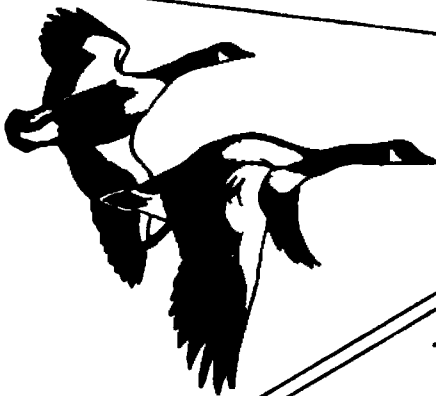
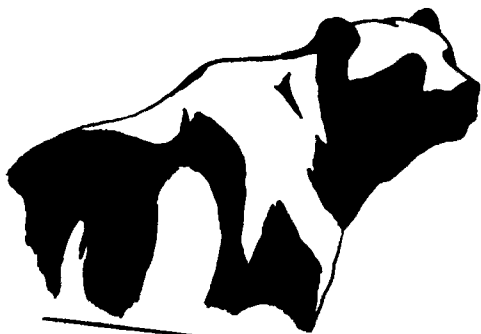


# **ALASKA GAME MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

**STATE of ALASKA**  
**WILLIAM A. EGAN, GOVERNOR**

**DEPARTMENT of FISH and GAME**  
**JAMES W. BROOKS, COMMISSIONER**



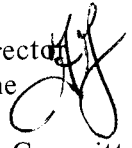
**DIVISION of GAME**

**FRANK JONES, DIRECTOR**

## MEMORANDUM OF TRANSMITTAL

May 4, 1973

**TO:** James W. Brooks, Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

**THRU:** Frank Jones, Director   
Division of Game

**FROM:** Program Review Committee  
Division of Game  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

**SUBJECT:** Game Management Policies

Contained herewith for your consideration is the Game Division's Game Management Policy Statement, including its preamble, general policy statement, and 22 individual policy statements. This document is the result of several years of intensive, long-range planning by the entire staff and provides the guidelines for ultimate development of comprehensive management plans for all of Alaska's wildlife. These policies represent the wildlife management philosophies of the Division's professional staff and reflect current thinking of wildlife scientists throughout North America. Implementation of these policies will guarantee the welfare of Alaska's abundant and diverse wildlife resource, at the same time allowing full public benefit.

Your expeditious review and acceptance of this policy statement would insure that: 1) Wildlife resource planning will be integrated with planning for beneficial uses of other resources; 2) The Alaska public will recognize the state's efforts to effectively manage her wildlife resource at a time of heightened ecological awareness; and 3) The United States Congress will recognize the ability of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to manage Alaska's wildlife resource in a manner benefiting the resource, the people of Alaska and all Americans.

Upon your acceptance, copies of this document will be furnished to Governor Egan and members of the Board of Fish and Game as representing this Department's policies governing management of Alaska's wildlife. Eventually this document will be published for issuance to citizens of Alaska and other interested members of the American public.

Attachment

3 3755 000 36018 0

## CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Preamble . . . . .	1
General Policy Statement . . . . .	1
Moose Management Policy . . . . .	4
Caribou Management Policy . . . . .	8
Elk Management Policy . . . . .	12
Deer Management Policy . . . . .	15
Dall Sheep Management Policy . . . . .	18
Mountain Goat Management Policy . . . . .	21
Bison Management Policy . . . . .	24
Muskox Management Policy . . . . .	27
Brown/Grizzly Bear Management Policy . . . . .	29
Polar Bear Management Policy . . . . .	32
Black Bear Management Policy . . . . .	34
Wolf Management Policy . . . . .	37
Wolverine Management Policy . . . . .	40
Seal Management Policy . . . . .	42
Sea Lion Management Policy . . . . .	44
Sea Otter Management Policy . . . . .	46
Walrus Management Policy . . . . .	49
Furbearer Management Policy . . . . .	51
Small Game Management Policy . . . . .	54
Raptor Management Policy . . . . .	57
Waterfowl Management Policy . . . . .	60
Unclassified Game Management Policy . . . . .	63

## PREAMBLE

The historical importance of wildlife in what is now the State of Alaska cannot be overemphasized. Distribution and abundance of wildlife determined where aboriginal peoples settled, how many could be supported in an area, and their life style and standard of living. The time and energy required to obtain the necessities of life by hunting directly influenced the cultural complexity of the various aboriginal groups.

The quest for Alaska's abundant furs stimulated the initial era of commercial exploitation and settlement begun by Russians in the 18th century. Commercial exploitation of wildlife, including market hunting of game species, continued as a way of life during Alaska's territorial years. Overexploitation resulted in widespread reduction of some species and in locally reduced abundance of others. These declines were only temporary because the productivity of our terrestrial and marine habitats had not been altered. Given appropriate management these species recovered, as numbers and population trends of species such as the sea otter, fur seal, bowhead whale and wolf attest.

Alaska presently is plunging into a period of dramatic mobilization of natural resources, both renewable and nonrenewable, that may involve marked alteration of wildlife habitats. This is occurring at a time when the land that has sustained our wildlife through previous periods of exploitation is being partitioned among the federal government, natives, other private owners and the state.

At present, the wildlife resources of Alaska are an invaluable and unique asset to all the people of the state and of the nation. The Department is dedicated to the perpetuation of suitable habitat for our native flora and fauna, and to the management of wildlife for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state. It would be a grave mistake to bow to the increasing pressures of misdirected "preservationists" who would accept mediocrity in wildlife management in order to eliminate the rational utilization of some species by man. Many people fail to realize that successful game management represents the most careful stewardship of all wildlife, and is cognizant of a broad spectrum of wildlife and wild land uses.

The following General Policy and Species Policies are intended to convey to the public the wildlife management philosophies of the professional staff of the Department. They are intended as broad guidelines in formulating both a comprehensive land use plan and specific species management plans. They will also serve as standards for program evaluation, and will assist in evaluating the inevitable jurisdictional disputes between state and federal agencies over the various management priorities for indigenous wildlife.

## GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for all wildlife species, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of wildlife, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible wildlife management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department recognizes that some of the people of the state are substantially dependent on wildlife for sustenance. In areas where people are primarily dependent on game for sustenance the Department will provide for liberal seasons and bag limits, within the limitation of maximum sustained yield.

In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of game. Recreational uses include: sport hunting and trapping in their various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting and trapping as dominant uses of game in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage game species for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In some areas game will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

In selected areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, certain game species will be managed consistent with the maximum sustained yield principle.

Certain areas will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex and age of animals taken and population manipulation.

The Department will manage game species to provide sustained yields of animals for humans and for wild carnivore populations that depend upon them for food. Whenever substantial conflicts arise between humans and predators over the use of prey, the predator population will be managed to minimize such conflicts.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where game populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of game through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

The Department does not consider the harvest of bears (black, brown/grizzly, polar), bison, deer, elk, goat, moose, muskox, sheep, waterfowl, game birds and unclassified game for the purpose of sale or barter of hides, meat, antlers, horns or other parts a proper use of the resource and will oppose it. However, when compatible with recreational and food resource demands, commercial utilization of other game species may be provided for in the Department's management plans.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of game animals for commercial purposes is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on game species within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on game species.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of game species, for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting game species for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of game will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of the transplanted species, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of a species will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of an animal or the reduction in numbers of a species in response to a specific problem. Control will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists.

Whenever possible, control will be effected by recreational hunting. When control by the Department or its designees is necessary, humane methods will be employed. Poison bait and other nonselective means of control will not be used. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of effecting control.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by wildlife. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of game.

## MOOSE MANAGEMENT POLICY

To many people, the moose (*Alces alces*) symbolizes Alaska. The largest state seems a fitting home for this largest member of the deer family, but Alaska does not have a monopoly on moose. They range across Canada, the northern states, and throughout northern Eurasia. Although moose are often considered animals of the forest, they also occupy drainages on the treeless tundra, and use sub-alpine areas.

Moose thrive on transitional vegetation that develops on land soon after disturbance by fire, erosion, aggradation, clearing of forests and other processes. Thus, the frequent fires and other disturbances typical of much of Alaska usually have been advantageous to moose. At the same time, unusually deep snow may cause high mortality of moose. Random combinations of these influences have produced dramatic fluctuations in moose populations over the years. The influence of such factors as hunting and predation has been slight compared to these fluctuations.

By contrast, in Scandinavia where land has been used intensively for many years, the influence of natural processes has been reduced. Intensive forestry practices provide a constant supply of transitional vegetation for forage which is interspersed with good cover. This has resulted in a virtual explosion of moose numbers. Scandinavian game managers have cultivated moose production by allowing intensive harvests of bulls, cows and calves, thereby stimulating production by reducing competition for available food. As a result, the moose harvest in Norway, a much smaller area, is nearly equal to the harvest in Alaska. Sweden's moose harvest is three to four times Alaska's.

