

**Division of Wildlife Conservation**  
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**Alaska Department of Fish and Game**  
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## **Advisory Announcement**

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### 2022 Brown Bear Management Plan for Game Management Unit 1D

(Douglas) – The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) is charged with protecting, maintaining, and improving game populations consistent with the sustained yield principle. Unsustainable human-caused brown bear mortality [hunting, defense of life or property (DLP), agency kills, etc.] in Game Management Unit (GMU) 1D during 2020 required ADF&G to reassess and modify brown bear management in this subunit. That review is documented in a GMU 1D brown bear management paper available from ADF&G in Douglas.

#### Purpose

Provide a science-based strategic plan for GMU 1D brown bear conservation between 2021–2025 that serves as the foundation to determine management priorities to recover the population and hunting opportunity to pre-2020 levels. It will specify the level of brown bear mortality that triggers an Emergency Order (EO; i.e., hunt closure).

#### GMU 1D Brown Bear Population

The Division of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) estimated the brown bear population in spring 2020 between 235–322 bears. Density estimates were derived from research conducted along the mainland coast of Southeast Alaska (Berners Bay and Yakutat) and predicted to the available GMU 1D habitat which was calculated from GPS radio-collared brown bears in Haines.

#### 2020 & 2021 Brown Bear Mortality

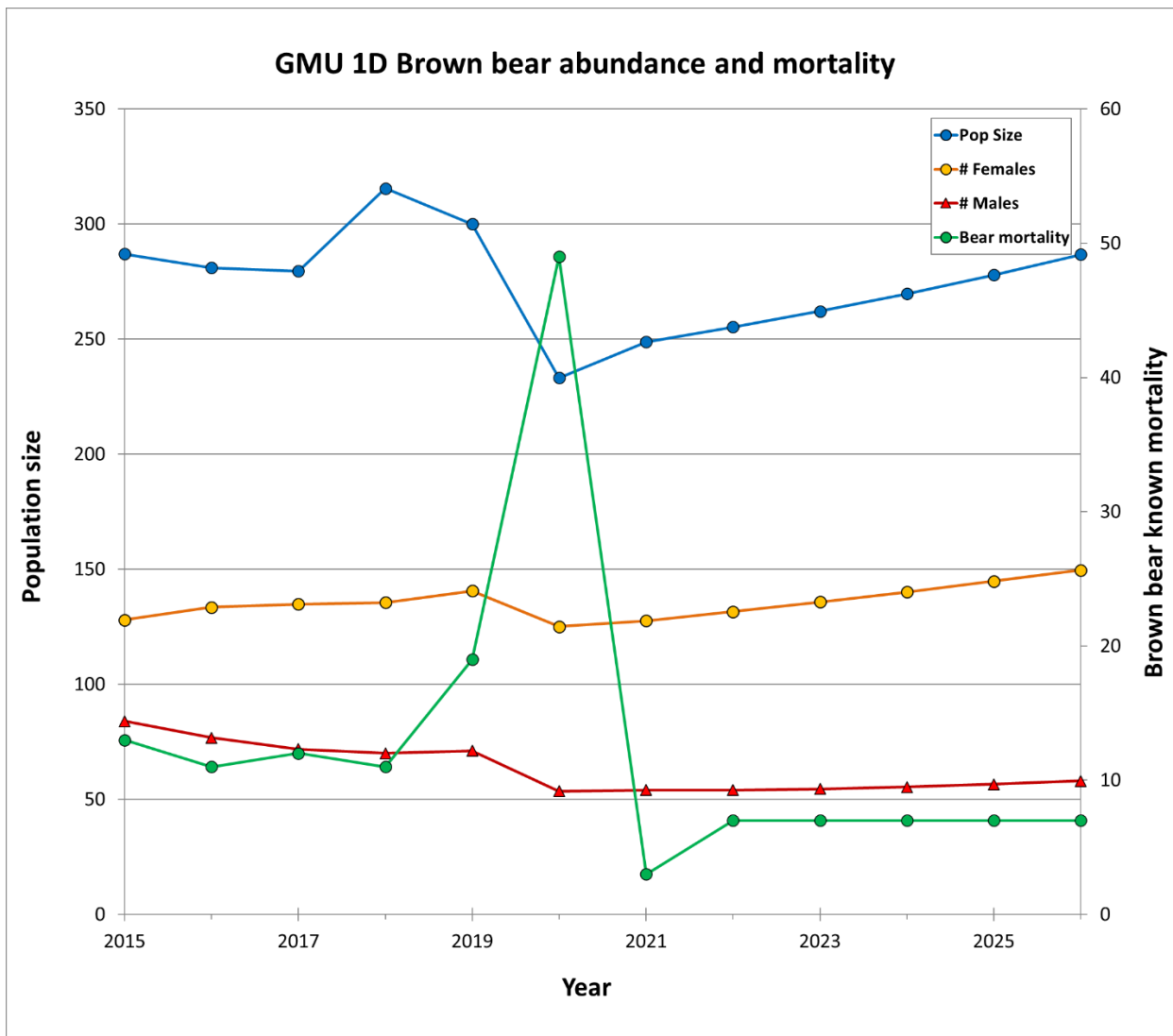
- High human-caused mortality in 2020 prompted the need to conserve the GMU 1D brown bear population with the goal of recovering the population and hunting opportunity.
- Forty-nine brown bears (24F:23M:2Unk) were killed in GMU 1D in 2020 including:
  - 19 hunter-harvested (9F:10M).
  - 30 non-hunter kills (15F:13M:2Unk) (agency kills, DLP, and vehicle collisions).
  - Mortality of 49 bears represents a 16–20% reduction of the estimated spring 2020 population of 235–322 bears.
  - Female mortality in GMU 1D (47.5% of harvest) exceeded our management objective (40% of harvest) in 2018–2020.
    - Female bears are integral to population recovery.
- Six brown bears (1F:5M) were killed in GMU 1D in 2021 including:

