



Draft West Slope Mountain Lion Management Plan

# Glenwood Springs Special Management Area (SMA)

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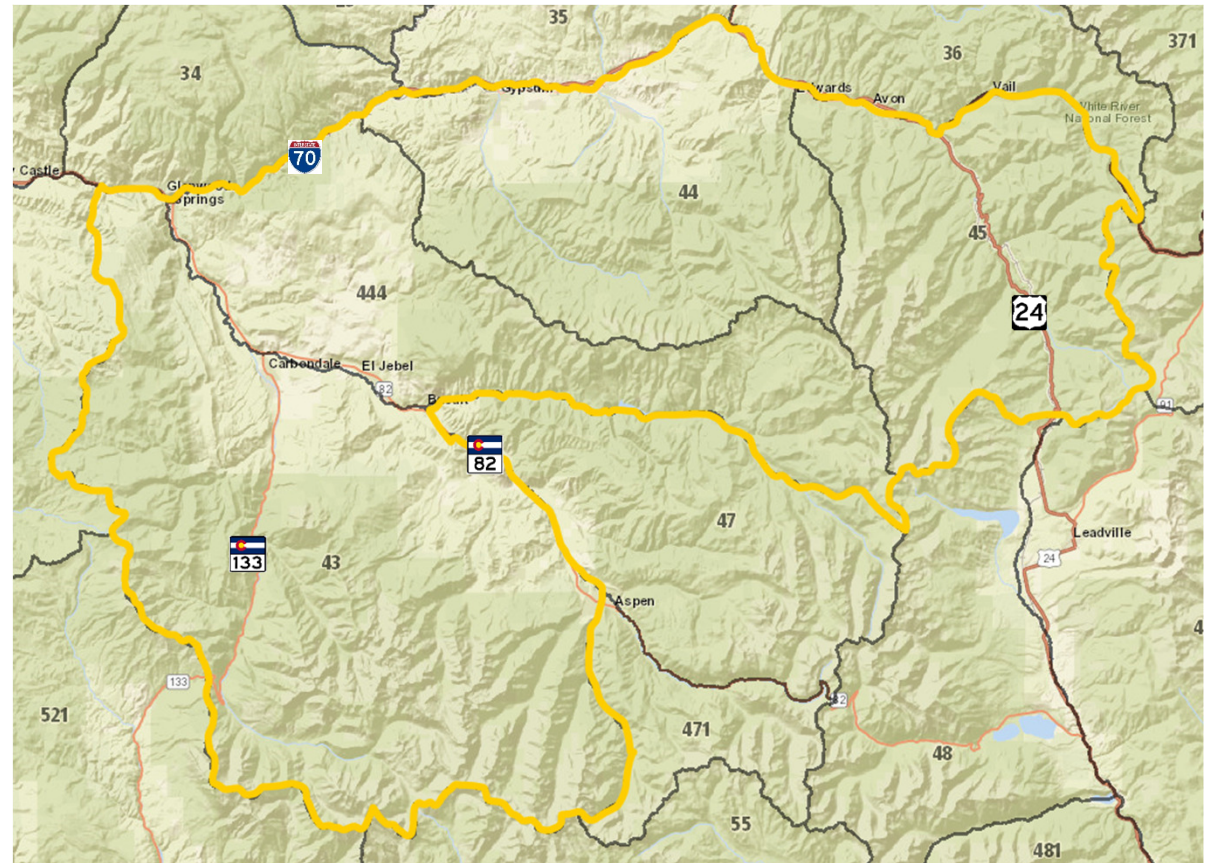
# Glenwood Springs Special Management Area

Roaring Fork and Eagle Valleys

Municipalities:

Aspen	Glenwood Springs
Basalt	Snowmass Village
Carbondale	Gypsum
Eagle	Edwards
Avon	Minturn
Vail	

Encompasses approximately  
1,830 square miles



# Historical vs. Current Conflicts - SMA

## Historical

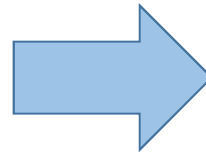
Infrequent sightings and reports

- Comparable distribution of calls on landscape (remote vs. developed)
- Mostly evidence left by lions (tracks/caches)

Winter months

- Concentrations of prey on winter range

Short duration



## Current

Routine sightings and reports

- Increasing proportion of urban/suburban reports
- Increased number of in-person sightings and encounters

Year-round

- Less correlation with prey distribution

Increased tolerance for people/activity

\* Increase in number, frequency, severity

## Changes and Trends - SMA

### Year-round activity

- Summer conflicts in low elevation areas near municipalities
- Lower deer/elk concentrations

### Habituation to people

- Less instinctual fear of humans
- Less sign of avoidance behavior
- Hazing is less effective than historical efforts



