

## 2003 The Cougar Fund Newsletter

### **Welcome to The Cougar Fund**

It is with much pleasure and anticipation that we bring you the first issue of The Cougar Fund Newsletter. On behalf of our working board of directors, we would like to welcome all of you to our growing and enthusiastic family of artists, writers, activists, educators, scientists, sportsmen, and concerned citizens dedicated to Protecting America's Greatest Cat. The Cougar Fund is about building bridges, and closing the gap between those who both live near and around cougar habitat and those who admire and champion these animals from afar.

The Cougar Fund's mission is to protect the cougar throughout the Americas through the arts, literature, and sciences. To this end, we present informative and inspiring programs to local communities and schools to educate the public on the value and role of cougars in nature as well as advocate for the application of sound science in cougar management.

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **The Cougar Fund visits the University of Northern Colorado**

The Cougar Fund will be visiting the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley Friday November 14, 2003 at 7 pm. Maggie Schafer, PhD Candidate in Environmental Education & Conservation Biology at the University has worked long and hard with The Cougar Fund to make this event happen, gaining sponsorship to cover costs and attending to every last detail to make the evening a success. The Cougar Fund's co-founders Tom Mangelsen and Cara Blessley Lowe will be giving a presentation on cougars. Tom will be doing a slide show of his photographs and telling about his first photographic experience with cougars in the wild. Cara will speak about The Cougar Fund, its successes and future goals and show her film, "Spirit of the Rockies: The Mountain Lions of Jackson Hole". Cougar Fund merchandise, information about the fund and how to get involved will all be available.

For ticket information for this event, please call (970) 352-5763 or email Maggie Schafer at [feline@viawest.net](mailto:feline@viawest.net).

#### **Pianist, Composer and Producer Peter Kater Teams with The Cougar Fund**

On November 15, 2003, pianist, composer and producer Peter Kater will perform a benefit concert for The Cougar Fund at Foundation Hall in Greeley, Colorado at 7 pm. Peter Kater has sold more than 1.3 million records and written music for more than 70 television and film programs including 11 On and Off-Broadway dramatic plays. His 30 critically acclaimed releases in 20 years range from World Fusion and Native American collaborations to contemporary jazz, vocal ensembles, full orchestrations and of course, his signature solo piano recordings. Receiving extensive world-wide airplay on a diverse

array of radio formats, Kater's broad creative stroke has touched millions of hearts. In addition, because of his commitment and dedication to the environment and humanitarian causes, Peter was honored with the Environmental Leadership Award by the United Nations in 1995.

For ticket information for this event, please call (970) 352-5763 or email Maggie Schafer at [feline@viawest.net](mailto:feline@viawest.net).

### **Habitat Preservation**

#### **Blackrock / Spreadcreek Grazing Allotment**

The Cougar Fund is proud to announce that we recently donated \$20,000 and secured a \$20,000 matching grant from Vital Ground to help retire the 87,500 acre Blackrock / Spreadcreek Grazing Allotment north of Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The Cougar Fund's donation came from a local Jackson fundraiser called Old Bill's Fun Run and the Chip Houseman Memorial Fund, established in memory of a Jackson wildlife photographer, who died in a plane crash.

The allotment is 20 miles south of Yellowstone National Park and abuts Grand Teton National Park. It is critical habitat for cougars, grizzlies, wolves, bison, moose, elk, wolverines, lynx and many other sensitive species. More conflicts between cattle and grizzly bears have occurred on this allotment than any other in the Yellowstone ecosystem. The Cougar Fund collaborated with the National Wildlife Federation, Vital Ground, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Heritage Foundation of Wyoming, the Charles Engelhard Foundation, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, the Wiancko Family Fund and the Arthur B. Schultz Foundation to successfully retire this allotment.

### **Education**

#### **The Cougar Fund Visits Jackson Hole Middle School**

This past spring Program Director Krissy Robertson visited the Jackson Hole Middle School's 7<sup>th</sup> grade science classes to teach the students about cougars. Krissy presented a slide show of Tom Mangelsen's wild cougar images along with a film by Cara Blessley Lowe. The film includes a scene where a hunter tracks and trees a cougar by using dogs with radio collars. The film made a profound impact on the kids, who were appalled by the hunt scene. The science teachers were able to tie the presentation into previous lectures about ecology and predator / prey relationships making the visit a worthwhile addition to the students education in this area of science.

