

RC 58

# Black Bear Trapping Regulations

## Proposal 36

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation



## Review

- Historically, black bears have variously been treated as big game animals or furbearers in North America.
  - In Canada, sale of bear skins has been legal in all provinces for over 300 years without conservation issues. Trapping legal in most provinces (all if First Nations are considered)
  - In Alaska, black bears were variously classified as big game or furbearers by Alaska Game Commission—sale of black bear hides was allowed by BOG as recently as the 1960s
  - Maine has allowed trapping for many years—currently, 250 trappers take about 75 bears/year
  - Board has received at least 18 proposals over the past 10 years to allow sale of bear skins or snaring

## Black Bears as a Furbearer

- ⊙ Black bears added to the definition of “furbearer” at January 2010 meeting in response to Yukon Flats AC proposal to allow sale of black bear hides—1 July 2010
  - Does not automatically allow bear trapping.
  - Does allow board to establish trapping seasons if the Board chooses to do so.

## Purpose of Trapping Proposal

- ⊙ Be responsive to Alaskans who want help with bear/moose management issues
  - Problem animals around fish camps and cabins
  - Predation on moose calves in hunting areas around villages
  - Avoid having to implement more aerial wolf control
  - Convince people to use more selective methods in dealing with problem bears
- ⊙ Provide examples of management situations that might be addressed with bear trapping
- ⊙ Promote discussion among ACs, the public, the Board about how trapping could be used to help manage black bears

## Policy Considerations

- Draft Bear Policy is before the Board.
  - Trapping not intended to provide additional opportunity for harvest—it is intended as a management tool
  - Focus trapping into small areas where it is likely to solve existing problems, not create new ones

## Practical Considerations if the Board Authorizes Open Trapping Seasons

- Methods and Means
- Incidentally Caught brown/grizzly bears
- Nonresident participation
- Age Limit
- Same-day-airborne
- Uncaptured brown/grizzly bears near traps
- Periodic trap check requirement

## Practical Considerations (con't)

- ⊙ Bait-site/trap site considerations
- ⊙ Commercial Use
- ⊙ Controlled Use Areas
- ⊙ Conservation Concerns
- ⊙ Human Safety Concerns
- ⊙ Land Status

## Units Under Consideration, Seasons and Bag

- ⊙ GMUs--with history of proposals for bear trapping
  - Unit 12, that portion north of the Alaska Highway and west of the Taylor Highway
  - Unit 16B
  - Unit 19A
  - Unit 19D
  - Unit 20E
  - Unit 21
  - Unit 25D, outside the Dalton Highway Corridor
- ⊙ April 15 – June 30 and July 1 – Oct 15
- ⊙ No bag limit, registration or registration permit required, may be closed by emergency order when xx brown bears are incidentally taken.

## Areas Under Consideration

- Yukon Flats, McGrath, and middle Kuskokwim has been the focus of discussion, but Department worked with other ACs who also have concerns (e.g. 20C, 12-20E).
  - Areas are large--intended to become smaller
  - Smaller areas described in regulation
  - Smaller areas established under permit conditions

## Salvage Requirement

- **Default**
  - Hides only
  - Meat can be sold
- **Recommend**
  - Either meat or hide
  - Meat cannot be sold
- **Considered**
  - No salvage requirements

## Methods and Means

### ○ Default

- All snares, leg-hold traps
- Firearms (rimfire and centerfire)
- Archery

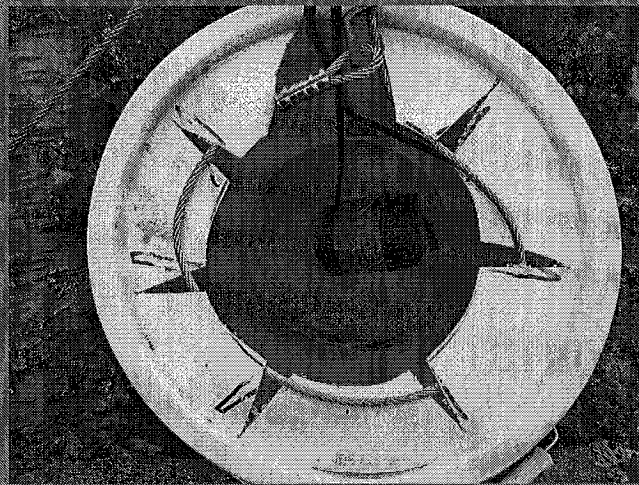
### ○ Recommend

- Bucket foot snares—selectivity, non-target catch
- Centerfire firearms—archery not likely in rural areas

### ○ Considered

- Archery and Muzzleloader—this would entail developing minimum equipment standards similar to those used in big game hunts