Moose in Alaska, from the scattered populations in Southeastern to those on the fringes of the tundra, represent a tremendous resource of recreation and food. Their adaptability to a variety of natural conditions and to the various activities of man allows a wide range of management possibilities.

The broad spectrum of needs and desires of an increasing human population in Alaska must be considered in formulating moose management programs.

## MOOSE POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage moose on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for moose, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of moose, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible moose management must be based on scientific knowledge.

In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of moose. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objectives; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing moose in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

Sport hunting with the gathering of meat as an important consideration has traditionally been the dominant use of moose in Alaska. This use will be encouraged in most areas, and salvaging of all edible meat will remain a condition of taking moose.

In most areas, moose will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

In selected areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, or where the human population is partially dependent upon moose for food, moose will be managed for the maximum sustained yield of animals. Management techniques may include harvest of moose of all sexes and ages, liberal seasons and bag limits, access improvement, and habitat manipulation.

Certain areas of the state will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex, age, and antler size and conformation of animals taken, and population manipulation.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of moose through public information and education, and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Although hunting is generally considered compatible with recreational observation of moose, certain areas exceptionally suited to viewing moose as the primary objective may be zoned in time or space to restrict hunting in favor of observation of moose in their most natural population and social structure.

The Department will manage moose to provide sustained yields of animals for humans and for wild carnivore populations that depend upon them for food. Whenever substantial conflicts arise between humans and predators over the use of moose, the predator population will be managed to minimize such conflicts.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where moose populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department has demonstrated that transplanting moose for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat can be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of moose will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed



transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of moose as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of moose will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

Moose are one of the few still-wild species that have been domesticated with some success. However, because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of moose for commercial purposes is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

In some nations moose meat and by-products are important commercial commodities. In Alaska, however, recreational hunting of moose is the major use of moose, with food gathering and other recreational pursuits being additional important considerations. In remote areas, where food gathering is the primary use of moose, regulations should be sufficiently liberal to allow the taking of an adequate supply of meat. The Department, therefore, holds that commercial harvesting of moose for the sale of animal products is unjustified.

When others conduct research on moose within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on moose.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of moose for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring control of moose. Controls will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists. The Department will discourage undue competition with moose by human activities including agriculture and animal husbandry.

Whenever appropriate, control of moose will be effected by recreational hunting. The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by moose. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of moose. When control by removal of moose is necessary, humane methods will be used and meat will be salvaged.

Protection and manipulation of habitat are of foremost importance in moose management. Much of the most productive moose range is in early post-disturbance successional stages. Therefore, disturbances such as fire, logging in small blocks, and selective land clearing will be encouraged where moose production is the best use of the land. When possible the Department will engage in habitat manipulation by the use of fire, mechanical means, or other methods.

Some moose populations depend upon climax sub-alpine, successional riparian, or marshy lowland plant communities for vital activities such as mating, calving and feeding. These critical areas will be recognized, designated and protected.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access planning for and control of moose hunters and observers. In some areas where moose are managed for maximum sustained yield and/or maximum recreational opportunity, access may take the form of roads, airstrips, snow machine trails, hiking trails, canoe routes, boat landings, and horse trails. The Department may disseminate information about access. In areas managed primarily for high quality hunting and compatible uses, access may be restricted to some or all of those nonmotorized means listed above. Seasonal time and area zoning may allow for compatible uses of the resource, however, and will be encouraged.

## **CARIBOU MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Caribou and the introduced domestic reindeer both occur in Alaska. Although these two animals exhibit striking differences in behavior and other aspects of their biology, they are technically considered as varieties of one species, *Rangifer tarandus*. The introduction of reindeer, starting in the late 1800's, has resulted in competition with caribou for available habitat on public domain. Because of their greater numbers, extensive distribution and migratory habits, caribou provide an important source of recreation, food and raw materials for people of the state.

Caribou habitat requirements include climax stages of boreal forest, and alpine and arctic tundra, in sharp contrast to the transitional flora utilized by most other members of the deer family. Caribou ranges produce a relatively small volume of usable forage per unit area and are easily damaged by fire and land development activities. The caribou's habit of nearly constant movement is necessary to fulfill nutritional requirements and to prevent overgrazing and excessive trampling of forage. Successful caribou management requires the retention of large areas of suitable habitat which allows unrestricted movement of caribou.

At present, 13 caribou herds are recognized in Alaska. They are the Adak, Alaska Peninsula, Arctic, Beaver, Chisana, Delta, Fortymile, Kenai, McKinley, Mentasta, Mulchatna, Nelchina, and Porcupine herds.

Caribou management programs must consider our responsibilities to Canada for those populations which cross the international border. Close cooperation must be maintained to provide mutually beneficial management.

Caribou are an important source of food and materials for many residents of the state, but these demands are decreasing and eventually will become minor management considerations. Recreational uses will far outweigh other uses of the resource. However, this transition will be slow and will occur only as human cultural and social values change.

Management planning must consider that personal criteria vary between individuals when defining "trophy" and "quality"; thus, a progressive program must be initiated to allow for optimal opportunities for selection by recreational users.

## **CARIBOU POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage caribou on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for caribou and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning. Because caribou are entirely dependent on large, undisturbed, areas of habitat, it is mandatory that the land management plans for this species be considered with those of other species which require transitional ranges.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of caribou, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible caribou management must be based on scientific knowledge.

In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of caribou. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

Sport hunting, with the gathering of meat as an important consideration, is currently a dominant use of caribou in Alaska. This use will be encouraged in most areas and the salvage of all edible meat will remain a condition of taking caribou.

The Department recognizes that many of the people of the state are substantially dependent on caribou for food. In areas where people are primarily dependent on caribou for food the Department will manage caribou to meet their needs, within the limitation of maximum sustained yield.

In some areas caribou will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In areas of the state where the sale or barter of caribou is an economic necessity, the Department will allow for this type of commercial utilization. However, this type of use will generally be discouraged. The Department will not approve the domestication of caribou for commercial purposes.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of caribou through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

In selected areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, or where people are substantially dependent upon caribou for food, caribou will be managed for maximum sustained yield of animals. Management techniques may include harvest of caribou of all sexes and ages, liberal seasons and bag limits, and improvement of access.

Certain areas of the state will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex, age, antler size and conformation of animals taken, and population manipulation.

The Department will manage caribou to provide sustained yields of animals for humans and for wild carnivore populations that depend upon them for food. Whenever substantial

conflicts arise between humans and predators over the use of caribou, the predator populations will be managed to minimize such conflicts. In no case will the predator population be eliminated in favor of human users.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where caribou populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

When others conduct research on caribou within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on caribou. The Department will cooperate with Canada in caribou management and research on those populations which are of mutual concern.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of caribou for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting caribou for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of caribou will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of caribou, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of caribou will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department holds that the introduction and maintenance of reindeer in areas of naturally occurring caribou populations is undesirable. Similarly, introduction of reindeer that will result in destruction of important habitat or direct conflicts with wildlife species is undesirable.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring control of caribou. Controls will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists. However, the Department will discourage undue competition with caribou by human activities including animal husbandry.

Whenever appropriate, control of caribou will be effected by recreational hunting. The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by caribou. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of caribou. When control by removal of caribou is necessary, humane methods will be used and the meat will be salvaged.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access planning for and control of caribou hunters and observers. In some areas where caribou are managed for maximum sustained

yield and/or maximum recreational opportunity, access may take the form of roads, airstrips, snow machine trails, hiking trails, canoe routes, boat landings, and horse trails. The Department may disseminate information about access. In areas managed primarily for high quality hunting and compatible uses, access may be restricted to some or all of those nonmotorized means listed above. Seasonal time and area zoning may allow for compatible uses of the resource, however, and will be encouraged.

## **ELK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Elk (*Cervis canadensis*) transplants to Alaska were attempted in the 1920's and 1930's to Kruzof, Revillagigedo and Afognak islands from the state of Washington. Only the Afognak transplant was successful.

In recent years elk transplants to Gravina and Revillagigedo islands have been attempted from Afognak.

Elk are both grazers and browsers and compete for food with bison, caribou, deer, moose and sheep. Although elk utilize an unusually broad variety of plants, their success on new ranges cannot be accurately predicted. On Afognak Island, they have undergone unexpected population increases resulting in high densities. As a result, these elk populations have "crashed" during severe winters. This situation may forewarn a questionable future for elk transplants in Alaska.

## **ELK POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage elk on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for elk, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of elk, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible elk management must be based on scientific knowledge.

Recreation is the most important use of elk. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting as the dominant use of elk. Consistent with its responsibility to manage elk for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In some areas of the state, elk will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities. Sport hunting with the gathering of meat as an important consideration is the dominant use of elk in Alaska. This use will be encouraged in most areas, and salvaging of all edible meat will remain a condition of taking elk.

In selected areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, elk will be managed consistent with the maximum sustained yield principle.

