[Date]

Mr. Eric Sklar, President

California Fish and Game Commission

1416 Ninth Street, Suite1320

Sacramento, CA 95814

Submitted via email to fgc@fgc.ca.gov

RE: Petition to list Southern California and Central Coast mountain lions as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act – support advancement to candidacy

Dear President Sklar and Commissioners:

My name is [Name] and I support the petition to list Southern California and Central Coast mountain lions as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).

Although facing many threats, the most substantial threat to mountain lions in California stems from low genetic diversity and effective population sizes, putting them at increased risk of extinction. Human impacts also threaten the population, with development and roads decreasing mobility of numerous Evolutionary Significant Units (ESUs). Due to restrictions and lack of consideration for mountain lion habitat, isolated populations possess little genetic diversity and have become the most at-risk populations. This, combined with a high level of human-caused mortalities such as car strikes, rodenticide poisonings, depredation kills, disease, and wildfires, are threatening California mountain lions.

Without immediate action to address threats and preserve remaining corridors to enhance connectivity, it is predicted that the Santa Ana and Santa Monica mountain populations could become extinct within 50 years or less. If inbreeding depression occurs, scientists predict these populations could disappear within 12-15 years.

Listing under CESA would not just benefit the cats themselves, but also local habitats which contribute to the flourishing biodiversity of California. The presence of mountain lions as top-predators maintains diverse habitats to support the plant, fish, reptile, mammal, and invertebrate species. Flourishing and healthy mountain lion populations have been shown to support healthy ecosystems by managing prey such as deer. Their kills also provide food sources for scavengers as they are the only remaining large predator in the region. If the species were to become extinct, effects would be seen across many wildlife species by limiting food supply and affecting biodiversity generally.

I therefore strongly urge the California Fish and Game Commission to accept the Department’s recommendation that listing may be warranted and advance Southern California and Central Coast mountain lions to candidacy.

Sincerely,

[Name]