## Bucket Snares-Description



## Incidentally Caught Brown Bears

- **Default**
  - Remain property of the state
- **Recommend**
  - Remain property of the state
- **Considered**
  - Allow trappers to keep brown bears
  - Harvested bears need to be skinned and hide and skull delivered to the department

## Nonresident Participation

- **Default**
  - Residents and non-residents
- **Options**
  - Residents and non-residents (when a nonresident is accompanied by a resident over the age of 16 who is registered to trap bears)
  - Confounded by how incidentally caught brown/grizzly bears and protective or young bears are handled
  - Residents only
  - Require guide for nonresidents

## Minimum Age

- **Default**
  - No minimum age
- **Recommend**
  - Age limit—16 years and older

## Same-day Airborne Shooting of Black Bears

- **Default**
  - Same-day airborne permitted for trapping
- **Recommend**
  - Allow same-day airborne, greater than 300 feet of aircraft



## Uncaptured Brown Bears Near Traps

### ⦿ Default

- Not allowed to be legally taken, except DLP

### ⦿ Recommend

- Allow protective or dependent bears to be killed if within xxx distance of trap

## Trap Check Requirement

### ⦿ Default

- No requirement

### ⦿ Recommend

- Every 2 days

Note: Department does not recommend trap check intervals for other trapping in winter—primarily for safety concerns

## Black Bear Bait Site Registration Trapping Permit Recommendations

- Must register with the department
- Must be clearly marked
- Must be cleaned up after use
- Must be away from public roads, trails and railroad, and houses or permanent dwellings, businesses and schools, and campgrounds and public recreation facilities
- Only biodegradable materials can be used for bait

## Other Black Bear Trapping Recommendations

- **Default**
  - Trappers can receive payment for taking people on traplines
  - must report harvest of incidentally taken brown bears within 5 days
- **Cub black bears and sows with cubs may be taken**

## Commercial Use

- ◉ Default

- Trappers can receive payment for taking people on traplines

## Controlled Use Areas

- ◉ Technically, the following areas will be open for the use of mechanized vehicles for bear trapping (current regulations only apply to hunting)—probably not a major issue.
  - Glacier Mountain CUA
  - Ladue River CUA
  - Upper Kuskokwim CUA
  - Holitna - Hoholitna CUA

## Conservation Issues

- ◉ ADF&G does not anticipate conservation issues with black bears or with brown/grizzly bears, even if the Board opens large areas to trapping.
  - Number of bears taken will be relatively small
  - Brown/grizzly bears much more resilient to harvest than previously thought—bears can tolerate higher percentage harvest than ungulates (where predation occurs)
  - Relatively few people will participate
  - Harvest cap on brown/grizzly bears
  - Reporting/sealing requirements for brown/grizzly bears

## Human Safety Concerns

- ◉ ADF&G does not consider this a major issue—probably similar to hunting brown/grizzly bears
  - Bucket snares are selective for black bears
  - Bear snaring clinics
  - Age limit—could be raised if Board thinks 16 is too young

## Land Status

- ◉ Parts of some units include Regional Village Corporation Lands, NPS and USFWS lands
- ◉ Regional Corporation—access for non-shareholders
- ◉ NPS lands in 20E and 19D
  - No intension to allow bear trapping—no villages, no benefit
- ◉ Yukon Flats
  - USFWS supports Yukon Flats Moose Management Plan including reducing predation on moose—more discussion needed with Service

Fax 465-6094

Board of Game  
State of Alaska  
October 10, 2010

RECEIVED  
OCT 11 2010  
BOARDS

RC59

Attention: Kristy Tibbles

Dear Kristy,

I have never written to the Board of Game before, but I want to express my strong opposition to the latest Board proposal to trap/snare black bears for the first time since Alaska became a state.

I realize that there are members of the Board of Game who believe that the animals that live in Alaska are here at our discretion. If they become inconvenient, they can be killed. I think they are wrong.

The rationale behind so many of these decisions is that the people who live in the bush don't have enough of (fill in the blank) game to kill to eat. Ergo, the predators are fair game (pun intended). This is faulty reasoning and so out of date. People who choose to live off the road system in areas of Alaska that can only be reached by air or boat have made a decision to live off the grid. They cannot have it both ways: living off the grid in a cabin and expecting the state to make sure they have enough animals to eat.

The same goes for trappers and trophy hunters. Their game, their client's trophy, their thrill of the hunt is my wildlife. It's the wildlife we say we treasure here in this great state. It's the wildlife that millions of tourists come here to see and photograph. It's the wildlife that television and movie crews pay big bucks to film for the rest of the world to see.

Killing wild animals who are doing what they have done for eons, or just happen to be the species the Game Board has targeted this year, is unethical. If you are defending your life against a bear attack, that's one thing. Snaring a black bear with a wire because somebody decided to "live off the land" and is having a tough time is unjustifiable and wrong.