Certain areas will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex and age, antler size and conformation of animals taken, and population manipulation.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of elk through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

When others conduct research on elk within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on elk.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of elk for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting elk for stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of elk will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of elk, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of elk will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department does not consider the harvest of elk for the purpose of sale or barter a proper use of the resource and will oppose it. Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of elk for commercial purposes is not considered a wise use of the resource and will be discouraged by the Department.

Habitat protection and manipulation are important to elk management. Productive elk range includes "fringe" areas where early post-disturbance successional communities merge with mature climax forest, providing both food and cover. Therefore disturbances such



as fire, logging in small blocks, and selective land clearing will be encouraged where elk production is the best use of the land.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access planning for and control of elk hunters and observers. In some areas where elk are managed for maximum sustained yield and/or maximum recreational opportunity, access may take the form of roads, airstrips, hiking trails, canoe routes, boat landings, horse trails, and hunter shelters. The Department may disseminate information about access. Seasonal time and area zoning may allow for compatible uses of the resource, however, and will be encouraged.

## DEER MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Sitka black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus sitkensis*) is the most abundant big game species in the coastal rain forest of Southeastern Alaska. Its range has been extended by successful introduction to Prince William Sound, the Yakutat area and Kodiak and Afognak islands.

The Sitka black-tail is smaller and stockier than other black-tails. Average weight in good condition is 100 pounds for does and 150 pounds for bucks. Antlers are also smaller.

Throughout their range in Alaska, deer provide more recreational hunting than any other big game species. Their small size makes them easy for the hunter to handle, the meat is of excellent quality, and they are challenging to hunt.

South-coastal Alaska is the northern limit of deer habitat and winter food availability is the primary limiting factor. This availability is controlled by snow depth, and populations fluctuate with the severity of winters. Hunting has had little impact on most deer populations in Alaska, but management plans must anticipate increasing use.

## DEER POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage deer on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for deer and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of deer, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible deer management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department will manage deer to provide sustained yields of animals for humans and for wild carnivore populations that depend upon them for food. Whenever substantial conflicts arise between humans and predators over the use of deer, the predator population will be managed to minimize such conflicts. In no case will the predator population be eliminated in favor of human users.

In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of deer. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its deer management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting as the dominant use of deer. Consistent with its responsibility to manage deer for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage deer on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In some areas deer will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

In selected areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, deer will be managed for maximum sustained yield. Management practices may include hunting of all sex and age classes of deer, liberal seasons and bag limits, improvement of access, and habitat manipulation. On these high use areas the Department will recommend land management practices which favor high sustained yields of deer.

Certain areas of the state will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex, age, antler size and conformation of animals taken, and population manipulation.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of deer through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where deer populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting deer for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of deer will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of deer as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of deer will not adversely affect the numbers, health or utilization of resident species.

The Department does not consider the harvest of deer for any commercial purpose a proper use of the resource and will oppose such use.

When others conduct research on deer within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the resource and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on deer.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of deer for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of a deer or the reduction of deer numbers in response to a specific problem. Control will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists. Whenever possible, control will be effected by recreational hunting. When control by the Department or its designees is necessary, humane methods will be employed.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by deer. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of deer.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access planning for and control of deer hunters and observers. In some areas where deer are managed for maximum sustained yield and/or maximum recreational opportunity, access may take the form of roads, airstrips, hiking trails, canoe routes, boat landings, horse trails, and hunter shelters. The Department may disseminate information about access. Seasonal time and area zoning may allow for compatible uses of the resource, however, and will be encouraged.

## **DALL SHEEP MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Dall sheep (*Ovis dalli*) inhabit Alaska's mountainous areas. Their distribution is limited to Alaska and western Canada and to many, they symbolize true wilderness.

Dall sheep numbers are limited by stringent habitat requirements. Sheep require range that is relatively snow-free in winter, supports the proper vegetation, and provides adequate escape terrain. Vegetation supporting sheep populations characteristically occurs in a climax community; consequently, it is not easily restored after disturbance. For this reason sheep habitat management must be accomplished through protection of the range rather than its manipulation.

The climax nature of sheep range, coupled with great vulnerability to winter snow and weather conditions, leads to fluctuations in sheep numbers under natural conditions.

The above considerations, in addition to a very strong tradition dictating harvest of only males with 3/4 curl or larger horns, make Dall sheep a difficult species to manage. Climax range cannot be rehabilitated, weather cannot be controlled and, with present knowledge and attitudes, fluctuations of sheep numbers cannot be effectively minimized. However, these complications should not preclude progressive management of this resource based on facts provided by sound biological research.

## **DALL SHEEP POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage Dall sheep on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for Dall sheep, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of Dall sheep, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible Dall sheep management must be based on scientific knowledge, and that management techniques for sheep may change with future advances in knowledge.

In all areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of Dall sheep. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these recreational uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes that high quality recreational hunting is the dominant use of Dall sheep in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage game species in the best interests of the species and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user, and occasionally c) maximum sustained yield of animals. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In some areas Dall sheep will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

Certain areas will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex, age, and horn size of animals taken, and population manipulation.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of Dall sheep through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Although hunting is generally considered compatible with casual recreational observation of sheep, certain areas exceptionally suited to viewing sheep as the primary objective may be zoned in space or time to restrict hunting in favor of observation of sheep in their most natural population and social structure.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where Dall sheep populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department will manage Dall sheep to provide sustained yields of animals for humans and for wild carnivore populations that depend upon them for food. Whenever substantial conflicts arise between humans and predators over the use of sheep, the predator population will be managed to minimize such conflicts. In no case will the predator population be eliminated in favor of human users.

The Department does not consider the harvest of Dall sheep for sale or barter of hides, meat, horns or other parts a proper use of the resource and will oppose it.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of Dall sheep for commercial purposes is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on Dall sheep within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on sheep.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of Dall sheep for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not

be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting Dall sheep for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of sheep will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of sheep, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of sheep will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department recognizes that there is limited Dall sheep habitat in Alaska, and will discourage undue competition with sheep by human encroachment. Because sheep habitat is limited and also irreplaceable, critical habitat areas will be recognized, designated and protected.

The Department recognizes the need to control access for recreational users of sheep. Because aesthetic values are important in recreational uses of sheep, regulation of access will in many cases consist of providing the public with information about trails, scattered airstrips, and other facilities calculated to produce low human densities.

## **MOUNTAIN GOAT MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The mountain goat (*Oreamnos americanus*) inhabits the coastal mountain ranges of Alaska from the Southeast Panhandle northwest to the Susitna River drainage. They are confined to rugged mountainous areas seldom visited by man and therefore have been little affected by human activities.

Goats are relatively abundant and are subjected to minimal hunting pressure over most of their range but recently have declined in numbers in some areas. These declines have been particularly evident on inland areas where populations fluctuate to a greater extent than on coastal ranges.

Mountain goats have been transplanted to Baranof, Chichagof and Kodiak islands, and have become established on Baranof and Kodiak where hunting is now permitted. The status of the Chichagof introduction is still uncertain.

In Alaska, mountain goats have been largely unknown and unappreciated by sportsmen and others. With future increases in human population, knowledge will increase and goats will surely become a much-sought wilderness species.

### **MOUNTAIN GOAT POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage mountain goats on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for mountain goats, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning that will provide for preservation of important mountain goat ranges.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of mountain goats, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible mountain goat management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department recognizes recreation as the most important use of mountain goats. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing mountain goats in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all of these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting as the dominant use of mountain goats in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage goats for the benefit



of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In selected areas mountain goats will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

In selected areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, mountain goats will be managed consistent with the maximum sustained yield principle.

Certain areas will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access and population manipulation.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where mountain goat populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of mountain goats through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Although hunting is generally considered compatible with casual recreational observation of mountain goats, certain areas exceptionally suited to viewing goats as the primary objective may be zoned in space or time to restrict hunting in favor of observation of goats in their most natural population and social structure.

The Department recognizes that transplanting mountain goats for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of mountain goats will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of the mountain goat, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of mountain goats will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department does not consider the harvest of mountain goats for the purpose of sale or barter of hides, meat, or horns a proper use of the resource and will oppose it.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of mountain goats for commercial purposes is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on mountain goats within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other

agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on mountain goats.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of mountain goats for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access planning for and control of goat hunters and observers. Seasonal time and area zoning may allow for compatible uses of the resource and will be encouraged.

## **BISON MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The American bison or buffalo (*Bison bison*) has achieved, in Alaska, an importance out of proportion to its numbers. This importance relates to its size, the high regard hunters have for it as a "trophy" and meat animal, and its status as a symbol of the original wildlife populations of North America.

The bison is an exotic to the state, originally having been imported from Montana. The species, however, has become well established in certain locations in the state and public interest is high for maintaining and proliferating these populations. Because bison are largely dependent upon grassland habitat, the potential for expansion of bison numbers and distribution within the state is limited.

### **BISON POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage bison on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for bison, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of bison, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible bison management must be based on scientific knowledge.

In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of bison. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all of these recreational uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting as the dominant use of bison in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage bison for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In some areas, bison will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

In those areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, bison will be managed according to the maximum sustained yield principle. Management techniques may include close regulation of hunters under a permit system, regulation of access, regulation of sex and age of animals taken, and population manipulation.

