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Division of Wildlife Conservation

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Annual Performance Report
Survey-Inventory Activities
1 July 1997 - 30 June 1998

BLACK BEAR

Mary U. Hicks, Editor



Hyde

Grant W-27-1
Study 17.0
October 1998

STATE OF ALASKA
Tony Knowles, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
Frank Rue, Commissioner

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
Wayne L. Regelin, Director

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Project Title: Southeast Black Bear Population Management

Project Location: Unit 1A (5,000 mi²)
Ketchikan area including mainland areas draining into Behm and Portland Canals

Unit 2 (3,900 mi²)
Prince of Wales Island and adjacent islands south of Sumner Strait and west of Kashevarof Passage and Clarence Strait

Project Objectives and Activities:

- Maintain an average spring and annual male skull size of at least 17.5 inches in Unit 1A and in Unit 2 maintain an average spring male skull size of 19.3 inches or an annual average of 19.1 inches
- Monitor the harvest and seal all black bears presented by hunters

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: Seventy-one and 283 black bears were reported harvested from Units 1A and 2, respectively. Males composed 89% and 75% of the Unit 1A and Unit 2 harvests, respectively. We measured skulls, determined sex, and pulled a tooth from most bears presented for sealing. We sent teeth from harvested bears to Matson's Laboratory for aging, and we will send letters to successful hunters informing them of their bears' ages when data are available. Age data from last season (1996–97) showed an average of 10.9 years for males harvested from Unit 1A ($n = 40$) and 4.8 years for females ($n = 7$). The average age of males harvested from Unit 2 during 1996–97 was 6.8 years ($n = 156$) and the average age of harvested females was 8.4 years ($n = 59$).

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: We met the Unit 1A skull size objective. Skulls from 62 males averaged 17.7 inches, down 0.1 inches from last season. Average skull size for 7 of 8 females harvested from Unit 1A was 15.7 inches, down 2.1 inches from last season.

At 18.7 inches, the 1997–98 skull average for Unit 2 males was 0.4 inches below our management objective for the second consecutive season; however, the 19.2 inch average for the 142 spring-killed males was 0.1 inches above the annual average objective of 19.1 inches. The average skull size for 64 of the females harvested from Unit 2 during 1997–98 was 16.7 inches, the same as we observed last season. We believe bear populations in Units 1A and 2 remained stable during this report period.

Project Location: Unit 1B (3,000 mi²)
Southeast mainland from Cape Fanshaw to Lemesurier Point

Unit 3 (3,000 mi²)
All islands west of Unit 1B, north of Unit 2, south of the centerline of Frederick Sound, and east of the centerline of Chatham Strait

Project Objectives and Activities:

- Maintain an average spring and annual male skull size of at least 17.5 inches in Unit 1B
- Maintain an average spring and annual male skull size of at least 18.5 inches for Unit 3
- Maintain a male to female ratio of at least 3:1 in the harvest
- Monitor the harvest and seal all black bears presented for sealing

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: Eleven bears (9 males and 2 females) from Unit 1B were sealed. We also sealed 241 bears (196 males and 45 female) from Unit 3; one was a nonsport kill. Skulls were measured, sex determined, and a tooth extracted for aging in the sealing procedure. We sent letters to successful hunters of the previous (1996–97) season, informing them of their bears' age.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: In Unit 1B, 82% ($n = 11$) of the bears killed were males, meeting the project objective. The average male skull size was 17.4 inches, barely missing the project objective. In Unit 3 81% ($n = 241$) of the harvested bears were males, which met the objective. The average male skull size was 18.3 inches, again just short of the objective. Kuiu Island had the highest harvest in the unit, with 149 bears killed.

Seven of the successful Unit 1B hunters and 169 of those in Unit 3 were nonresidents. Four hunters in Unit 1B used guides; 85 hunters used guides in Unit 3.

