

JAGUAR HANDLING PROTOCOL

(Updated March 2007)

Policy:

State wildlife representatives to the Jaguar Conservation Team (JAGCT) or their designees will respond to all jaguar reports, including livestock depredation reports or reports of accidental trapping, in accordance with procedures prescribed in this protocol.

Procedures:

- A. The purpose of these procedures is to create a situation where jaguars and humans can co-exist. In dealing with jaguars, there are a number of factors that must be considered. These factors may include the individual jaguar's physical condition, damage of personal property, and public safety. We must be aware of the effects jaguars may have on landowners and government agencies, and be sensitive to what people and agencies feel their role is when we handle jaguars.
- B. During normal working hours, all observations of reported jaguars should be forwarded to the JAGCT respective state wildlife agency representative. Handling requirements of these observations are outlined below by category. Each agency maintains its own policy regarding how to route information on such reported sightings, but the end results should be the same: involvement of all affected parties and timely resolution of any situation.
- C. The JAGCT member receiving the report will determine if the jaguar call requires an immediate response based on the following categories. (Appropriate responses for each category are described below in section D.)
 1. Category 1: Jaguar is considered to be in immediate danger because:
 - a. the jaguar is injured;
 - b. the jaguar is confined or restrained and unable to leave the area, i.e. foot snare.
 2. Category 2: Jaguar is not considered in immediate danger, but is of special interest to the JAGCT (i.e. potential for placing a radio-collar on the jaguar) or may be in danger in the future because:
 - a. the jaguar is temporarily confined or restrained (i.e. at bay by dogs) and/or does not appear to have a radio-collar or is unmarked;
 - b. the jaguar is defending a kill, or has been involved in a livestock depredation.
 3. Category 3: The jaguar is not in immediate danger, nor is there reason to believe that it will be because:
 - a. the jaguar is only observed traveling through an area or resting, and appears

uninjured and poses no threat to personal property.

D. As soon as the category has been determined, the JAGCT member responding to the call will continue as follows for the appropriate category listed below.

1. Category I situations require immediate responses by a state wildlife agency representative of the JAGCT or their designee. If livestock depredation is suspected or observed, a member of the JAGCT Depredation Committee should also be contacted and respond.
 - a. The reporting party will be advised that the jaguar poses a threat to public safety and that all people should keep out of the area where the jaguar is located. The reporting party will also be advised to avoid any activities that might cause the animal to injure itself.
 - b. The JAGCT state wildlife representative or their designee will travel to the site and assess the situation as soon as possible. Jaguar capture procedures (see Jaguar Capture Guidelines) should be initiated if deemed appropriate.
 - c. The safety of the jaguar and any people present are the most important aspects of handling. If for any reason, any of the actions below would imperil the jaguar or people present, those actions should not take place, and the jaguar should be released immediately.
 - d. If necessary, jaguars that are handled will be anesthetized, processed and released on site. Processing includes taking standard physical measurements (weight, length, girth, pad sizes, skull and tooth dimensions); estimating age; assessing physical condition; taking blood samples for genetics evaluation, assessing physical parameters and parasites/disease testing; photographing natural spot patterns; ear-tagging and radio collaring. Recommended anesthesia is Telazol at a dose of 5mg/kg (2.3mg/lb) [Schobert 1987, Kock et al. 1989, Barnett and Lewis 1990] administered by experienced personnel only, with a jab stick or dart from a dart pistol or dart rifle (long range only). Round plastic ear-tags may be applied and should be numbered and non-protruding.
 - e. Injured jaguars will be anesthetized and the extent of injuries evaluated. Non-debilitating injuries will be treated on site and the animal will be processed and released (following the description above and within the JAGCT Capture Guidelines), if appropriate. Debilitating injuries will be treated on site, as best possible. If necessary, the jaguar will be transported to a veterinarian experienced in working with large carnivores and/or wild animals for treatment. Rehabilitated jaguars will be released as soon as possible at or near the capture site. Non-releasible, rehabilitated jaguars will be placed at

appropriate facilities to the extent possible.

- f. When a Category I jaguar is captured on private property and the landowner does not want it released on site, the jaguar will be moved to and released at a pre-approved release site. Both state wildlife agencies will pre-determine at least one release site where jaguars can be relocated. If a jaguar is moved to the release site, and remains in the area, a second site must also be identified for the release of a second jaguar, if needed. If the jaguar does not remain in the vicinity of the release site, successive jaguars can also be released there until one does occupy the area.
2. If a Category II jaguar is on a natural kill, the location of the kill will be visited, the kill verified and documented, and habitat data recorded. If the kill is determined to be a livestock depredation, the landowner will be offered fair compensation for their loss following procedures described by the JAGCT Depredation Committee. Compensation for livestock depredations requires verification by an approved JAGCT Depredation Committee member. The landowner will be offered fair compensation for the loss following the JAGCT Depredation Committee guidelines.
3. If a Category III jaguar is reported, a JAGCT Sighting Report Form must be filled out and forwarded to the JAGCT state wildlife agency representative. Further actions (i.e. field investigations for possible tracks and/or physical evidence) may be required depending upon the validity (JAGCT Ranking Criteria) and timing of the report.
 - a. For Class I observations (those with physical evidence or deemed as high probability of an actual jaguar) every measure should be taken to maintain confidentiality of the site. At the same time, notification of affected landowners and persons conducting legal trapping activities in the immediate vicinity of the sighting should occur as deemed appropriate by the JAGCT state wildlife agency representative.