#### **Children's Book for The Cougar Fund**

Maggie Schafer is also currently working on a children's book inspired by and based on *Spirit of the Rockies: The Mountain Lions of Jackson Hole*, which was photographed by Tom Mangelsen and written by Cara Blessley Lowe after spending nearly 42 days in the field watching a wild mountain lion mother and her three cubs. The new children's book

will be for grade school children and will be authored by Lynne Fox-Parrish, PhD Candidate in Environmental Education/Conservation Biology, Elliot Loftis, Masters Degree Candidate in Biological Research – Environmental Studies, and Maggie Schafer at the University of Northern Colorado. The students are being mentored by Dr. Richard Jurin, Director of Environmental Studies.

Children from area elementary schools in Colorado have submitted their own interpretive cougar drawings to embellish the pages of the book, along with actual photographs of the cougar family taken by Tom. The finished product will be a story, which we hope will help educate children about *Puma Concolor* “The American Mountain Lion” as the Lion King did for the African Lion. The book will show that humans and cougars can co-exist peacefully and that we should appreciate and protect this magnificent animal.

### **Wilderness Medical Society Presentation**

Co-founder Tom Mangelsen gave a presentation to more than 350 people during a Wilderness Medical Society conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming February 14. Tom spoke about his experience photographing cougars on the National Elk Refuge and the value of this rare occurrence, which prompted the founding of The Cougar Fund. The event made an impact on those in attendance. Many physicians and medical professionals joined The Cougar Fund and left the lecture with brochures and merchandise.

### **Research**

#### **Cougar Research in Jackson Hole, Wyoming**

The Cougar Fund is currently helping to fund the salary for cougar biologist, Rachel Gray. Rachel works for Beringia South, a nonprofit research and educational organization established in 1998 by Derek J. Craighead. Beringia South’s Teton Cougar Project is aimed at characterizing the cougar population in terms of demography, density and territorial dynamics, as well as analyzing predator-predator and predator-prey interactions. The group will be focusing their efforts in Jackson Hole between the Gros Ventre drainage in the south and Buffalo Valley in the north, attempting to mark and track all resident cougars in that area.

### **Media**

#### **World News Tonight with Peter Jennings**

This past January, ABC aired a segment on Peter Jennings World News Tonight on Jane Goodall and Tom Mangelsen’s involvement with cougars. This national segment generated enormous interest in The Cougar Fund, and drew attention to the lack of scientific population data available on cougars and the unethical hunting practices that are legal in many states. The segment also helped to boost The Cougar Fund’s membership to 536 members in 47 states.

## **High Definition Television**

Also in January 2003 HDNet, a national high-definition television network, aired a 30-minute documentary called "The Cougar Debate." The program gave an overview of the issues surrounding cougar management in Colorado. It included interviews with a cougar hunting outfitter, a Colorado Game and Fish biologist and a writer. Tom Mangelsen was also interviewed about his experience photographing cougars and his personal feelings about current cougar management policies.

## **Artist Puts Effort into Helping Cougars**

### **Anything's Possible, Introducing Clayton LeFevre**

Artist Clayton LeFevre of New York City has generously donated 2 cougar paintings to The Cougar Fund. The paintings are limited edition lithographs and part of a 6-piece series, all of which are being donated to The Cougar Fund. The paintings are modeled after photographs of wild cougars by Tom Mangelsen and Cara Blessley Lowe. In September, we were able to meet Clayton personally at our benefit for The Cougar Fund and The Jane Goodall Institute in Laguna Beach, California. Clayton's beautiful prints were displayed and are very impressive.

From all of us at The Cougar Fund...Thank you for making this happen Clayton...for your hard work, perseverance and sincere dedication to protecting the cougar."

Please click on the link below to view Clayton's cougar prints. Prints can be ordered through The Cougar Fund either by email [krissy@cougarfund.org](mailto:krissy@cougarfund.org) or phone 307.733.0797.

<http://www.claytonartworks.com/MNWFramesetProjects.html>

## **Recent Events**

### **The Cougar Fund's Second Gala Event September 13, 2003**

Last year, on September 18, 2002, The Cougar Fund held its first gala event fundraiser in Laguna Beach, California, featuring world-renowned primatologist and Cougar Fund board member Dr. Jane Goodall. The night was described by those in attendance as "magical", an evening that went beyond being just entertaining and informational to inspirational and life changing.