I am an Alaskan. I oppose this proposal. I want my voice heard.



Barbara Belknap  
4481 Abby Way  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

780-8602

# Bear Foot-snare Information

RC 60

Aldrich Foot Snares – Preferred method for snaring large predators

- Humane, safe, and reliable capture tool developed in the early 1960's for capturing wildlife
- Requires the use of cable snare and spring mechanism to deploy the snare onto the target animal's foot
- Used across North America by researchers for snaring large predators including black bears, grizzly bears, and mountain lions
- Used by researchers in Asia for capturing Siberian Tigers
- M-15 bucket snare is based on the basic design of the Aldrich

Issues and claims made about the use of snares for bear capture

- Trapping will result in serious injuries or the loss of limbs to bears and other wildlife
- Snares and traps are indiscriminate and will result in numerous non-target catches
- It will be unsafe and dangerous for people to travel in bear snaring areas
- Bear snaring is unsporting and is not fair chase

Department provisions and permit conditions used to regulate and monitor snaring activities

- Required to be a resident (currently) licensed trapper
- Mandatory snare check daily (up to once every two days in other areas)
- Requires ADF&G notification and/or registration; defined application
- Permits issued after training and orientation in Unit 16 Black Bear Control Program
- Established snare camps registered with the Department (in Unit 16 PCA)
- Permit required to allow for the use of helicopters to access registered camps

Results of current Bear Control Snaring Program in 2010 (as of 10/10/2010)

UNIT	Gen Hunt	Control	SNARE APPL	PERMIT#	BLKBEAR#	BRNBEAR#
16	213	193	37	14	62 (+ 8 shot)	7
19D	4	10	44	7		

Of the seven brown bears incidentally snared this year in the Unit 16 Black Bear Control Snare Program, none were killed, seriously injured or required medical treatment; all were darted, removed from the snare and released without incident.

submitted by ADFG WC

FELICIA RIEDEL  
HC 60 BOX 335-R  
COPPER CENTER, AK 99573  
(907) 822-5831  
FAX: (907) 822-5831

RC 61

FAX TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

Date: 10-11-10 No. of pages including cover: 2

Fax Number: 907-465-6094

TO: Board of Game

FROM: F. Riedel

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Please notify sender if not properly received.

ATTN: Board of Game Comments  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Boards Support Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
By Fax to: 907-465-6094

Re: Proposal 36 Black Bear Trapping—Oppose

Dear Board of Game Members:

I know from experience that bear trapping will be unsafe for people because it involves baiting. My mother homesteaded near Fairbanks in the late '40s so I have a long association with hunting and do not oppose it. My husband (an avid hunter) and I live in the Copper Basin now, just down the ridge from a son and his wife, while a younger son lives in Anchorage, and one daughter and her family live in Fairbanks.

Our other daughter survived two close calls because of bear baiting when she was in high school. She was riding her horses and probably was all right only because she had ridden so many years in 4-H and the rodeo. Someone had put a bait station near enough to the dirt road our driveway turns off of to be able to access the site from his vehicle. Twice when our teenager rode by, the bear that had been attracted scared her mount. Once she saw the bear and was scratched when the horse galloped away through the woods in a panic to escape. If she were younger or less experienced, I can only imagine what tragedy might have happened. As it was, she went to prom that night sporting her scrapes.

Bear trapping will make baiting and human contact with it more widespread, so it's easy to see that it will cause serious new problems. Please do not allow this to happen.

Sincerely,  
*Felicia Riedel*  
Felicia Riedel  
HC 60 Box 335-R  
Copper Center, AK 99573  
907-822-5831



**ALASKA BOARD OF GAME  
October Meeting – Nelchina Caribou and  
Black Bear Trapping Regulations  
October 8-12, 2010  
Anchorage, Alaska**

**MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AGENDA**

Emergency Petition re: Moose registration hunt in Unit 13 submitted by Ahtna Tene Nene' (RC 9)

Emergency Petition re: Moose hunt in Unit 15C submitted by the Native Village of Port Graham (RC 57)

Agenda Change Request concerning moose hunting in Unit 19 (RC 1 and RC 56)

Agenda Change Request concerning 2<sup>nd</sup> degree kindred (RC 50)

Discussion of a request to the Board of Fisheries concerning a Joint Board meeting to address Nonsubsistence Areas

