



Santa Monica
Mountains
FUND

Organization	Santa Monica Mountains Fund
Project Location	United States
Species	Cougars & Bobcats
Project Overview	<p>The Santa Monica Mountains Fund is dedicated to advancing research and conservation of the mountain lions and Bobcats that call the park home. Unfortunately, their future in the park is uncertain and the Fund is actively working with park biologists to learn what is needed protect these magnificent animals. Clear evidence shows that when large predators are lost, the balance of life in an ecosystem is severely disrupted and the diversity of other plants and animals begins an accelerated decline. Human impact is the largest threat to native species, and it comes in many forms including habitat loss, conflict with wildlife, and introduction of invasive species. The Santa Monica Fund protects native species by investing in scientific research that is used to determine management and policy decisions. They also work to raise awareness of species protection issues to help visitors and park neighbors understand how their decisions might affect the amazing plants and animals found within the mountains.</p> <p>A known threat for these cats is Habitat Fragmentation. A single male mountain lion uses about 100,000 acres of natural habitat, about the size of the entire Santa Monica Mountains! If mountain lions cannot move between natural areas, their population will not survive, therefore it is essential to keep open spaces connected and create new wildlife corridors where needed. Recent studies also showed threats from rodent poisons. Eleven out of twelve mountain lions tested positive for two or more rodent poison toxins. Researchers found higher levels of toxins in wild cats that spent more time in developed areas.</p> <p>Since the spring of 2002, park scientists have studied mountain lions in and around the park. The more known about their behavior, the better equipped they are to protect them. Mountain lions are radio-collared and then scientists use GPS to monitor their movement. The questions researchers are trying to answer are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How are movement patterns of mountain lions affected by urban development and roads?• What constitutes a barrier (ie., freeways?) and what constitutes a corridor (ie., underpasses?) for these wild cats?• What is the survival rate for these animals and what are the sources of mortality for them?• What are the population estimates for mountain lions in the Simi Valley and Santa Monica Mountains?

- To what diseases are these mountain lions exposed?
- Are the mountain lions reproducing?

Website

<https://www.samofund.org>