We are pleased to announce that this year, The Cougar Fund once again joined The Jane Goodall Institute on September 13, 2003 to make another magical evening in Laguna

Beach. The event was sponsored by the Heart and Soul Coalition, an organization dedicated to preserving southern Orange County's history and scenic landscapes that contribute to the clean air, water, and quality of life in the area. The organization works to protect an area of crucial wildlife habitat in Orange County known as Rancho Mission Viejo. This area is under the gun and potential construction and expansion will inevitably cut off vital corridors for wildlife, including cougars. Brenda Stouffer, executive director for the Heart and Soul Coalition, played a significant part in the planning and execution of the event for the benefit of The Cougar Fund and The Jane Goodall Institute.

Many people wonder what first drew Dr. Goodall's attention to cougars. "The first book I remember reading featured a puma" recalls Goodall. "That story has stayed in my mind since and I was shocked to learn that cougars are still persecuted across most of their range. After seeing the short film *Spirit of the Rockies*, I knew this had to be my next cause." Cougars are a keystone species, and are as much a symbol of wilderness and wild places as the chimpanzee in Africa, a species that Dr. Goodall has spent her life studying.

"An Evening with Jane Goodall" was a tremendous success this year with more than 1000 people in attendance. Both Cara and Tom presented their cougar film and shared stories on The Cougar Fund's successes in the past year. Dr. Goodall entertained the crowd for more than an hour with enchanting tales from her childhood, her life with the chimpanzees and her Roots and Shoots programs for children. Dr. Goodall travels the world 300 days each year. It was an honor to have her present to share stories and enlighten the crowd with her message of concern and hope for the earth and its precious resources, including the cougar. Proceeds from the evening, which included a silent auction and donated prints by Tom Mangelsen, Cougar Fund Board Member Howard Buffett and other local artists went to both The Cougar Fund and the Jane Goodall Institute.

The day following the event, The Cougar Fund joined The Jane Goodall Institute aboard "The Mantis" for a benefit cruise to see dolphins. The crew set sail at noon and enjoyed a beautiful lunch at sea with fabulous company, including 007 icon Pierce Brosnan and his wonderful wife, Keely Shaye. Jane Goodall witnessed her first wild dolphins as the crew came upon a pod of more than 2,000 dolphins that formed a wide semi-circle around the bow, putting on an unbelievable breaching show for the 50 or so guests. Only James Bond and Jane Goodall could have commanded such a stunning performance! In an issue of People Magazine following the event, Pierce was shown riding a mountain bike with no hands wearing a Cougar Fund ball cap – Go Pierce!

### **Benefit for The Cougar Fund and The Jane Goodall Institute September 26, 2003**

Following the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival in September 2003, Cougar Fund supporter Les Thiele hosted an exclusive supper benefit titled "Hope" at her home on East Gros Ventre Butte. The exclusive event was an opportunity for 18 people to join co-founders Tom Mangelsen and Cara Blessley Lowe, Dr. Jane Goodall, and world-

renowned field biologist George Schaller to discuss issues of conservation worldwide. The Old Yellowstone Garage catered the event, which stretched into the early morning hours, fueled by inspiring conversation and one-on-one time with the two of the greatest field biologists living today.

### **Secretary Gail Norton**

In early November 2002, Cara Blessley Lowe was invited to attend a private reception hosting Secretary of the Department of the Interior Gail Norton. Cara presented Secretary Norton with a copy of *Spirit of the Rockies* and briefed the Secretary on the value of cougars to all Americans. “Cougars are perhaps a greater symbol of the Americas than the bald eagle, since it once roamed all 48 of the continental United States,” Cara told Secretary Norton. Secretary Norton assured Cara that she would review the book and take her concerns about cougar management into account. The Cougar Fund hopes Secretary Norton and the Bush administration will indeed make a positive move toward preserving cougars and their habitat.

### **Taking Action and the Management of Cougars**

#### **Carnivores 2002**

One of the most perplexing facets of cougar conservation deals with the state-level management strategies of this elusive species. Cougars are obligate carnivores and live in low densities on landscapes—one cougar roams and defends a “home range” of approximately 100 square miles.

In 11 of the 14 states where cougars remain, cougar hunting is permitted and regulated as a “big game” or “trophy” species. While this status is considered “protected”, meaning that one must have a license to shoot cougars—versus the cougars previous classification as a “bountied predator”—cougars are only protected from sport hunting in California, a decision that was made by the citizens of California through the ballot initiative process in 1991.

Management of carnivores is among the most controversial of topics in wildlife conservation today, mainly because four legged predators—wolves, coyotes, cougars, and bears—compete with two legged hunters for the same animals—deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and moose. Adding to the complexity of the issue, two-legged hunters and outfitters often make a large portion of their living from hunting or leading hunts.

