

Title of Investigation: Mountain Lion Investigation

**Notification / Dispatch to complaint:**

On December 15, 2014 at approximately 1702 hours I was dispatched to [REDACTED] in Bourbon County Ky for a mountain lion sighting. On the way to the complaint I made contact with my supervisor and a wildlife biologist with the department. The biologist advised that if it was a mountain lion it needed to be euthanized due to the fact that a tranquilizer gun was more than 2 hours away and it would be dark within 30 minutes. He advised that public safety was our main concern.

**Arrival at Complaint:**

Upon arrival at the complaint I made contact with property owner [REDACTED] who was the complainant. [REDACTED] Advised she had been walking her dog, a rhodesian ridgeback, on her property and it treed a large cat that she believed to be a mountain lion. [REDACTED] advised that it was last seen in a tree approximately 200 yards from her residence. At 1720 [REDACTED] took me to the tree that she had photographed the mountain lion in. I asked [REDACTED] if she wanted to let her dog back out of the kennel in hopes it would warn us if the mountain lion was still around and she did. I secured my patrol rifle from my vehicle and followed her as she led me through a field and onto a trail on the back of her farm. [REDACTED] stated that if the animal was still around, her dog would pick up the scent immediately. Not long after that her dog picked up a scent and started running through the woods and [REDACTED] said that was exactly how he acted earlier. I followed the dog through the woods into an open field and lost sight of him. I could still hear the dog barking when I heard [REDACTED] say that she could see the mountain lion and that it was in a tree. I walked a few feet into the woods and saw the mountain lion in a fork of a tree approximately 40 yards away. I then fired three shots at it. The mountain lion fell out of the tree and I could hear it running through the woods. I backed out and waited for another officer to arrive. We recovered the mountain lion at 1821

**Interview with Complainant [REDACTED]:**

On December 16, 2014 at approximately 1247 hours I interviewed [REDACTED]. This interview was recorded. The interview took place at [REDACTED]. Officer James Mulholland was present during the interview.

[REDACTED] explained:

- She explained that she just got back from England on Thursday December 11, 2015 and she started noticing more than normal feathers and fur on her property so she put a trail cam up.

- On December 15<sup>th</sup> around 4 she ran her Rhodesian ridgeback and the dog dove in a wood pile and ran a large cat up a tree. She took pictures and went back to the house because she didn't have a gun. She stated that the mountain lion did not act aggressive towards her.
- She called her neighbor [REDACTED] who got her in contact with PAWS animal shelter. PAWS contacted Bourbon County Animal Control Officer Jesse Florence. He called her back and said he didn't have the resources to handle a mountain lion and that fish and wildlife should be contacted.
- She stated that she took the memory card out of the camera to check it on December the 15<sup>th</sup> and erased it because there was nothing on it.
- She stated that she does nuisance wildlife control as a hobby and has worked for a number of farm owners in the area. She raises terriers that will go into a hole in the ground and hold the animal until she can dig down and shoot the nuisance animal.
- She stated that she has been taking trips to England since the 1990's to hunt animals such as fox and badger with her terriers. She explained that England has lost permission to hunt with dogs so what she does is highly illegal there and has to be done under the table.
- She stated that they have a veterinarian in England that signs road kill certificates on animals she kills so she can legally bring the pelts into the United States.
- She stated that with her knowledge of animals that the mountain lion did not act like a wild animal and that from its teeth she would guess that it was around three years old.
- She stated that who ever had this mountain lion would have to feed it raw meat.
- She stated that the reason she has an African lion dog is because her friend has one and it is good with terriers.
- She stated that she had no knowledge of this mountain lion and does not believe in keeping wild animals caged. She gave us permission to search her property.
- Conducted thorough search of the property including house, kennels, barn and sheds and gathered hair samples from basement all the dog kennels and feces samples from the yard. One room in barn had a freezer with several bags of frozen raw meat.
- Recovered memory card from trail cam had it analyzed at KSP crime lab.

**Interview with [REDACTED]:**

On December 16, 2014 at approximately 1500 hours I interviewed [REDACTED]. This interview was not recorded. The interview took place at [REDACTED]. Officer James Mulholland was present during the interview.

[REDACTED] explained:

- He stated that he has known [REDACTED] for several years and has spoken with her on several occasions.
- He stated that she is a good neighbor and keeps to herself.
- He stated that he doesn't believe she had anything to do with the mountain lion.
- He stated that he has no knowledge of where the mountain lion came from.

**Interview with [REDACTED]:**

On December 16, 2014 at approximately 1527 hours I interviewed [REDACTED]. This interview was recorded. The interview took place at [REDACTED]. Officer James Mulholland was present during the interview.

[REDACTED] explained:

- He stated the he doesn't have any knowledge of where the mountain lion came from.
- He stated that [REDACTED] sent him a picture of the mountain lion at 1600 on December 15, 2014 and he drove to her residence but didn't see anything. He stated that was the only time he has been on her property.

**Interview with [REDACTED]:**

On June 2, 2015 at approximately 1100 hours I was present with US Fish and Wildlife agent John Barham during phone interview with [REDACTED] in Jackson Ohio. This interview was recorded.

[REDACTED] explained:

- He stated that he has known [REDACTED] for several years and they hunt dogs together.
- He confirmed everything about the events on December 15, 2014 that she told in her statement.
- He stated that to his knowledge she has never shown any interest in mountain lions.
- He explained that the reason she has a Rhodesian ridgeback is for protection because she lives alone.
- He stated that anyone that knows her knows that she would not keep a mountain lion.

**Interview with [REDACTED]**

On June 2, 2015 at approximately 1511 hours US Fish and Wildlife Officer John Barham and myself interviewed [REDACTED] who is a neighbor of [REDACTED]. This interview was recorded. The interview took place at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] explained:

- He stated that he has no knowledge of the mountain lion.
- He stated that he has only lived at this residence for one year so he does not know any of the neighbors.