

CITY/REGION

Lion encounters few in state

By LEW FREEDMAN
Staff writer

When they bare their teeth, they mean business. But, luckily, the chance of an encounter with a mountain lion in Wyoming is limited.

"In Wyoming we average 1-2 aggressive encounters a year," said Luke Ellsberry, a large carnivore biologist with the Game and Fish Department. "It's extremely rare."

Wyoming is a place that not only has many people who love to be active in the outdoors, but also is a place where it's possible to run into bears, mountain lions and wolves.

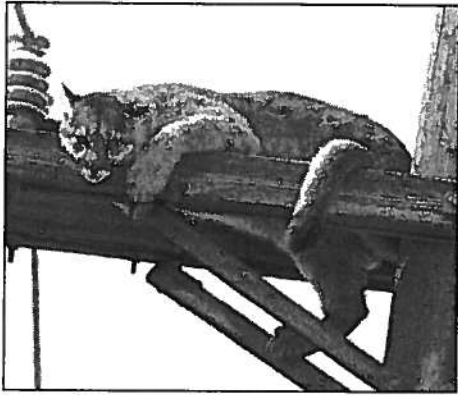
At an educational workshop April 9 at the Park County Public Library, G&F experts provided safety tips and advice for people hiking, hunting, fishing or otherwise recreating in the backcountry.

While it is more likely that people will bump into black or grizzly bears, discussion was included on how to react if someone walks around a bend on a wooded trail and there's a mountain lion or wolf.

Common sense, mental preparedness and being armed with bear spray or a firearm all are tools to fight back, if necessary, or to help avoid a dangerous confrontation.

But behavior by the animals in various situations is unpredictable.

As for mountain lions, "you can read them a little bit," Ellsberry says. "They



A young mountain lion lies atop a utility pole on Stagecoach Trail near Buffalo Bill Reservoir in March 2013.

hiss a lot and vocalize a little bit. I've seen 200 lions and have yet to hear one scream."

An agitated mountain lion that might attack needs to know you are not prey, Ellsberry said.

"You're big, you're mean," he said of how a person should act.

Ellsberry said if an individual is unarmed he should arm himself with rocks or sticks.

"You want to fight back. Don't run," he added. "If you have bear spray, there is no reason it should not work on them. Fight back as hard as you can."

Such advice is more prac-

tical for a tangle with a mountain lion (which may weigh up to 180 pounds among males and 120 among females) than it is for a larger species like a bear.

Ellsberry noted a famous Wyoming human-mountain lion conflict in which a mountain lion crawled toward a man cutting wood and leapt at him. The wood chopper, wielding a chainsaw, buried the metal teeth into the lion's shoulder.

When examined after the incident, the lion was ill and had parasitic worms, Ellsberry said.

While that was an unusual attack, Ellsberry said people should try to avoid being in

the wild at dusk and dawn - prime time for mountain lions - should control their pets and keep children close. At home in rural areas people should also install outdoor lighting and trim bushes to provide clearings where a lion easily can be seen.

Wolves are out there, too, but encounters are more rare.

While wolves will eat moose, bison, elk and squirrels, they also prey on cattle and sheep. There were 61 wolf attacks last year in which the state was obligated to reimburse ranchers for livestock loss.

There are about 195 wolves in Wyoming, not including Yellowstone Park, Ellsberry said.

Statistics dating to about 1800 indicate there have been only five human fatalities due to wolf predation in North America.

"I don't think we have a confirmed case in Wyoming," Ellsberry said.

"We need to bring much more attention to safety in bear country than to safety in wolf country," G&F information specialist Tara Hodgess said in assessing the comparative threat.

The chances of a one-on-one battle with a wolf are remote, Ellsberry said, but as in any showdown with a mountain lion a person should "fight back aggressively with all you've got."

(Lew Freedman can be reached at lew@codyenterprise.com.)

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'Lot, boundary' changes approved

By RHONDA SCHULTE
Staff writer

A revised section of city subdivision ordinance is on its way to becoming law.