The average age for harvested black bears in the previous (1996–97) season was 9.3 years ($n = 21$) in Unit 1B and 7.2 years ($n = 226$) in Unit 3. The oldest bear harvested was a 23-year-old female from the Stikine River.

Project Location: Unit 1C (7,600 mi²)
Southeast mainland and the islands of Lynn Canal and Stephens Passage lying between Cape Fanshaw and the latitude of Eldred Rock, including Sullivan Island and the drainages of Berners Bay

Project Objectives and Activities:

- Maintain a mean spring and annual male skull size of at least 17.5 inches
- Maintain a male to female harvest ratio of 3:1
- Reduce by 50% the number of nuisance bear problems resulting from improper refuse handling and disposal

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: Harvest data were collected through the mandatory sealing process. All successful hunters are required to present hides and skulls for sealing within 30 days of take. Data on biological characteristics (e.g., skull measurements, sex, etc.) and harvest-related aspects of the hunt (e.g., date and location of

kill, transportation mode, etc.) were collected at the time of sealing. We solicited additional anecdotal information from hunters and other observers.

We continued educational and enforcement efforts to reduce garbage availability to bears and subsequent habituation of black bears to human foods. This was a cooperative effort between the Department and the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ). Response to nuisance bear problems and capture and disposal activities were coordinated with CBJ and the Juneau Police Department.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: Hunters in Unit 1C harvested 76 black bears during the 1997 regulatory year. Management objectives for hunter-harvested black bears in the unit were met. Skull sizes for males averaged 17.7 inches for the spring hunt and 17.6 inches for the entire year. Males composed 86% of the hunter harvest, meeting the harvest sex ratio objective. The fall harvest (8 males and no females) was followed by a characteristically larger spring harvest (57 males and 11 females). A motorist hit 1 bear, causing 1 nonhunt kill during this regulatory year, compared to 16 nonhunt kills in 1996. Garbage bear activity within Juneau urban areas was at moderate levels during the summer and fall of 1997. Nuisance bear activity in Juneau during the spring of 1998 was high. Two previously captured bears (no. 79 and no. 80) are responsible for most complaints of bears in garbage or of property damage. Most nuisance calls, however, are of bears seen in neighborhoods but not necessarily causing problems. We must continue efforts to make refuse unavailable to bears and to educate the public about bear behavior. With the hiring of new Community Service Officers, the litter enforcement program of the Juneau Police Department has begun to recover from earlier cutbacks due to staff attrition.

Project Location: Unit 1D (2,700 mi²)

That portion of the Southeast Alaska mainland lying north of the latitude of Eldred Rock, excluding Sullivan Island and the drainages of Berners Bay

Project Objectives and Activities:

- Maintain a mean spring and annual male skull size of at least 17.0 inches
- Maintain a male to female harvest ratio of 3:1

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: We collected harvest data through the mandatory sealing process. All successful hunters were required to present hides and skulls for sealing within 30 days of take. Bears were sealed in Haines, Skagway, and Juneau. Harvest-related data including biological characteristics of the bear (e.g., skull measurements, sex, etc.) and aspects of the hunt (e.g., date and location of kill, transportation mode, etc.) were collected at the time of sealing. We also gathered anecdotal information from hunters and other observers.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: Black bear hunter harvest in Unit 1D did not meet management objectives. The average skull size for male bears was only 16.4 inches, below the objective of 17.0 inches. This small skull size was due to the fall harvest of 6 bears with a mean age of only 2.5 years and a mean skull size of 14.7 inches. The population could probably support a larger harvest, even if hunter effort increased. A total of 32 bears (23 males and 9 females) were reported taken by hunters. Twenty-one bears (17 males, 4 females) were harvested in the spring, with the remaining 11 (6 males, 5 females) taken in the fall. Two other male bears were killed in defense of life or property. Males continued to compose most of the harvest (72%) but did not quite meet the desired sex ratio objective of 3:1.

