.

Devon Earl, Conservation Specialist