
Program and Abstracts

2nd Printing

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Proceedings of the
1985 ARCTIC SCIENCE CONFERENCE
(36th Alaska Science Conference)

September 27-29, 1985
University of Alaska-Fairbanks

TRICHODECTES CANIS LOUSE INFESTATION OF WOLVES IN ALASKA

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During winter 1981-82, Trichodectes canis were found on 11 wolves and 1 coyote on the Kenai Peninsula. During winter 1982-83, approximately 35 wolves were involved. Behavioral modification and severe pelt damage were observed. Several options of human intervention into the disease process were considered. The selected strategy involved capture and treatment of all animals known to be infested. The treatment program was not successful in eradicating lice from the wolf population. Capture and treatment was repeated again during the winter of 1983-84. Once again, eradication of lice was unsuccessful. The problem has recently spread to other areas. Experimental studies involving captive animals were unsuccessful due to inability of lice to establish viable infestations on potential hosts. Financial and political considerations have prevented any meaningful attempt at human intervention during the past 18 months.