Certain areas may be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex and age of animals taken, and population manipulation.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of bison through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

The Department does not consider the harvest of bison for the purpose of sale or barter of hides, meat, or horns a proper use of the resource and will oppose it.

The bison is one of the few game animals that has been domesticated with some degree of success, and is one of the few species which, by law, may be transferred to private ownership for domestication. Because wild bison belong to all the people, the Department does not consider the transfer of wild bison to private ownership for commercial or other purposes a wise use of the resource and will discourage this use.

When others conduct research on bison within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on bison.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of bison for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting bison for stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of bison will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of bison as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of bison will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of an animal or the reduction in numbers of a bison herd in response to a specific problem. Control will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists. However, the Department will discourage undue competition with bison by human activities.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by bison. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of bison.

Whenever possible, control will be effected by recreational hunting. When control by the Department or its designees is necessary, humane methods will be employed and all usable parts will be salvaged.

## MUSKOX MANAGEMENT POLICY

The muskox (*Ovibos moschatus*) is one of the most interesting and controversial animals in Alaska. It is adapted to existence in the high arctic and excites the imagination of many who consider it a unique and endangered species.

Muskox occur in Greenland and across Canada's northern arctic. Once endemic to the northern coast of Alaska, they disappeared from Alaska during the 1850's, probably as a result of over-hunting by Eskimos and the effects of marginal climate and/or habitat conditions. Few, if any, white men ever saw a muskox from the original Alaskan population.

Muskox were reintroduced to the state in the 1930's when 34 animals from Greenland were transplanted to Nunivak Island. This population increased to about 760 animals by 1968 but then began to decrease due to overpopulation and consequent habitat deterioration. Muskox from Nunivak have been introduced to various locations in Alaska's arctic with the hope of reestablishing them throughout their former range. Because the parent herd on Nunivak is on a National Wildlife Refuge under the land management jurisdiction of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, close cooperation and joint agreement on objectives is necessary to achieve satisfactory management of this species.

## MUSKOX POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage muskox on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for muskox and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of muskox, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible muskox management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The muskox is unique among Alaskan game animals in that one of the primary goals is to manage certain populations to produce maximum numbers of animals for stocking former habitat in the state. Management of these populations will be aimed at maximum productivity to provide maximum numbers of young for transplanting. The impracticality of transplanting adult bulls requires the selective removal of surplus males by other means, preferably sport hunting.

Although present muskox herds in Alaska are managed primarily for production of animals for transplanting, the Department holds that recreation ultimately will be the most

important use of muskox. Recreational uses will include: observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing muskox in natural interactions with their environment; and carefully regulated sport hunting. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these recreational uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

Because of the remoteness of muskox habitat, the opportunities for recreational observation of muskox are limited. Therefore, the Department will encourage appreciation of muskox through public information and education programs.

Transplants will be approved only if substantial benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of muskox, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of muskox will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

Hunting of muskox will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex and age of animals taken, zoning of hunting in time and space, and regulation of methods and means.

The Department does not consider the taking of muskox primarily for food a wise use, nor does the Department consider the harvest of muskox for the purpose of sale or barter of hides, meat, horns, or other parts a proper use of the resource and will oppose it.

When others conduct research on muskox within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on muskox.

The muskox is one of the few wild animals in Alaska that may offer some potential for domestication. The Department will recognize scientific investigations designed to determine the feasibility of this use. The Department will oppose domestication as the sole use of the species and will also oppose it in situations which may interfere with management of wild muskox populations.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, and exporting muskox for stocking, public education, scientific study or domestication, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

## **BROWN/GRIZZLY BEAR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Alaska contains most of the brown/grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos*) remaining on the North American continent. A true "wilderness" species, these large carnivores have slowly retreated from the advance of civilization with only remnant populations remaining in the contiguous United States. In the more populated areas of the continent, those few remaining constantly compete for space with humans.

The eventual fate of the brown/grizzly bear may not depend entirely on the creation of vast tracts of unspoiled "wilderness", as shown by conflicts occurring in large national parks. Instead, the future of the bears lies in the reassessment of human values to include reasonable coexistence with them. Bears are not constant competitors and the major conflicts usually have resulted from improper land planning and classification, marginal economic pursuits, and basic misunderstanding of bears and their behavior.

This lack of understanding reaches into the ranks of naturalists and scientists who, until recently, listed several different species of North American brown and grizzly bears. Scientists have recently reclassified all brown and grizzly bears as one species. In popular usage the term grizzly bear is applied by most people when speaking of those found in interior and northern Alaska. Bears in these areas are usually smaller than the so-called "brown" bears found along the coast, possibly because they lack the rich supply of fish and other food available to coastal bears. Trophy classification of the two groups, based upon arbitrary geographical boundaries, has further confused their scientific classification.

Although brown/grizzly bears are sometimes taken for food, their greatest values are associated with recreational trophy hunting and their aesthetic appeal to the photographer and other nonconsumptive users. Management plans must provide for all these uses. In addition, planning must consider that personal criteria vary between individuals when defining "trophy" and "quality"; thus, a progressive program must allow optimal opportunities for selection by recreational users.

## **BROWN/GRIZZLY BEAR POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage brown/grizzly bears on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for brown/grizzly bears and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of brown/grizzly bears, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible brown/grizzly bear management must be based on scientific knowledge.



In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of brown/grizzly bears. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

Sport hunting has traditionally been the dominant use of brown/grizzly bears in Alaska. This use will be encouraged in most areas, and salvaging of hides and/or meat will remain a condition of taking bears. Regulatory proposals will consider pelt primeness and continued protection of cubs and sows with cubs.

In some areas brown/grizzly bears will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational uses.

In selected areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, brown/grizzly bears will be managed consistent with the maximum sustained yield principle.

Certain areas will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access and regulation of sex, age and numbers of animals taken.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of brown/grizzly bears through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

The Department does not consider the harvest of brown/grizzly bears for sale or barter of hides or meat a proper use of the resource and will oppose it. The Department will not approve the domestication of brown/grizzly bears for commercial purposes.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where brown/grizzly bear populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

When others conduct research on brown/grizzly bears within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on bears.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of brown/grizzly bears for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting brown/grizzly bears for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat usually is unfeasible but under certain conditions may be a useful management tool. Importing and transplanting of bears will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of brown/grizzly bears as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of brown/grizzly bears will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring removal of a brown/grizzly bear in response to a specific problem. Controls will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined that a valid need exists but shall never be carried out to such an extent as to endanger the bear population in question. The Department will discourage undue human competition with bears.

Whenever possible, control will be effected by recreational hunting. It is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by brown/grizzly bears. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of bears. Where control by removal of a bear is necessary, humane methods will be used and the hide and skull will be salvaged. Poison bait and other nonselective means of control will not be used.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access planning for and control of brown/grizzly bear hunters and observers. In some areas where bears are managed for maximum sustained yield and/or maximum recreational opportunity, access may take the form of roads, airstrips, hiking trails, canoe routes, boat landings, and horse trails. The Department may disseminate information about access. In areas managed primarily for high quality hunting and compatible uses, access may be restricted to some or all of those nonmotorized means listed above. Seasonal time and area zoning may allow for compatible uses of the resource, however, and will be encouraged.

## **POLAR BEAR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) is a circumpolar species which, in some parts of its range, is under management jurisdiction of the State of Alaska. People throughout the world have an interest in this spectacular large carnivore which is sparsely distributed in a habitat largely unknown and inimical to man.

Throughout their range, polar bears are used in a variety of ways. In Norwegian waters, sport and commercial hunting is conducted from large boats. In Canada, native hunters pursue polar bears by dog team. Russia has banned hunting. In Alaska, natives long have hunted them for personal use, and sport hunting with the aid of aircraft formerly was an important use.

Recent international concern for this species has resulted in greatly increased research by workers in Alaska, Canada, Russia, Norway, and Denmark. At the same time, ethical considerations have resulted in opposition to various methods of taking polar bears, including the use of set guns in Spitzbergen and of aircraft in Alaska.

Many bears are born on land controlled by one of the nations bordering the polar basin and spend much of their lives in international waters, sometimes moving from one national sector of the high seas to another.

The challenge in polar bear management is to maintain rational management of the species, withstanding pressure from economic considerations on one side and emotionalism of those who consider this species endangered on the other.

## **POLAR BEAR POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage polar bears on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for polar bears and advocates comprehensive resource planning and the institution of controls on the use and development of the coastal and marine environments.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of polar bears, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible polar bear management must be based on scientific knowledge.

Recreation is the most important use of polar bears. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being

aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting as the dominant use of polar bears in the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage game species for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage polar bears on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user, c) sustained harvest. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

The Department will encourage the development of polar bear hunting from the ground, ice, or water only and will oppose the use of aircraft in taking bear. Cubs and females with cubs will continue to be protected. Salvaging of hides and/or meat will remain a condition of taking polar bears.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of polar bears through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

The Department does not consider the harvest of polar bears primarily for food a proper use, nor does it consider the sale or barter of hides, meat, or other parts a proper use, and will oppose these uses.