Gypsum June 2019  
Vail Daily



Edwards June 2019



Mountain lion on Highway 82

A mountain lion was seen crossing southbound Highway 82 near Glenwood Springs, Colorado on September 25, 2019

Glenwood Springs Summer 2019

Post Independent

## Changes and Trends - SMA

### Less reclusive

- Midday activity
- Tolerant of being seen/approached/confronted by humans and dogs

### Higher densities

- Larger family groups
- Multiple groups or adults residing in close proximity
- Diminishing natural prey resource



Post Independent

## Severity of Conflicts & Concerns

- 2011 (El Jebel): Livestock owner near Basalt lost multiple animals over a several month period to lion depredation. United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services was contracted to assist with removal of the depredating lions. In a 16 month period 11 lions were euthanized in approximately 0.5 square mile area.
- 2015 (Dotsero): On July 23 at 3:30pm a man was fishing on Deep Creek and felt several sharp objects in his back. He dove forward and threw a lion off his back. Wounds were non life threatening and the victim drove himself to the hospital. Wildlife officers confirmed lion tracks at the site of the incident and used hounds to follow the scent trail. A subadult male lion was located approximately 150 yards from the site and euthanized. DNA comparison confirmed same animal.

## Severity of Conflicts & Concerns

- 2016 (Old Snowmass): June 17 a young boy was playing out front of his house when his mother heard a scream. The mother struck the lion repeatedly and pried it's mouth open to release the boy. The boy suffered multiple non life threatening cuts and punctures to his face. The lion was still on site a few yards away when law enforcement arrived and euthanized it. A second lion was also discovered at the site and euthanized. DNA testing confirmed the first animal as the one that had attacked.
- 2018 (Glenwood Springs): From December 2017 through January 2018 CPW received reports of multiple sets of lion tracks travelling through residential yards in a Glenwood subdivision. One dog was attacked and survived another attacked and killed. A subsequent report indicated a man walking his dog on the street and observing a lion stalking them behind bushes in yards. Over the course of nine days five lions were trapped in the subdivision.

## Severity of Conflicts & Concerns

- 2019 (Edwards): February of 2019 an Edwards resident was outside on his back porch when an adult lion with two dependent kittens attacked and killed his dog on the porch next to him. During the same time multiple reports were received of groups of lions in a subdivision across the street. Based on the timing of reports and photos it was estimated that 10-12 lions were residing in approximately a 0.5 square mile area. An elementary school in the neighborhood reported sightings or new tracks on the property daily for almost four weeks spurring increased patrols between CPW and other law enforcement plus installation of loud speakers on school grounds and multiple school lockdowns.
- 2020 (Edwards): February – March. During a 19-day period 29 calls of lion activity in Edwards ranged from daytime sightings on neighborhood streets to cached kills and attacks on pets. One attempted attack occurred on a dog next to the owner on a back porch and another dog was killed while the owner kicked the attacking lion.



## Game Damage

### Game Damage

- 33-3-102 Colorado Revised Statutes  
The state of Colorado is liable for certain damages caused by wildlife.
- Historically incorporated game damage objectives into lion management plans.

### 1998 – 2008

- 11 mountain lion claims
- \$3,936

### 2009 – 2019

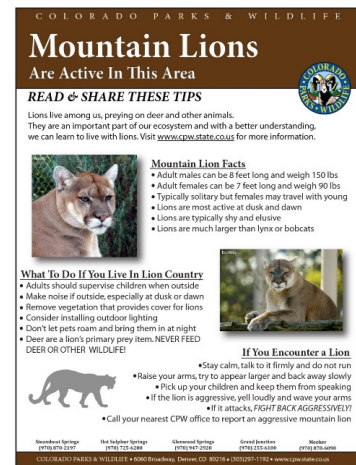
- 21 mountain lion claims
- \$38,870



# Education/Prevention

CPW staff prioritize public education as a means of mitigating conflict with wildlife

- Education efforts range from providing advice over the phone to site visits, distributing information brochures/fliers and hosting meetings.
- CPW routinely uses a variety of sources to reach the publics within communities:
  - Newspaper
  - Brochures
  - Radio
  - Online resources
  - Signs
  - Videos
  - Sandwich boards
  - Land use recommendations
  - Social media
  - School curriculums
  - Volunteers



## Conflict Management

Hazing individual conflict lions/groups of lions

- CPW officers use a variety of hazing tools and techniques aimed at deterring lions from using an area or returning.
  - Non lethal shotgun rounds (bean bags, rubber shot)
  - Tasers
  - Hounds to pursue (without harvest)

Removal/translocation of specific problem animals

- Evaluated on case-by-case basis
  - Based on behavior/location
- Trapping
- Immobilization



Denver Post

# SMA Goals and Objectives

Current efforts are ineffective at reducing conflict

- CPW staff continues to increase efforts and allocate more time toward educating the public on conflict mitigation. Reported conflicts continue to rise.
- Hunter harvest has increased slightly over the past decade but remains limited. Traditional methods of hunting have made targeted harvest of conflict animals difficult.

