

DNR Confirms Cougar Killed In Buffalo County November 15, 2023 Wisconsin DNR News

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has confirmed the fatal shooting of a cougar in Buffalo County. The incident was reported to the [DNR's Violation Hotline](#) on Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023.

Cougars are a protected species in Wisconsin, so DNR conservation wardens conducted a thorough investigation into the shooting and provided the information to the Buffalo County District Attorney. After careful review and consideration, no charges will be filed.

The incident involved an archery deer hunter who encountered the cougar while hunting and felt their safety was at risk. The hunter shot the cougar and self-reported it shortly afterward to the DNR. The DNR collected the cougar carcass as part of the investigation.

Cougars are a native species to Wisconsin but were extirpated from the state in the early 1900s. The DNR has not confirmed evidence of a breeding population of cougars. In the last 20 years, observations of cougars have been increasing but are still rare, with an average of 15-20 reports verified by the DNR annually. All evidence to date suggests that most, if not all, of these observations are of dispersing individuals from established populations out west. Dispersing cougars also do not tend to stay in one location for long and have been recorded traveling up to 1,600 miles.

The public is encouraged to report cougar sightings via the DNR's [Wildlife Observation Tool](#). Additional information on cougars and verified observations is available on the DNR's [Cougars in Wisconsin webpage](#).