Project Location: Unit 5 (5,800 mi²)
Cape Fairweather to Icy Bay, eastern gulf coast

Project Objectives and Activities:

- Maintain a mean spring and annual male skull size of at least 17.0 inches
- Maintain a male to female harvest ratio of 3:1

Work accomplished During the Project Segment Period: We collected harvest data through the mandatory sealing process. All successful hunters were required to present hides and skulls for sealing within 30 days of take. Black bears were sealed in Yakutat, Juneau, and Anchorage. We collected harvest-related data including biological characteristics of the bear (e.g., skull measurements, sex, etc.) and aspects of the hunt (e.g., date and location of kill, transportation mode, etc.). Anecdotal information was collected at the time of sealing.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: The average male skull size for both the spring and annual harvests was 15.9 inches, falling short of the 17.0 inch management objective. Hunters took 6 male and 3 female bears. The 3:1 sex ratio objective was not met. All but 2 of the black bears were harvested in the spring season. Two glacier bears were taken: 1 in October and the other in May. Although only 9 bears were killed, the population could probably support a larger harvest.

Segment Period Project Costs:

	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Operating</u>	<u>Total</u>
Planned	31.8	12.0	43.8
Actual	31.8	12.0	43.8
Difference	0.0	0.0	0.0

Submitted by:

Bruce Dinneford
Management Coordinator

Project Title: Southcentral Black Bear Population Management

Project Location: Unit 6 (10,150 mi²)
Prince William Sound and north Gulf Coast

Project Objectives: Maintain a black bear population that will sustain a 3-year average annual harvest of 200 bears comprised of at least 75% males and a minimum average male skull size of 17 inches.

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: Twenty-four black bears (15 males and 9 females) were harvested during fall 1997. One hundred ninety-seven bears (163 males 31 females, and 3 unknown sex) were taken during spring 1998. The mean skull size for the males was 17 inches.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: The preliminary harvest (221) was higher than the average harvest for the previous 3 years (177). The percentage of males in the take (80%) was consistent with the percentage for the previous 3 years (80%). The objective for mean skull size was met. The population can sustain the current harvest. In addition to the sport harvest, 5 bears were killed in defense of life or property and 2 were killed by highway vehicles.

Project Location: Units 7 and 15 (8,400 mi²)
Kenai Peninsula

Project Objectives: Maintain a black bear population that will sustain a 3-year average annual harvest of 250 bears comprised of no more than 40% females.

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: Black bear hunting has increased in popularity as an alternate big game species. Preliminary harvest reports indicated harvest was stable within management objectives. Final harvest data will be available during the fall of 1998.

The 1997 fall harvest was within normal ranges. We sealed 104 bears and certificates showed 35% were females. One bear was struck by a vehicle. Numbers of bears sealed in Peninsula offices indicated that less than 50% of fall bears were harvested during the general moose hunting season.

The spring bear harvest was also within normal ranges. Hunters reported harvesting at least 135 bears and approximately 20% were females. In Unit 7, 25 (46%) of the bears were harvested over bait. In Unit 15A, 14 (67%) of the bears were harvested over bait. No bears were harvested over bait in either Unit 15B or 15C. Thirty-eight percent of all bears taken in the spring were taken over bait. The higher than normal harvest over bait in Unit 7 may have been caused by an increase in effort due in part to the department-sponsored bear bait clinics.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: During the January 1996 Board of Game meeting, the Board required that hunters must complete a black bear baiting clinic in order to register a bait station in Unit 15. In March 1997 the Board passed regulations effective spring 1998 that made Unit 7 similar to Unit 15 for black bear hunting. Hunters are required to attend a bear bait clinic before they can register a bait station. In addition, bowhunters that intend to hunt black bears over bait in Unit 7 must complete a bowhunter education course.

Logging associated with bark beetle infestations will be the major factor affecting black bear habitat on the Kenai Peninsula. Over 33,000 acres of new timber sales were offered during regulatory year 1997–98. Additional federal, state, borough, and private forested lands are being planned for salvage logging in the future.