**Board of Game Nelchina Caribou / Black Bear Trapping Regulations Meeting**

**RC 63**

**October 8 – 12, 2010**

**RC Index**

**Anchorage, Alaska**

**Log # Submitted by**

**Topic**

1		ADF&G Boards Support	BOG Workbook
2		ADF&G Wildlife Conservation (WC)	Department comments
3		ADF&G Subsistence	Biological report on Nelchina Caribou
4	10/5/2010	GASH AC	10-4-10 Meeting minutes – Prop 36
5	10/4/2010	Yukon Flats AC	Prop 34 – 36 and letter to BOG
6	10/8/2010	ADF&G Subsistence	Oral report on Nelchina Caribou
7	10/7/2010	Fairbanks AC	BOG findings – Nelchina Caribou Prop 21A -
8	9/30/2010	Minto Nenana AC	9-29-10 Meeting minutes – Prop 33 – 36
9	10/6/2010	Ahtna Inc	Emergency Petition
10	10/6/2010	Ahtna Inc	John Starkey affidavit
11	10/6/2010	Art Peterson	Comments on Bear trapping regulatory process
12	10/6/2010	Wade Willis	Correspondence with BOG and Governor’s office
13	10/7/2010	Minto AC	Nelchina caribou comments
14	10/7/2010	Mike Kramer	Nelchina caribou comments
15	10/8/2010	ADF&G Subsistence	ANS recommendation for Nelchina
16	10/8/2010	US Dept of Interior	FSB review and results
17	10/8/2010	USFWS	Prop 36 comments
18	10/7/2010	Laura D’Amico	Predator control comments
19	10/8/2010	ADF&G WC	Nelchina Caribou Herd overview
20	10/8/2010	Mat Valley AC – Dan Montgomery	Nelchina Caribou letter re: subsistence
21	10/8/2010	Anchorage AC	Testimony
22	10/8/2010	Dept of Law	Last page of packet p 29 of 29 (Conclusions)
23	10/8/2010	Paxson AC	9-21-2010 Meeting minutes
24	10/8/2010	Eva & Soren Threadgill	Predator control comments
25	10/8/2010	Anchorage AC	Opposing addition of bear trapping to upcoming meetings
26	10/8/2010	Anchorage AC	Board intent Codified regulations
27	10/8/2010	Mike McCrary	Personal testimony
28	10/8/2010	Stony Holitna AC	Comments on proposals
29	10/8/2010	Doug Carney	Personal testimony
30	10/9/2010	Don Horrell	Copper Basin AC testimony to BOG
31	10/9/2010	Wade Willis	Testimony to BOG
32	10/9/2010	Sky Starkey	Ahtna Prop 20 comments
33	10/9/2010	Sky Starkey	Comments collected on community harvest
34	10/9/2010	Matt Kirchhoff	AK Audubon testimony Prop 36
35	10/9/2010	Sky Starkey	GMU 13 caribou summary by year report
36	10/9/2010	James W. Elliott	Oppose black bear trapping
37	10/9/2010	April Warwick	BOG management
38	10/9/2010	Rod Arno	AK Outdoor Council comments on proposals
39	10/9/2010	Merbian Cebrian	PowerPoint presentation re: Nelchina federal harvest

**Board of Game Nelchina Caribou / Black Bear Trapping Regulations Meeting**

**RC 63**

**October 8 – 12, 2010**

**RC Index**

**Anchorage, Alaska**

**Log # Submitted by**

**Topic**

40	10/9/2010	Vera Paschke	Testimony re: Prop 34 & 36
41	10/10/2010	Dan Ecklund	Opposed to bear snaring
42	10/10/2010	Joe Versteeg	Oppose to bear trapping
43	10/10/2010	Kathy VerSteeg	Oppose bear snaring
44	10/10/2010	ADF&G WC	Unit 13 IM proposal 31A
45	10/10/2010	ADF&G WC	Rossi presentation
46	10/10/2010	Sky Starkey	Ahtna letter re: court concerns for CHP
47	10/10/2010	ADF&G WC	Ahtna community hunt packet
48	10/10/2010	ADF&G WC	Nelchina hunt options
49	10/11/2010	ADF&G WC	Prop 32 Power Point
50	10/11/2010	Bill Cohen	ACR – 2 <sup>nd</sup> degree of kindred
51	10/11/2010	ADF&G WC	Prop 32 amended language
52	10/11/2010	ADF&G WC	Nelchina hunt options revised
53	10/11/2010	ADF&G WC	Prop 31 Power Point
54	10/11/2010	Helena Spector	Oppose bear trapping
55	10/11/2010	Tom Hansen	Black bear snaring
56	10/11/2010	ADF&G WC	Response to ACR re: 19A closed area
57	10/11/2010	ADF&G / Boards	Port Graham petition & Department response
58	10/11/2010	ADF&G WC	Prop 36 Power Point
59	10/11/2010	Barbara Belknap	Black bear snaring
60	10/11/2010	ADF&G WC	Foot snaring information
61	10/11/2010	Felicia Riedel	Oppose bear trapping
62	10/11/2010	ADF&G / Boards	Miscellaneous Business Agenda
63	10/11/2010	ADF&G / Boards	RC Index