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### **(S.D.)-Protection Group Upset By Killing Of Young Mountain Lions**



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/19/2014 07:53 AM

RAPID CITY, S.D. (ASSOCIATED PRESS) - A national mountain lion protection organization is outraged that South Dakota hunters shot three young lions last week and had their kills deemed legal by the state.

Penny Maldonado with the Wyoming-based Cougar Fund says that the killing of the 3-month-old, 4-month-old and 5-month-old lions is "tragic."

It's a misdemeanor for hunters to kill lion kittens that still have spots, or those that travel in pairs or groups. But state Game, Fish & Parks Regional Wildlife Manager John Kanta says the spotted coat that indicates youth can disappear at various times.

He says no fines were issued to hunters who killed the young lions, after the animals were examined in a lab.

Maldonado thinks more education and animal identification training is needed in South Dakota.