The goals of the SMA are to:

- Address human safety concerns through reducing conflicts
- Reduce lion occupancy in developed areas of high human use (subdivisions, schools, downtown corridors)
- Provide maximum hunting opportunity

## Additional Hunting Tools

### April season

- Only area on West slope open for first 3 years

### Electronic Calls

- Significant tracts of private land and areas near development where traditional use of hounds is precluded or not feasible
- Provides additional opportunities

### Concurrent season

- Unique opportunity afforded to hunters already in the field during the deer and elk seasons



Elizabeth Stewart-Severy Aspen Journalism

# Conflict Monitoring

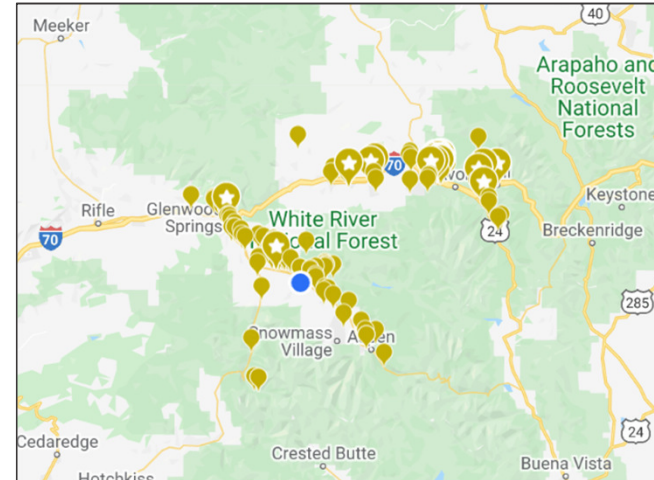


Wildlife Incidents



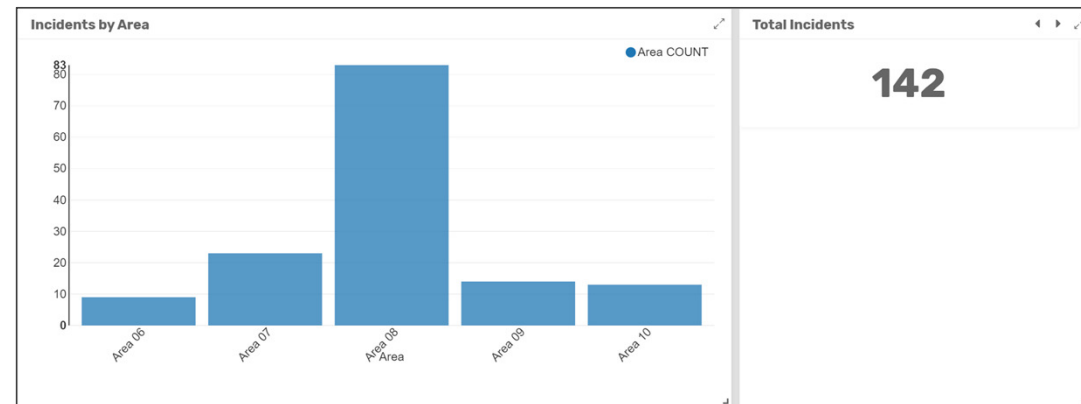
## CPW Wildlife Incident App

- Replaced historical carbon copy forms to report/record response to conflicts
- Provides more informative data and statistics



## CPW Area 8

- 2016: 67 incidents
- April 2019 – April 2020: 125 incidents
- Jan 1 2020 – July 9 2020: 84 to date
  
- 59% of lion incidents in NW region



NW REGION STATS

## Public Outreach

Local staff hosted two in person public meetings

- Glenwood Springs (Feb 12, 2020) – 66 attendees
- Gypsum (Feb 18, 2020) – 85 attendees

Presented to Boards of County Commissioners for Pitkin and Eagle Counties

Other groups (representatives of groups) that participated in presentations:

- Federal: USFS, BLM
- County: Pitkin County Open Space, Eagle County Open Space
- Organizations: Aspen Valley Land Trust, Aspen Center for Environmental Studies, Wilderness Workshop, Cattlemen's Association, Woolgrowers Association, Roaring Fork Conservancy, Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Colorado Outfitters Association

Strong local government support

HOA support



# Glenwood Springs Special Management Area



The proposed SMA objectives and guidelines allow wildlife managers flexibility to address conflicts on multiple levels