State game and fish departments were created in the early 1900s to protect and regulate hunting, and developed a revenue structure through the sale of licenses. Because of the diverse interests and non-consumptive value placed on many species, this antiquated structure often compromises the integrity of true game management. A bias toward selling more licenses, therefore killing more cougars, is inherent in this structure.

One reasonable method of managing cougars was proposed by the foremost cougar ecologist Ken Logan. Logan presented the Zone Management Approach at the biannual Defenders of Wildlife Carnivores Conference on November 18-20 in Monterey, California. The Zone Management Approach is the result of Ken Logan and Cougar Fund Advisory Board Member Linda Sweanor's extensive 10-year cougar study in New Mexico. It developed through a series of community meetings conducted throughout New Mexico on the myriad public attitudes and values towards cougars. Although the plan is accepted by the New Mexico Game and Fish Department, it has yet to be implemented.

The Zone Management Approach integrates the interests and concerns of many different and establishes common ground among the diverse interests. by designating three distinct zones for cougar conservation:

- VIII. Control zone: Cougars are controlled in this type of zone, which is adjacent to populated areas and domestic livestock pens.
- IX. Hunting zone: Cougar hunting is permitted in this zone, but with strict subquotas that protect females, the reproductive segment of the population who are either pregnant or with dependent young for 75% of their adult lives.
- X. Refuge zones: Cougars are protected in these no-hunt zones, which must be at least 1000 square miles. These zones act as "biological savings accounts" for the species.

### **Cougars in Wyoming**

The proper way to manage cougars in Wyoming is debated by outfitters, hunters, non consumptive users and conservationists. There are many conflicting interests and no easy solution. However, The Cougar Fund feels that Wyoming's current cougar management plan does not ensure the long-term survival of the species. The Cougar Fund also questions the ethics of how cougars are most often pursued, using dogs, radio-telemetry devices and motorized vehicles.

This past May, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department commendably hosted the 7<sup>th</sup> Mountain Lion Workshop, a world-class gathering of management professionals and the top cougar ecologists working in the field today. The workshop was held in Jackson Hole, Wyoming and attended by the majority of the board of The Cougar Fund. Cougar biologists and concerned citizens from around the country gathered to talk about the past, current and future of cougar management.

During the three days of presentations, several scientific papers pointed to the need to amplify current cougar management strategies to include larger geographical areas, in some cases recommending that game managers set their sights on regional management approaches, often in cooperation with neighboring states. Such approaches were presented as a way for managers to base their recommendations on available science and established cougar ecology, noting the dispersal habits and low-density characteristics of *Puma concolor*.

A single lion, or a mother with cubs, patrols and defends an average home range of 100 square miles. Intense competition between individual cats, as well as natural mortality, results in cub survival rates of just 60%. Highways, roads, housing development, agriculture, fragmented landscapes and nearly year-round hunting pressure across the West add to the natural challenges cougars face in trying to live, disperse and survive on their own in the wild.

So should it be a surprise that, after funding an extensive five-year study in the Snowy Mountains (Lindsey/Andersen) and hosting a major scientific symposium, the WYGFD would delay retooling a dated management model, instead opting to further fragment their current approach by subdividing south Jackson hunt Area 2 into two management units, thus adding an Area 29.

The WYGFD seems to be tying its own loophole in carving out a new Area 29 to escape the potential public scrutiny of raising the kill quota in Area 2 without any scientific reason for the increase. After all, the WYGFD reassured the general public that kill quotas would not be raised for a considerable amount of time following the jump from 5 to 12 in 2000—in order to better study trends, they said. However, under Wyoming's new management plan, four more cougars would be available for hunters to kill each year.

The WYGFD's priority seems to remain focused on exploiting some of the best cougar habitat in the state, a potential source population that may provide genetic diversity for the greater cougar gene pool. The state regulations miss the mark completely on managing a resilient yet cryptic keystone species such as the cougar and accomplishes this without as much as a nod toward the current science available. Subdividing Area 2 amounts to a strategy to better accommodate hunters, not a scientifically-driven management approach to better manage cougars.

Finally, the thin veneer of hunting as an antidote to human safety concerns is unjustifiable and patently misleads the public about the state's ability to diminish, much less prevent, a potential cougar attack on pets, humans or livestock. There is no scientific research that supports hunting cougars will result in increased human safety. On the contrary, the most hunted cougar population is in British Columbia; likewise, more people are attacked by cougars there than anywhere else. On the flip side, cougars have not been hunted in California for 30 years and in spite of boasting both the most abundant and productive cougar habitat in the West, and the largest population in the U.S. – 34 million – no fatal attacks have occurred since 1994.

