

## **Introduction**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) mission is "sound stewardship of fish and wildlife" with the intent of serving Washington's residents. WDFW recognizes the value of natural resources to Washington residents and aims to protect, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife while providing sustainable recreational and commercial opportunities. WDFW spends significant resources managing carnivore populations while minimizing and mitigating negative encounters between carnivores and people.

This spring (2019), WDFW established an internal cougar committee to review its current cougar management and the corresponding recreational harvest rules. The objective of the committee was to prepare and provide recommendations for consideration for the 2020 season. In March 2019 the Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) tasked the committee with reviewing the existing harvest regulations, evaluating options and preparing recommendations for the Commission to consider for implementation in the 2020 season.

The following recommendations are a subset of the of the committee's work. They take into consideration the objectives and constraints contained in the Game Management Plan. We have supplied you with a description of those options for your consideration. The entire report containing additional options for future consideration is also provided for your information.