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- 5 hunter-harvested (1F:4M).
- 1 non-hunter kill DLP (1M).
- Natural foods were more available than in 2020 including fish and berries.
- Fewer non-hunter kills in GMU 1D is commendable, including Haines’s updated bear attractant ordinance, new dumpsters, and continued fruit gleaning.
- ADF&G provided additional education and electric fences.



*A graphic model output of known GMU 1D brown bear mortality to-date (Winter 2021/2022) and then projected population growth through 2026. Projected population growth (blue line past 2021) assumes human-caused mortality (green line) for each calendar year from 2022 – 2025 will not exceed 7 bears (5 male, 2 female).*

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## **GMU 1D Brown Bear Management Guidelines for Calendar Year 2021–2025**

DWC's constitutional mandate is to manage game populations on the sustained yield basis. The level of human-caused brown bear mortality in 2020 exceeded sustainable yield, and without conservation measures would result in a long-term decline in sustainable harvest opportunity. Population modeling indicates that recovering the bear population and future hunter harvest opportunity requires limiting mortality, particularly for adult female bears, for about 5 years (2021–2025). Although DWC staff have worked with Haines Borough government, NGOs, refuge managers, and residents to limit non-hunting mortality (DLP, agency kills, etc.), the only form of mortality that DWC can manage is mortality from hunting. Consequently, recovering the population will require restrictions on hunting mortality.

In GMU 1D there are 2 authorized brown bear hunts per calendar year. These registration hunts are spring hunt (RB051) which is open from March 15–May 31, and the fall hunt (RB050) which is open from Sept. 15–Dec. 31. DWC historically managed hunting by regulatory year, occurring July 1 to June 30 of the following year. However, in 2020 significant non-hunting mortality occurred in the summer. The DWC considers all human-caused mortality when managing the GMU 1D brown bear population and evaluating sustainable spring and fall hunting opportunity, which is more easily assessed within the calendar year. For 2022–2025, DWC will manage brown bear hunter harvest in GMU 1D by calendar year.

For calendar year 2022, brown bear hunting in GMU 1D will be managed as follows:

- **The hunter harvest limit for calendar year 2022 hunts (RB051/RB050) will be a combined total of 5 bears or not more than 2 females.**
- **For calendar year 2022 DWC will set a human-caused mortality limit in GMU 1D of 7 independent (not cubs) brown bears or 2 female bears.**
  - **The 7-bear limit includes a maximum of 5 hunter harvested bears.**
  - **Two additional bears are included in the annual mortality limit so hunting can remain open even if one or two bears die as a result of other human-caused mortality (DLP, roadkill, etc.). If there are no non-hunting human-caused mortalities in a year, those two bears will not be reallocated to hunter harvest.**
- **To facilitate in-season harvest monitoring, the RB050 and RB051 permit condition for when hunters must report harvesting a brown bear will be reduced from 10 days to 3 days. The sealing period will not change.**
- **DWC will annually review the status of the GMU 1D brown bear population and progress toward recovery.**
- **Annual human-caused mortality in excess of 7 bears may be deducted from the hunting harvest quota for the following hunting season (i.e., the next calendar year).**

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### Triggers for Hunt Closures

Because hunting is the only form of mortality ADF&G can manage, during calendar year 2022 brown bear hunting in GMU 1D (RB050/RB051) will be closed by Emergency Order for the remainder of the calendar year when any of the following conditions is met:

- **Five bears are harvested by hunters.**
- **Human-caused mortality of 2 female bears (hunting, DLP, roadkill, etc.).**
- **Human-caused mortality of 7 bears (hunting, DLP, roadkill, etc.).**
  - **Non-hunting mortality in excess of 2 bears will be deducted from the maximum of 5 bears allocated for hunter harvest in the current or following calendar year.**

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