It is disappointing to see the WYGFD jeopardize its resources, investment and reputation with their new cougar management regulations – forming another cougar management area and raising the kill quota by four lions. At the annual cougar hunting season setting meeting in Sheridan, Wyoming on July 26, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission not only ignored much public comment questioning their rationale for again raising the quota but continued to subvert the democratic process and further stifle public debate. In the new proposal, cougar hunting regulations are now set every 3 years instead of annually. This lack of due process not



only shows a disregard for the concerned public but a disrespect for such and important and magnificent species. In the sticky business of wildlife management, under near-constant fire from the varying agendas of special interest groups, must not the common denominator be science? This point was well made in Jackson during the 7<sup>th</sup> Mountain Lion Workshop.

## **Cougars in Colorado**

In November 2002, The Cougar Fund joined forces with SINAPU, a Boulder, Colorado-based nonprofit organization that is dedicated to restoring native carnivores in the Southern Rockies. Carnivore Protection Program Director Wendy Keefover-Ring launched Sinapu's statewide campaign, calling for the Colorado Division of Wildlife to lower its proposed cougar kill quota from 791 to 300 on the basis of the lack of scientific data the Colorado Division of Wildlife employs in setting cougar quotas. Cougar ecologist Dr. Rick Hopkins provided scientific testimony on behalf of SINAPU'S citizen petition.

“The Cougar Fund played a key role in testifying before the CO DOW Commission” says Keefover-Ring. “It is important that local and state game managers realize the value of cougars beyond their respective state borders. Cougars have a value to all people, no matter where they live.”

Cougar Fund co-founders Tom Mangelsen and Cara Blessley Lowe traveled to Colorado to testify before the Division of Wildlife to both lower the proposed quota as well as to call for strict sub-quotas on females. “It is essential that state game managers and commissioners understand the value of cougars to hunters and nonhunters alike throughout the United States”, remarked Mangelsen.

“Cougars know no boundaries” reflected Blessley Lowe, “neither in literal or philosophical terms. Cougars belong not only to the states where they live and roam, but to all Americans as our collective heritage of wildlife and wildlands.”

The Cougar Fund partners with local grassroots and national organizations to advocate the science-based management of cougars as well as fomenting understanding of the species through education. “Only by approaching issues cooperatively can we truly make a difference. As Americans, we all share cougars in common,” said Lowe.

In spite of the fact that the Colorado DOW Commission voted 5-3 in favor of keeping the quota at 791, the Commission was unable to reconcile their missing population, age/sex ratio, or dispersal data for the state's cougars. “Colorado's lack of basic scientific data handicaps their role as a responsible agency capable of managing a controversial species such as the cougar in the eyes of their constituency and the general public.” It is a shame that they haven't chosen to err on being conservative in their policies towards managing cougars.

## COLORADO'S COUGARS: THE FACTS

1999 cougar kill quota: 782 total killed: 337 179 males 155 females (46% female)  
2000 cougar kill quota: 794 Total killed: 318 179 males 139 females (44% female)  
2001 cougar kill quota: 791 Total killed: 439 237 males 197 females (45% female)

Estimated number of cougars in Colorado: 1,500-7,000

### **The Cougar Fund Staff**

The Cougar Fund is made up of a 9-person Board of Directors and has 4 Advisory Board members. Please visit our website at [www.cougarfund.org](http://www.cougarfund.org) if you are interested in reading about our board members.

In May of 2003, Wildlife Biologist Rick Hopkins joined the Board of Directors for The Cougar Fund. Rick has a Ph.D in Wildlands Resource Science from the University of California, Berkeley. Rick's areas of expertise include population ecology, mammalogy, predator ecology, wildlife/habitat relationships, conservation biology, threatened and endangered species and environmental regulations. He is the author or co-author of many publications including *The Density and Home Range Characteristics of Mountain Lions in the Diablo Range of California*, *Monitoring Population Trends of Large Carnivores using Track Transects* and *Current Techniques Used in the Research of Pumas*.

Krissy Robertson is currently the only part-time employee for The Cougar Fund. Krissy makes her home in Jackson Hole, Wyoming and originally hails from New York. As Program Director for The Cougar Fund and our only employee, Krissy juggles everything from daily office needs to program conception, planning and execution.

The Cougar Fund operates with a 99% volunteer staff. If you are interested in volunteering time or sponsoring services for The Cougar Fund, please contact us at [info@cougarfund.org](mailto:info@cougarfund.org) with "volunteer" or "sponsor" in the subject heading.