When others conduct research on polar bears, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on polar bears.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of polar bears, for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

## **BLACK BEAR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Unlike most species of Alaska's fauna, black bears (*Ursus americanus*) also occur in most of the 48 contiguous United States, as well as throughout sub-arctic Canada. Within Alaska, the black bear is the most commonly observed large carnivore, and perhaps the most adaptable to human encroachment on its range. It is found in most forested areas of Alaska, with the exception of Kodiak and some other islands.

Because of their ability to live near human settlement, black bears provide many with their best opportunity to observe an impressive wild predator. However, when precautions are ignored, black bears frequently become nuisance animals near human habitation. They also kill young moose and deer, although the impact of such predation is probably slight.

### **BLACK BEAR POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage black bears on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for black bears, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of black bears, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible black bear management must be based on scientific knowledge.

Throughout the state recreation is the most important use of black bears. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing black bears in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting as the dominant use of black bears in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage black bears for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user, c) maximum sustained harvest. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In some areas black bears will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy

uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

Certain areas will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex and age of animals taken, and population manipulation.

In selected areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, black bears will be managed consistent with the maximum sustained yield principle.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of black bears through public information and education, and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Although hunting is generally considered compatible with casual recreational observation of bears, certain areas exceptionally suited to viewing black bears as the primary objective may be zoned in space or time to restrict hunting in favor of observation of bears in their most natural population and social structure.

The Department recognizes that some of the people of the state are partially dependent on black bears for food. In areas where people are primarily dependent on wildlife for food the Department will manage bears to meet their needs, within the limitation of maximum sustained yield.

The Department recognizes the blue (glacier bear) color phase of the black bear is a unique and desirable variety and will manage populations containing this color phase in its favor.

The Department does not consider the harvest of black bears for the purpose of sale or barter of hides, meat or other parts a proper use of the resource and will oppose it.

The Department does not consider domestication, taming, or restraint of black bears by private or commercial ventures as valid uses and will oppose such uses.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where black bear populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

When others conduct research on black bears within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on black bears.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of black bears for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting black bears for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often

have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of black bears will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of black bears, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of black bears will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

Whenever substantial conflicts arise between humans and black bears over the use of prey, the bear population will be managed to minimize such conflicts. The various recreational and aesthetic values of the bears will be considered equally with similar values of the prey species in the final management decision, and in no cases will black bears be completely eliminated.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring removal of a black bear in response to a specific problem. Controls will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined that a valid need exists, but shall never be carried out to such an extent as to endanger the bear population in question. The Department will discourage undue human competition with bears.

Whenever possible, control will be effected by recreational hunting. It is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by black bears. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of bears. Where control by removal of a bear is necessary, humane methods will be used and the hide and skull will be salvaged. Poison bait and other nonselective means of control will not be used. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of control.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access planning for and control of black bear hunters and observers. In some areas where bears are managed for maximum sustained yield and/or maximum recreational opportunity, access may take the form of roads, airstrips, hiking trails, canoe routes, boat landings, and horse trails. The Department may disseminate information about access. In areas managed primarily for high quality hunting and compatible uses, access may be restricted to some or all of those nonmotorized means listed above. Seasonal time and area zoning may allow for compatible uses of the resource, however, and will be encouraged.

## **WOLF MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The wolf (*Canis lupus*) preys primarily upon large mammals and as a result is one of the most controversial components of the world's fauna. Because of the wolf's proclivity for eating large mammals, man has actively attempted to limit and in some cases eliminate the wolf as a competitor. Control efforts have successfully depressed wolf numbers in western Europe and parts of Asia; in Russia an intensive campaign to exterminate the wolf was launched after World War II with apparent success in some areas. In North America, wolves are now rare in Mexico, and absent from the conterminous United States except Minnesota. Remnant populations do exist in a few states and strays may occur near the Canadian border and in some national parks. They range in abundance from rare to common throughout Canada, where they have been reduced only in areas devoted to agriculture.

Wolves occur throughout the Alaskan mainland and on some of the major islands in southeast Alaska. Their distribution in Alaska has not been greatly affected by man's activities except in urban areas. In addition, continuous control efforts by the U. S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife have reduced wolf numbers greatly on the reindeer grazing ranges of the Seward Peninsula.

The challenge is to establish management policies to insure perpetuation of the species during the forthcoming period of resource exploitation, when long-term implications to wildlife and other values may be ignored. This mobilization of resources for industry comes at a time when additional insight into predator-prey relationships is occurring and also when cultural values are being reassessed. Pressure from this widespread ecological awakening may assist in gaining support for rational management of all wildlife, including the wolf.

Traditionally, game management has emphasized maximum production of ungulates for man's use. With today's movement toward protecting all components of the environment, aesthetic or nonconsumptive uses are gaining prominence in resource management. A meaningful management policy for wolves requires a comprehensive land use policy for all lands within the state. Wolves are largely dependent upon ungulate populations and they will survive if ungulates are managed successfully, providing they receive a minimum of protection from humans. In this sense wolves can be considered an indicator of our stewardship of Alaska's land. Land areas supporting substantial populations of wolves have not been severely abused by man.

## **WOLF POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage wolves on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes that successful management of wolves is directly related to maintaining adequate prey abundance which in turn is dependent upon the development and implementation of a comprehensive resource use plan.



The Department recognizes that there are many uses of wolves, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible wolf management must be based on scientific knowledge.

In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of wolves. Recreational uses include: hunting and trapping in their various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting and trapping as beneficial uses of wolves in most of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage wolves for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In some areas wolves will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

Wolf pelts are in considerable demand for domestic and commercial uses. Accordingly, in selected areas with intensive hunting and trapping use, wolves will be managed consistent with the maximum sustained yield principle.

Aerial sport hunting of wolves generally is not considered a desirable use of the resource and the Department will not encourage it.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by wolves. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of wolves.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of a wolf or the reduction in numbers of wolves in response to a specific problem. Control will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists.

Whenever substantial conflicts arise between humans and wolves over the use of prey, the wolf population will be managed to minimize such conflicts. The various recreational and aesthetic values of the wolves will be considered equally with similar values of the prey species in the final management decision.

Whenever possible, control will be effected by hunting and trapping. When control by the Department or its designees is necessary, humane methods will be employed. Poison bait and other nonselective means of control will not be used. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of effecting control.

The Department recognizes that transplanting wolves for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, transplanting of wolves will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of wolves, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of wolves will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where wolf populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of wolves through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of wolves for commercial purposes is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on wolves within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on wolves.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting wolves for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

## WOLVERINE MANAGEMENT POLICY

The wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) has been the subject of considerable mythology throughout its circumpolar range. Much folklore stems from the wolverine's tendency to use a wide variety of food—food often gathered by another. This habit brought the wolverine into conflict with man. As the wolverine is equipped with powerful jaws, offensive musk glands and the seemingly insatiable appetite common to weasels, man concerned himself more with eliminating this competitor and in furthering the folklore than he did with attempting to discover facts about the wolverine. As wolverines were gradually extirpated or greatly reduced in numbers, particularly in Fennoscandia and in the conterminous United States, man finally did notice and within the past 15 years several studies have been reported.

Wolverines never were abundant in any part of their range and are considered a rare species even without man's interference. In Alaska they occur throughout the mainland and on some of the major islands in Southeastern Alaska.

Their distribution in Alaska has not been greatly affected by man's activities. The challenge is to establish management policies to insure perpetuation of the species during the forthcoming period of resource exploitation when long-term implications to wildlife and other values may be ignored. This mobilization of resources for industry comes at a time when cultural values are being reassessed. Pressure from this widespread ecological awakening may assist in gaining support for rational management of all wildlife, including the wolverine.

## WOLVERINE POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage wolverines on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for wolverines, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of wolverines, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible wolverine management must be based on scientific knowledge.

In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of wolverines. Recreational uses include: hunting and trapping in their various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with

their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting and trapping as dominant uses of wolverines in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage wolverines for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where wolverine populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of wolverines through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of wolverines for commercial purposes is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on wolverines within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on wolverines.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of wolverines for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting wolverines for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of wolverines will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of wolverines, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of wolverines will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

Management will be effected by hunting and trapping. Poison bait and other nonselective means of taking will not be used. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of effecting control.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by wolverines. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of wolverines.

## SEAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

In Alaskan waters there are five species of true (phocid) seals, including: the harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*), ringed seal (*Phoca hispida*), bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus*), ribbon seal (*Phoca fasciata*) and the northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*). Of these only the harbor seal occurs along most of Alaska's coastline. The arctic seals (ringed, bearded and ribbon seals) are confined to the Bering Sea and waters north of the Bering Strait, while the elephant seal is an occasional visitor to southern Alaska.

