

June 1, 2016

Public Notice of Intent to Issue a Permit for Mountain Lion Research in California

Legislation passed in 2012 requires the Department to notify the public at least 30 days prior to the issuance of a Scientific Collecting Permit (SCP) to qualified researchers desiring to conduct research on mountain lions.

The legislation is described in Section [4810 of the Fish and Game Code](#).

A summary of the proposed research is below. Copies of the DRAFT permit are available upon request to the Department. Please contact the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Branch- MOUNTAIN LION SCP at 1812 Ninth Street, Sacramento, CA 95811.

Prospective Scientific Collecting Permit Issued to:

Audubon Canyon Ranch – Entity

Dr. Quinton Martins, Ph.D. – Principal Investigator

Project Title:

Sonoma Mountain Lion Project

Executive Summary:

Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) is spearheading a mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) research and education project in California's San Francisco North Bay Region. These iconic and charismatic predators are an ecological keystone species, their survival indicating whether habitats are intact and functioning. The SF Bay Area, with its increasing human population in an ever-changing matrix of urban, rural, and open space-uses, presents a challenge for mountain lion conservation. As such, our project offers a unique environment in which to ensure that humans and mountain lions can coexist in this complex fragmented landscape. ACR protects over 5000 acres of natural habitat in this region and has been collaborating with partner organizations to maximize the wildlife connectivity. Although individual mountain lions have been documented through ACR's remote camera surveys, little is known about how they navigate the landscape. The population of mountain lions has yet to be enumerated and insufficient information pertaining to their local diet and habitat needs further complicates land management decisions. This project will use habitat selection models to model likely core habitat and corridors for lions in our study area then validate those models with new GPS data from lions we will collar. Furthermore, there is a lack of public awareness showing how intact wildlife habitat provides important ecosystem services for humans as well, such as clean air and water. These data will lead to a better understanding of ecological

interactions and inform management strategies. The Project is part of a larger “Bay Area Research Cooperative” in which relevant data will be shared with two other NGOs and with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Mountain Lion Conservation Program. This cooperative approach leverages the expertise of multiple, well-respected researchers, increasing conservation impact, expanding the scope of public awareness and streamlining costs. The project builds on ACR’s successful model of community-based conservation and education which has been connecting people with nature for over 50 years. With over 800 trained volunteers supporting its education, stewardship, and research programs, ACR has a cadre of “conservation ambassadors” with deep ties to surrounding communities. The education and outreach components of the project will broaden awareness, transform attitudes towards mountain lions, and contribute to long-term conservation of habitat for mountain lions, their prey and many other species.