The proposed amendments describe how to adjust boundary lines or consolidate multiple lots into one.

City council members passed the revised subdivision ordinance on first reading April 7 after a hearing drew no public comment.

Planning and Zoning members voted March 24 to recommend the changes to the council.

City planner Todd Stowell explained the reasons behind the changes during meetings and in a written report.

The lot consolidation section to the ordinance is new, he said. It outlines procedures for moving and eliminating property lines for the purpose of combining

two or more lots into a single lot. The process is typically done to reduce total tax assessments or to comply with building or zoning codes.

Current law prohibits building across lot lines without providing a fire wall at the boundary. Depending on zoning regulations for the property, zoning setbacks may be violated by building over lot lines.

Stowell said he looked for the simplest way to legally adjust lots lines. Other than ignoring them - which he said some jurisdictions do - the simplest method is a declaration method.

"Effectively, it's a one-page document completed by the property owner and recorded with the county clerk that declares the multiple consolidated lots are to be treated as a single lot for building code, zoning code and property transfer purposes,"

Stowell wrote in a report. He said amendments to the existing boundary line ordinance primarily deal with procedure. The detailed information serves mainly as an instruction manual for staff or applicants.

According to Stowell's report, the current code does not have clear approval or denial criteria. Clarity about the need to file a deed to transfer property also is needed.

Changes add a deadline to the deed filing process. The lack of deadline has led to extensive lapses between authorization for the adjustment and filing the deed.

For more information about the ordinance visit cityofcody-wy.gov or call Stowell, 527-7511.

(Rhonda Schulte can be reached at rhonda@codyenterprise.com.)

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STATE OF WYOMING PUBLIC NOTICE
Purpose of Public Notice

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Water Quality Division (WQD) will hold a public meeting at the Meeteetse Senior Center, 1105 Park Avenue, Meeteetse, Wyoming 82433, on Thursday, June 4, 2015 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm. The purpose of the public meeting is to discuss potential steps that the Big Valley-Crossed Arrows subdivisions might take to resolve pending enforcement actions related to the subdivision's failing and unpermitted septic system, and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to provide any information related to the septic system.

Wyoming Water Quality Rules and Regulations, Chapter 16, Section 9(j) prohibits the operation of any Class V facility with liquid waste visible on the ground surface. During multiple inspections since 1991, raw sewage has been observed surfacing at the Big Valley-Crossed Arrows subdivision's septic system, in violation of this regulation. In addition, Wyoming Water Quality Rules and Regulations, Chapter 16, Section 4(a) requires all operators of existing systems to obtain a UIC permit by April 14, 2000. The septic system currently being utilized by residents of the Big Valley-Crossed Arrows subdivisions has never had an Underground Injection Control (UIC) permit.

The Big Valley-Crossed Arrows subdivision septic system, located near the intersection of Saddle Hill Road and Arrowhead Drive north of Meeteetse, Wyoming, serves an undetermined number of residences located within the adjoining Big Valley and Crossed Arrows subdivisions. Currently, there appears to be no entity responsible for the maintenance and repair of this facility.

The public may specifically comment on and provide information related to the Big Valley-Crossed Arrows septic system. Written comments and information may be submitted in advance of the public meeting to the following address: Department of Environmental Quality/Water Quality Division, Attn: Kevin Frederick, Administrator, 122 West 25th Street, Herschler 4W, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002. Oral and written comments and information will be accepted until the public comment period closes at the end of the public meeting. An electronic copy of this notice is available at: <http://deq.wyoming.gov/wqd/public-notices/underground-injection-control/>.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, special assistance or alternative formats will be made available upon request for individuals with disabilities. Please provide at least three (3) weeks advance notice for such requests.

Big Valley-Crossed Arrows Public Meeting Sign-in Sheet - June 4, 2015

| # | Name (please print clearly) | Address | Telephone # | E-mail address |
|----|---|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1 | Shante Brown/Samartha Biskley/Ron Blake | | 250-0102 (Ron) | |
| 2 | Renae Hugg | 5123 Slato Hwy 120 | 272-9602 | |
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