To many coastal residents, arctic seals constitute an important source of food, clothing, equipment and income. Sport and commercial hunting occurs but is not a major use of the resource. There are few conflicts between seals and fishermen in this region.

South of Bristol Bay, the harbor seal is harvested in significant numbers by commercial hunters and is also taken by sport hunters. A few harbor seals are taken for domestic use. Because they eat fish, harbor seals are viewed as competitors by fishermen, and until recently a bounty was paid for these seals.

## SEAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage seals on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for seals and advocates comprehensive resource planning and the institution of controls on the use and development of the coastal and marine environments.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of seals, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible seal management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department recognizes that many residents of coastal villages in northern Alaska are dependent upon seals for a substantial part of their sustenance. The Department holds that this is the most beneficial use of the seal resource in that area and has high priority. The Department will manage seals to meet their needs, within the limitations of maximum sustained yield.

In areas south of the Arctic region, recreation is an important use of seals. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

Where recreation is an important use of seals, sport hunting is recognized by the Department as a high priority use and will be encouraged.

Where serious conflicts develop between sport and commercial hunting, sport hunting will be given priority consideration. When sport hunting becomes the major use of the resource, seasons and bag limits will be established to provide maximum recreational opportunity. Under these circumstances pelt primeness will not be the major factor for determining hunting seasons.

The Department recognizes that commercial hunting of seals for their pelts is a desirable use of the resource in some areas. In these areas seals will be managed for maximum sustained yield of prime pelts.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of seals through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Although hunting is generally considered compatible with recreational observation of seals, certain areas exceptionally suited to viewing seals as the primary objective may be zoned in space or time to restrict hunting in favor of observation of seals in their most natural population and social structure. Because seal rookeries are limited and necessary for survival of the species, these areas may be recognized, designated and protected from disturbance during critical times of the year.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of a seal or the reduction in numbers of seals in response to a specific problem. When seals are involved in depredations on fish already caught by fishermen, the Department's policy is that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage. This may include destruction of the seals. Such control shall be directed only at those animals specifically involved in depredations on fish or destruction of gear.

The Department may reduce a seal population in a specific area only after Department investigations have clearly demonstrated that seals are significantly detrimental to a fish population and are competing excessively with human utilization of that fishery resource. In such cases the commercial and recreational values of seals will be weighed against similar values of that fishery resource. Control, when implemented, shall consist of removing only that portion of the seal population necessary to achieve the desired results. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of effecting control.

A few areas may be reserved for controlled scientific studies where seal populations can be manipulated.

When others conduct research on seals within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on seals.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of seals for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

## SEA LION MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubata*) is a common resident of the littoral zone of the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea. In Alaska the largest rookeries are found on the Aleutian Islands and along the Alaska Peninsula.

Although sea lions spend considerable time at sea, they do utilize selected remote island beaches exposed to the open sea, where they come ashore to rest or breed and give birth to their young. Although they do not migrate extensively, population shifts occur at various times of the year.

Sea lions are primarily fish eaters but are known to feed on crabs, bivalves, octupi and other sea life. Because they sometimes feed on commercially valuable fish they incur the wrath of fishermen. Many individual fishermen exercise control measures to protect their catch. Often, however, sea lions are killed indiscriminately.

Once widely and heavily used by natives of Alaska, today sea lions are harvested in relatively small numbers primarily for their pelts. There is considerable potential for greater use, particularly by commercial enterprises requiring animal protein for human or animal consumption.

## SEA LION POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage sea lions on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for sea lions and advocates comprehensive resource planning and the institution of controls on the use and development of the coastal and marine environments.

The Department recognizes that use of sea lions presently is limited, that the potential for greater use is considerable, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible sea lion management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department recognizes that in selected areas sea lions are important for viewing, commercial products, and scientific study, and will provide for these uses.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of sea lions through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Although commercial utilization is generally considered compatible with casual recreational observation of sea lions, certain areas exceptionally suited to viewing sea lions as the primary objective may be zoned in space or time to restrict commercial utilization in favor of observation of sea lions in their most natural population and social structure.

The Department recognizes that sea lion pelts are commercially valuable and that other parts may be used in the future. The Department supports the concept of regulated harvests in certain areas. In these areas sea lions will be managed for maximum sustained yield.

Recreational hunting for sea lions has never been a common use, and hunting with no subsequent utilization of the animal is not considered a wise use and will be opposed.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where sea lion populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

When others conduct research on sea lions within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on sea lions.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of a sea lion or the reduction in numbers of sea lions in response to a specific problem. When sea lions are involved in depredations on fish already caught by fishermen, the Department's policy is that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage. This may include destruction of the sea lion. Such control shall be directed only at those animals specifically involved in depredations on fish or destruction of gear. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of effecting control.

The Department may reduce a sea lion population in a specific area only after Department investigations have clearly demonstrated that sea lions are significantly detrimental to a fish population and are competing excessively with human utilization of that fishery resource. In such cases the commercial and recreational values of sea lions will be weighed against similar values of that fishery resource. Control, when implemented, shall consist of removing only that portion of the sea lion population necessary to achieve the desired results.

The Department may issue permits for the capturing, holding, and exporting of sea lions for public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable holding facilities are available to the permittee.



## SEA OTTER MANAGAMENT POLICY

The sea otter (*Enhydra lutris*) is a valuable furbearer and a popular subject for observation.

Excessive commercial hunting for furs between 1742 and 1911 reduced sea otters to a dangerously low level. After 50 years of complete protection and careful management since Alaska became a state, sea otters have increased in numbers. Sea otters are now abundant in most of their former range although in some areas populations are still below maximum numbers. Department transplants and natural dispersal have contributed to this recovery.

Where sea otter populations have completely recovered, an annual, harvestable surplus is being produced. While sea otter pelts are not as valuable as they were in the 19th century, they still command high prices, necessitating strict control of harvesting.

Sea otters are entertaining to watch. They are tolerant of humans and may be viewed frequently and for long periods of time. Much of the popular interest in this species is based on its recovery from near extinction. Many people who will never see a sea otter derive satisfaction from knowing that they still exist as a natural component of the fauna.

## SEA OTTER POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage sea otters on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for sea otters and advocates comprehensive resource planning and the institution of controls on the use and development of the coastal and marine environments.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of sea otters, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible sea otter management must be based on scientific knowledge.

Recreation is the most important use of sea otters. Recreational uses include: observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for these uses in its management plans.

The Department recognizes recreational observation as the dominant use of sea otters. The Department will encourage recreational observation through public information and

education and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Properly conducted harvesting does not unduly disturb the remaining animals and is generally considered compatible with recreational observation. However, certain areas exceptionally suited to viewing sea otter may be zoned in space or time to exclude harvesting in favor of observation of sea otters in their natural environment.

The Department does not consider sport hunting for sea otters a wise use of the resource and will discourage it.

The Department has demonstrated that transplanting sea otters to former ranges or vacant habitat is a useful management tool. Future sea otter transplants may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of transplanted sea otters, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of sea otters will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

Production of sea otters for transplanting will have a higher priority than harvesting as long as such transplants will contribute significantly to the repopulation of former sea otter habitat.

The Department recognizes that sea otter pelts are commercially valuable. The Department supports the concept of a well-regulated harvest in certain areas provided that: 1) The population of the area is producing a harvestable surplus; 2) The surplus is not contributing to the repopulation of an adjacent area; and 3) The harvest does not significantly interfere with public observation of the species. In areas where harvesting is designated as the primary use, the Department will manage sea otters for maximum sustained yield.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where sea otter populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of sea otters for commercial purposes is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on sea otters within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on sea otters.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of sea otters, for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department will become involved in controlling sea otter populations only after it has been clearly demonstrated that sea otters are the primary mortality factor to a fish or shellfish population and that their continued use of the fish or shellfish population threatens its existence or competes excessively with human utilization of that population. Control, if implemented, will consist of removing only that portion of the sea otter population necessary to achieve the desired results. In such cases, recreational and commercial values of sea otters will be weighed against similar values of the fishery resource.

## WALRUS MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Pacific walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*) has played a key role in the settlement and support of residents along the coasts of the Bering and Chukchi seas. For centuries, walruses provided meat, skins, oil, ivory and other products essential to the well-being of a succession of Eskimo cultures. Drastic reduction of Pacific walruses during the late 19th century was a major factor contributing to the collapse of several Eskimo settlements in the northern Bering Sea region. Records indicate that as many as 300,000 walruses were taken for commercial purposes by whalers during the decade from 1870-1880. The number of Pacific walruses probably reached a minimum between 1930 and 1950, when an estimated 45,000 animals existed. Since that time the population has increased to an estimated 100,000 animals in 1970.

Walruses are of great importance to the contemporary economy of western Alaska. They provide food and the basic raw material for home and industry and retail sale of artifacts which are marketed throughout the state. Within the cash economy, they are of increasing importance because of the established demand for ivory and the expanding demands for other products such as hides.

