

**BLACK BEAR
ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR: W-33-2

WORK LOCATION: Statewide

PROJECT NR: 17.0

PROJECT LOCATION: Game Management Regions 1, 2, and 3

PROJECT TITLE: The Status of Alaska Black Bears and Factors Influencing Their Populations

PERIOD: 1 July 2003–2004

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This statewide performance report includes the three regions involved in black bear survey and inventory activities. Statewide and regional activities are listed before specific activities by herd and game management unit.

**The Status of Alaska Black Bears
and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region I**

Regionwide Activities

Activity: Provide information to the Board of Game on black bear management.

The Board of Game meets on a two-year cycle for the SE Alaska region and did not meet during this reporting period. However, in preparation for the November 2004 meeting, regional staffs have met and discussed ideas that may be addressed at the next meeting.

Activity: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

Area biologists and other staff tracked harvest trends and collected biological samples as possible. Where appropriate, harvest was monitored to keep it within the guideline levels established by the board.

Activity: Collect data, determine sex, and extract a tooth for aging from black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

Black bear skulls were measured and the sex determined as bears were sealed. Except in cases where the hunter damaged the skull or external sex identifiers were removed, this data was collected on every bear presented for sealing. At least 831 black bears were sealed in Region I during the period, including a minimum of 12 that were the result of road kills or DLP circumstances.

Activity: Coordinate with community decision makers on local bear issues.

Area biologists spent considerable time working with municipal leaders in towns like Juneau, Craig, Hyder, and Kake regarding black bears in that community. In Juneau, the area staff spent significant time working with a city-appointed committee to address urban bear problems.

Work was completed at the landfill located near Craig on Prince of Wales Island and garbage is no longer available to bears. This facility is now fenced and all refuse is baled and barged off the island. Biologists continue to work closely with the City police and AST to educate the public about handling household garbage, pet food, and other bear attractants.

Unit 1C

Activity: Reduce the number of nuisance bear problems and possible DLP kills resulting from improper refuse handling and disposal.

Ongoing efforts by ADF&G biologists working with city officials and “bear committee” members resulted in metal lids becoming mandatory on all dumpsters within the city limits. These efforts resulted in immediate rewards as bears were not longer able to access dumpsters.

Activity: Capture one or two black bears opportunistically and monitor their movements using GPS radio collars to identify problem areas and to assist educational efforts towards better refuse management.

A female black bear was captured and fitted with a GPS collar in July 2003 and relocated to a remote site. The bear subsequently returned to the urban area and ADF&G biologists were able to get a location via satellite every 15 minutes for the next 2 months. This information was used in numerous presentations to provide insight into the day to day travels and activities of an urban bear.

Unit 3

Activity: Monitor the Kuiu Island nonresident harvest.

During the report period nonresident hunters harvested a total of 114 Kuiu Island black bears, including 27 during fall 2003 and 87 during spring 2004.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None

Stewardship Investment items purchased: None

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$40.66

Submitted by: Dale L. Rabe – Region I Management Coordinator

The Status of Alaska Black Bears and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region II

Regionwide Activities

Activity 1: Provide information to the Board of Game on black bear management.

The Board of Game meets on a two year cycle for the SC Alaska region and did not meet during this reporting period. However, regional staffs have met and discussed ideas may need to be addressed at the next meeting.

Activity 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

See below

Activity 3: Collect data, determine the sex, and extract a tooth for aging from black bear presented by sealing by hunters.

No teeth were collected during this period.

Unit 6

Activity 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

The preliminary 2003–04 harvest was:
Males 263 Females 88 (25%) Total 351

Units 7 and 15

Activity 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

The preliminary 2003–04 harvest was:
Males 239 Females 95 (28%) Unknown 4 Total 338

Units 11 and 13

Activity 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

The preliminary 2003–04 harvest was:
Unit 13 Males 75 Females 34 (31%) Total 109
Unit 11 Males 8 Females 2 (20%) Total 10

Unit 14

Activity 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

The preliminary 2003–04 harvest was:

	14A	Males 58	Females 35 (38%)	Total 74
	14B	Males 12	Females 6 (33%)	Total 18
	14C	Males 28	Females 9 (25%)	Total 37
14	Total	Males 98	Females 50 (34%)	Total 148

Unit 16

Activity 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

The preliminary 2003–04 harvest was:

	16A	Males 50	Females 22 (31%)	Total 72
	16B	Males 112	Females 35 (24%)	Total 147
16	Total	Males 162	Females 57 (26%)	Total 219

Unit 17

Activity 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

The preliminary 2003–04 harvest was:

	Males 7	Females 6 (46%)	Total 13
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Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project:

Stewardship Investment items purchased: None

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$33.14

Submitted by: Bruce Bartley, Acting Assistant Management Coordinator

The Status of Black Bear and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region III

Regionwide Activities

Activity: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, interviews with successful hunters and analyze data.

Monitored the hunting/harvest of black bears using sealing reports, observations from the field when checking bait stations and through interviews with hunters during sealing and in the field. Preliminary data indicate:

Unit 12: 16 black bears harvested (81% male).

Unit 19D: 6 black bears harvested.

Unit 20E: 3 black bears harvested (33% male)

Unit 20D: 12 black bears harvested.

Activity: Monitor and analyze black bear bait station permit distribution.

Monitored bear bait stations and analyzed their distribution.

Unit 12: 40 permits (60 bait stations).

Units 20A, 20B, 20C, 20F: 520 permits (779 bait stations).

Unit 20D: 69 bait stations.

Unit 20E: 2 bait station permits (3 bait stations).

Activity: Collect data, determine sex and extract a tooth for aging from black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

Collected data, determined sex and extracted teeth for aging of black bears presented for sealing.

Activity: Provide information to the Board of Game and advisory committees on black bear management

Provided information on black bear population status and management issues to the Board of Game and various advisory committees.

Unit 12

Activity: Monitor blueberry abundance on permanent study plots to evaluate relationships between berry abundance and black bear harvest.

Monitored blueberry abundance within the Tanana River valley using 4 permanent transects (5 1-meter² plots/transect) in conjunction with brown bear activities. The intent is to monitor these plots annually and develop a blueberry abundance index to compare between years and between habitat types. Data will be used to determine if there is a relationship between berry abundance and black bear harvest and DLP kills.

Unit 20E

Activity: Monitor blueberry abundance on permanent study plots to evaluate relationships between berry abundance and black bear harvest.

Monitored blueberry abundance along the Taylor Highway using 4 permanent transects (5 1-meter² plots/transect) in conjunction with brown bear activities. The intent is to monitor these plots annually and develop a blueberry abundance index to compare between years and between habitat types. Data will be used to try to determine if there is a relationship between berry abundance and black bear harvest and DLP kills.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None

Stewardship Investment items purchased:

\$9,758 boat purchased for black bear management programs in conjunction with moose, brown bear, and bison management in the McGrath Area.

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Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$25.8

Submitted by: Doreen Parker McNeill, Assistant Management Coordinator

Statewide Project Costs (in thousands):

State Share = \$24.23 Federal Share = \$72.68 Total Costs = \$96.9