The philosophical attitudes of coastal residents are changing in relation to the purposes for which walruses are hunted. Hunters formerly considered themselves successful when an adequate supply of meat was secured. Magnitude of the harvest depended on the need for food. In the present economy, hunting is continued long after the need for food has been met. Larger harvests mean greater monetary returns to the hunters and fewer men are now willing to stop hunting when walruses are still available. A trend toward increased hunting, primarily for ivory, has been evident during recent years. Both male and female walruses possess tusks and therefore are equally suitable to hunters. All of the prerequisites exist for a return to the era of commercial exploitation.

Regulations imposed since statehood have effectively protected the female segment of the walrus herds and at the same time provided for food requirements of coastal residents. Because there is presently no closed season or bag limit on males, careful attention is necessary to insure that this segment of the herd is not over-exploited.

The greatest challenge to successful walrus management in the immediate future will involve manipulation of harvests to provide primarily for the food requirements of coastal residents and secondarily, for a necessary but limited cash income based on ivory, other walrus products, and the returns derived from sport hunters. Based on our knowledge of population levels and productivity of the Pacific walrus, expanded commercial harvests by either American or Soviet hunters will be discouraged.

## WALRUS POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage walruses on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for walruses and advocates comprehensive resource planning and the institution of controls on the use and development of the coastal and marine environments.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of walruses, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible walrus management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department recognizes that many residents of coastal villages in Northern Alaska are dependent upon walruses for a substantial part of their food supply. The Department holds that this is the most beneficial use of the walrus resource in that area and at present has high priority. The Department will manage walruses to meet their needs, within the limitation of maximum sustained yield.

The Department recognizes that a limited harvest of walruses primarily for ivory used in home manufacture of carvings is a valid use. However, the Department will not permit increased walrus harvests to supply increased demands for raw ivory or other commercial purposes.

Sport hunting is a minor but increasing use of walruses and is recognized by the Department as a high priority use. Sport hunting of walruses will be encouraged.

Certain coastal areas will be managed to provide sport hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality. Management techniques may include, but are not limited to, regulation of access, regulation of sex and age of animals taken and regulation of methods and means of hunting.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of walruses through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans. With the exception of established walrus hauling grounds, hunting is considered compatible with recreational observation. Certain areas exceptionally suited to viewing walruses, particularly the hauling grounds, may be zoned in time and space to restrict hunting and other forms of disturbance.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies of walrus.

When others conduct research on walruses, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information about walruses.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of walruses for public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

## **FURBEARER MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The early exploration and settlement of Alaska were primarily motivated by the desire to harvest the vast fur animal resources. The constitution of Alaska and the Alaska legislature have empowered the Board of Fish and Game to define "Fur Animals" and to regulate their harvest. Beaver, coyote, arctic fox, red fox, lynx, marten, mink, weasel, muskrat, land otter, sea otter, raccoon, red squirrel, flying squirrel, ground squirrel, marmot, wolf and wolverine have been defined as fur animals. Separate management policies have been prepared for wolf, wolverine and sea otter.

Furbearers are a diverse group including both herbivores and carnivores. Populations of some furbearers fluctuate greatly and others are comparatively stable. For most species, population fluctuations occur independent of present harvest levels. Exploitation of still other species has influenced their abundance and has reduced populations below their level of maximum sustained yield.

The harvest of furbearers has been primarily for their economic value. This condition is rapidly changing because of changing economic and social values, and recreational uses are becoming more important. As new demands upon fur animals become apparent, specific management policies may become necessary.

### **FURBEARER POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage all furbearers on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for all furbearer species, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of furbearers, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible furbearer management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department will manage furbearers to provide sustained yields of animals for humans and for wild carnivore populations that depend upon them for food. Whenever substantial conflicts arise between humans and predators over the use of prey, the predator population will be managed to minimize such conflicts. In no case will an indigenous predator population be eliminated in favor of the prey species or human users.

The Department recognizes that hunting and trapping for their economic value is a major use of furbearers. In most areas, furbearers will be managed for maximum sustained yield.

In many areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of furbearers. Recreational uses include: hunting and trapping in their various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes hunting and trapping as dominant uses of furbearers in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage furbearers for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum sustained harvest, b) maximum overall recreational opportunity, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where furbearer populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of furbearers through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Recognizing the difficulty of observing many furbearers, management solely for the purpose of observation will be discouraged.

Considering the limited success of fur farms in Alaska and the economic competition between domestic and wild furs the domestication of furbearers will be discouraged.

When others conduct research on furbearers within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on furbearer species.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of furbearers for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

Numerous transplants of furbearers have been made in Alaska with a variety of results. Even though viable populations of furbearers have been established in some areas, most transplants have provided little benefit. Some transplants have resulted in serious conflicts between the transplanted species and indigenous wildlife. Because furbearer transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of furbearers will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of the transplanted species, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of a species will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of an animal or the reduction in numbers of a species in response to a specific problem. Control will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists.

Whenever possible, control will be effected by public trapping or hunting. When control by the Department or its designees is necessary, humane methods will be employed. Poison bait and other nonselective means of control will not be used. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of effecting control.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by furbearers. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of furbearers.



## SMALL GAME MANAGEMENT POLICY

Alaska is richly endowed with small game. Small game for purposes of this policy includes grouse, ptarmigan, rabbits and hares. Seven species of upland game birds occur in the state. These are rock ptarmigan, willow ptarmigan, white-tailed ptarmigan, spruce grouse, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse and blue grouse. Mammals listed as small game include snowshoe and arctic hares and feral rabbits.

Throughout Alaska small game populations fluctuate in numbers independent of present harvest levels, and hunting pressure is largely regulated by yearly abundance. Increases in human populations, access improvements, and accelerated economic development will exert more pressure on the small game resource in the near future. Alaska is in the unique position of having time to anticipate future problems, as well as to plan and conduct research that will yield information essential to meet future needs.

### SMALL GAME POLICY STATEMENT

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage small game on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for all small game species, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of small game, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible small game management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department will manage small game species to provide sustained yields of animals for humans and predators that depend upon them for food.

In most areas of the state, recreation is the most important use of small game. Recreational uses include: sport hunting and trapping in their various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing animals in natural interactions with their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting and trapping as dominant uses of small game in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage small game species for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses.

In some areas small game will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

In areas with highly developed access and intensive hunter use, certain small game species will be managed consistent with the maximum sustained yield principle.

Certain areas will be managed to provide hunting opportunities of the highest aesthetic quality by regulation of access.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where small game populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of small game through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

The Department recognizes that some of the people of the state are partially dependent on small game for sustenance. In areas where people are primarily dependent on wildlife for food the Department will manage small game to meet their needs, within the limitation of maximum sustained yield.

The Department does not consider the harvest of grouse or ptarmigan for the purposes of sale or barter a proper use of the resource and will oppose it.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of small game animals is not considered a wise use of the resource and will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on small game species within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on small game.

The Department may issue permits for collecting, capturing, holding, importing and exporting of small game or their eggs for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

Attempts to transplant exotic species of game birds have never succeeded in Alaska, and each major vegetative type in the state naturally supports at least one species of gallinaceous birds. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of small game will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of the transplanted species, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of a species will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of an animal or the reduction in numbers of a species in response to a specific problem. Control will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists.

Whenever possible, control will be effected by recreational hunting. When control by the Department or its designees is necessary, humane methods will be employed. Poison bait and other nonselective means of control will not be used. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of effecting control.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by small game. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of small game.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access for small game hunters and observers, and will encourage development of access integrated with plans for management of other species.

## **RAPTOR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Alaskan raptors include hawks, falcons, eagles, and owls. The following species are year-round residents of the state: gyrfalcon, peregrine falcon (one subspecies), goshawk, bald eagle, golden eagle, great horned owl, great grey owl, snowy owl, hawk owl, and boreal owl. The sharp-shinned hawk, red-tailed hawk, and saw-whet owl may be winter residents in Southeastern Alaska. Migratory species nesting in Alaska include rough-legged hawk, Harlan's hawk, Swainson's hawk, peregrine falcon, merlin, kestrel, harrier, osprey, and short-eared owl. Other species occurring rarely in the state are Steller's sea eagle, white-tailed sea eagle, and screech, pygmy, and long-eared owls. Raptors are distributed widely but occur in low densities.

There is national concern that some migratory species are threatened with extinction due to pesticides. While these fears are justified for peregrine falcons, ospreys, and other migratory species, resident raptors are probably in little current danger from pesticide contamination.

For years birds of prey mistakenly have been held responsible for declines in wildlife populations. With increasing public concern for all species of wildlife and their environments, the role of raptors in the ecosystem is becoming more fully understood and appreciated by growing numbers of people.

The art of falconry long has been recognized as an exciting and sporting method of hunting small game. Because of increasing interest in this sport and declining raptor populations in other parts of the nation, the demand for Alaskan raptors has increased.

## **RAPTOR POLICY STATEMENT**

The Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage all raptors, with the exception of bald and golden eagles (under federal jurisdiction), on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for all species of raptors, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of raptors, that present priorities may not be priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible raptor management must be based on scientific knowledge.

Recreation is the most important use of raptors. Recreational uses include: observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing raptors in natural

interactions with their environment; and use of certain species in the sport of falconry. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans and holds that they are generally compatible.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of raptors through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans. Because traditional nesting sites are essential to certain species, these areas may be recognized, designated and protected from disturbance.

The Department holds that the greatest benefits derived from raptors are observation, photography, and enrichment of wilderness experiences. All species will be managed with these uses assuming highest priority.

The Department holds that falconry is a legitimate method of hunting small game, and that regulated use of raptors for this purpose is a valid use of the raptor resource. Goshawks and gyrfalcons are suitable for taking all game normally hunted by falconers in Alaska, and the Department will allow a limited number of them to be taken for falconry purposes, consistent with the sustained yield principle.

Snowy owls are used for food in northern Alaska. The few birds taken for food have little effect on snowy owl abundance. The Department recognizes this use and will provide for liberal seasons and bag limits, within the limitation of maximum sustained yield.

The Department holds that barter or sale of raptors are not wise uses of the resource and will oppose them.

When others conduct research on raptors within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on raptors.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of raptors for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated. The taking of raptors for private collections is not considered wise use and will be opposed.

The Department recognizes that transplanting raptors for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of raptors will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of the raptor species, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of a raptor species will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department recognizes that conflict may occur between raptors and domestic animals, but holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by raptors. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect property by means other than the destruction of raptors. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of control. Poison bait and other nonselective means of control will not be used.

## **WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Alaska is recognized as a major production area for ducks, geese, swans, cranes and shorebirds. Seven species of geese, three species of swans and more than 35 species of ducks have been reported in the state. Annually, millions of waterfowl migrate from Alaska to the conterminous United States, Canada, Mexico and Asia. Some species are residents of the state.

River valleys, deltas, coastal marshes, and the Arctic North Slope are the most important nesting areas. Most wintering areas are located in coastal regions of Southcentral and Southeast Alaska, and the Aleutian Islands. Some portions of the state, although not critical wintering or production areas, are important as fall and/or spring resting areas.

The federal government is responsible for waterfowl management activities of a national scope. Alaska has membership in the Pacific Flyway Council, one of four such councils created to solve waterfowl problems and to act in an advisory capacity to the federal government on national waterfowl management problems.

The future of waterfowl and waterfowl-related recreational activities in Alaska depends on maintenance of adequate habitat for production, migration and wintering. Although Alaska's waterfowl habitat is largely undisturbed, alteration and destruction of some of this habitat are imminent. The future of this habitat depends on land use planning and environmental quality controls by the Department and other state and federal agencies.

## **WATERFOWL POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage waterfowl on the sustained yield principle for the benefit of the resource and the people of the state, and also recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for waterfowl and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning. The Department will protect key waterfowl areas to assure future waterfowl-related recreational opportunities.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of waterfowl, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible waterfowl management must be based on scientific knowledge.

Throughout the state, recreation is the most important use of waterfowl. Recreational uses include: sport hunting in its various forms; observation, both incidental to other activities and as the primary objective; and wilderness experience, which includes the aesthetic rewards of being aware of or observing waterfowl in natural interactions with

their environment. The Department recognizes its responsibility to provide for all these uses in its management plans, and holds that they are generally compatible. The Department also recognizes other state, national and international interests in Alaskan-reared waterfowl and will cooperate with management activities at these levels, when compatible with the best interests of the Alaskan public and the resource.

The Department recognizes recreational hunting as the dominant use of waterfowl in much of the state. Consistent with its responsibility to manage waterfowl for the benefit of the resource and the people, the Department will manage the resource on the basis of a) maximum overall recreational opportunity, b) maximum sustained harvest, c) maximum aesthetic appeal to the user. Regulatory zoning of recreation in time and space may be used to obtain an optimum level of recreational wildlife uses. The Department will make recommendations to the Department of Interior for maximum allowable waterfowl harvests by hunters in Alaska.

In most areas waterfowl will be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunity. This concept recognizes the value of the opportunity to be selective in hunting, to enjoy uncrowded hunting conditions, to make use of remote areas, and to enjoy various other experiences which enhance wildlife-oriented activities.

A few areas may be reserved for scientific studies where waterfowl populations and/or habitat can be manipulated.

The Department will encourage recreational observation of waterfowl through public information and education and will provide for such activities in its management plans.

The Department does not consider the harvest of waterfowl for the purposes of sale or barter of meat, feathers, or other parts a proper use of the resource and will oppose it.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of waterfowl is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on waterfowl within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on waterfowl.

The Department may issue permits for collecting, capturing, holding, importing and exporting of waterfowl or their eggs for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting waterfowl may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of waterfowl will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit



can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of the transplanted species, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of a species will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by waterfowl. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect property by means other than the destruction of waterfowl.

The Department recognizes the need to provide access for and control of waterfowl hunters and observers. In areas where waterfowl are managed for maximum recreational opportunity, access may take the form of roads, airstrips, trails and boat landings. The Department may disseminate information about access. In areas managed primarily for high quality hunting and/or other compatible uses, access may be restricted to some or all of the means listed above. Seasonal time and area zoning may allow compatible uses of the resource, however, and will be encouraged.

## **UNCLASSIFIED GAME MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Alaskan birds and mammals are classified for regulatory purposes as big game, small game, fur animals, marine mammals, or unclassified game.

By definition, birds and mammals not assigned to other categories are unclassified game. Major groups of birds included are passerines, most shorebirds, raptors, swallows, kingfishers, woodpeckers, gulls, jaegers, alcids and other sea birds. Raptors are considered in a separate policy. Major groups of mammals included are shrews, bats, rats, mice, voles, lemmings, porcupines and pikas.

Hunting is not allowed for most of the birds, but is allowed for most of the mammals. In practice, some sea birds are hunted intensively for short periods but few unclassified mammals are hunted.

The Department emphasizes the management of game most in demand for hunting and trapping, but recognizes the need for regulating use of other species. Regulations for unclassified game provide a means of meeting this need.

Because major groups of unclassified game are ecologically diverse, a collective management policy cannot consider adequately their natural relationships. However, they can be considered together for management because most are not hunted, they compose much of the fauna observed on recreational outings, and they are essential components of biological communities.

## **UNCLASSIFIED GAME POLICY STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recognizes the Constitutional mandate of the State of Alaska to manage unclassified game for the benefit of the species involved and of the people. When a species is harvested, the Department recognizes its obligation to manage on a sustained yield basis. The Department recognizes that national and international interests must be considered.

The Department recognizes the singular importance of maintaining suitable habitat for unclassified game species, and advocates the development and implementation of comprehensive resource use planning.

The Department recognizes that there are many uses of unclassified game, that present priorities may not be the priorities of the future, and that management plans must consider all uses.

The Department recognizes that responsible unclassified game management must be based on scientific knowledge.

The Department recognizes recreational observation as the highest priority use of unclassified game. Recreational observation includes general viewing, bird watching, and photography. In selected areas, the Department will provide for this use and will encourage recreational observation in all areas.

The Department will oppose the harvest of unclassified game unless substantial public benefit can be shown and unless harvests can be conducted without conflict with recreational observation.

The Department does not consider the harvest of unclassified game for the purposes of sale or barter a proper use of the resource and will oppose it.

Because wildlife belongs to all the people, the domestication of unclassified game for commercial purposes is normally not considered a wise use of the resource and usually will be discouraged by the Department.

When others conduct research on unclassified game within Alaska, the Department will request a description of proposed studies and make recommendations in the best interest of the species and the people of the state. The Department will cooperate with other agencies or individuals whose research may provide useful information on unclassified game.

The Department may issue permits for capturing, holding, importing and exporting of unclassified game for stocking, public education and scientific study, but only after demonstration that suitable habitat or holding facilities are available to the permittee. Permits will not be issued unless substantial benefits which are consistent with the Department's management policies can be demonstrated.

The Department recognizes that transplanting unclassified game for restocking former ranges or stocking vacant habitat may be a useful management tool. Because transplants often have unforeseen detrimental effects, importing and transplanting of unclassified game will be generally opposed, but may be approved if substantial public benefit can be shown. Proposed transplants will be reviewed by the Department and must meet the following minimum requirements to be approved: 1) The proposed transplant site must provide sufficient and suitable habitat to support a viable population of the transplanted species, as determined by comprehensive study; 2) Prior study must establish that the introduction of the species will not adversely affect the numbers, health, or utilization of resident species.

The Department recognizes that situations may arise requiring the removal of an animal or the reduction in numbers of a species in response to a specific problem. Control will be implemented only after an investigation by Department personnel has determined a valid need exists.

When control by the Department or its designees is necessary, humane methods will be employed. Nonselective means of control will not be used. Bounties are not considered a desirable means of effecting control.

The Department holds that it is the owner's responsibility to protect his property from damage by unclassified game. Reasonable efforts must be made to protect life and property by means other than the destruction of game.