Project Location: Unit 11 (12,800 mi²)
Wrangell Mountains

Project Objectives: Maintain a black bear population that is largely unaffected by human harvest and fluctuates as dictated by available habitat, climate conditions, and natural mortality factors.

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: We monitored the black bear harvest by sealing the hides and skulls of all bears killed. At the time of sealing, we interviewed hunters to determine hunting methods, means, and effort.

Hunters took 2 black bears in Unit 11 during the 1997–98 season, and both bears were taken during the fall. The current hunter harvest is below last year's take of 7 bears and below the 5-year (1992–96) average of 13 bears. Harvest data for the 1997–98 season are preliminary; we are still processing sealing certificates for spring 1998. The 2 bears reported were males, taken by nonlocal Alaska residents.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: The black bear harvest in Unit 11 has been relatively low for a number of years. Unit 11 has some good black bear habitat, and frequent sightings indicated bears were abundant. The low harvest reflected a lack of hunting pressure rather than low bear numbers. The proportion of males in the harvest exceeded that of females. A harvest comprised of more males than females has less effect on overall bear numbers. Because guidelines are being met, we propose no changes in season dates and bag limits.

Project Location: Unit 13 (23,400 mi²)
Nelchina Basin

Project Objectives: Maintain a black bear population largely unaffected by human harvest; annual harvest should average less than 125 bears.

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: We monitored the black bear harvest by sealing the hides and skulls of all bears killed. We interviewed hunters at the time of sealing to determine hunting methods, means, success, and effort.

Preliminary harvest data for the 1997–98 hunting season indicated hunters took 61 black bears. Harvest data for the entire 1997–98 season are preliminary because hunting season is open year-round and sealing certificates are still being processed. Hunters harvested 54 bears (58% males) during the fall of 1997 and 7 (100% males) to date in spring 1998. Males composed 63% of the harvest. Unit residents took 18 bears (30%), other Alaska residents killed 24 (39%), and nonresidents harvested 19 (31%) bears. During fall successful hunters preferred highway vehicles as their method of transport; boats and aircraft were also popular modes of transport. Spring hunters went on foot or used highway vehicles.

Skull size and age data were not available for this report. Units 13D and 13E remained the most important black bear hunting locations, accounting for 54% and 36% of the unit take, respectively. Guided hunting remained relatively high for the second year. This year 10 bears were taken on guided hunts (12 during 1996–97) compared to only 2 during 1994–95.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: The preliminary harvest of 61 black bears was 7% above the previous year's take of 57 but 22% below the 5-year (1992–96) average of 78. The reason for the decline in the black bear harvest is not known but may reflect a decline in hunting pressure or vulnerability of black bears. There is no indication of a decline in black bear numbers in Unit 13; sightings are frequent as are problem bear calls. The black bear harvest in Unit 13 is within sustainable levels, and black bears are considered relatively abundant in forested areas. Units 13D and 13E have the highest black bear numbers because of the extensive areas of forest habitat. Preliminary composition data for the 1997–98 season indicated the proportion of males in the harvest was above the 60% management guideline for Unit 13. Because current guidelines are being met, we propose no changes in season dates and bag limits.

Project Location: Unit 14 (6,600 mi²)
Upper Cook Inlet

Project Objectives: The population objective is to maintain a black bear population of a size largely unaffected by human harvest. The human-use objective is to provide liberal opportunities to hunt black bears with annual average harvests of less than 80 bears.

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: During this reporting period, we sealed 103 black bears for all of Unit 14. Hunters killed 94 bears: 56 in Subunit 14A, 19 in 14B, and 19 in 14C. Of the hunter-killed bears, 69% were males. One male was killed illegally in 14A. Six male bears (1 in Subunit 14A and 5 in 14C) were killed in defense of life or property (DLP). In 14C 1 male was killed in a vehicle collision, and 1 male was killed during a research project. Females composed 31% of the hunter harvest and 28% of the total harvest.

A minimum of 110 hunters registered at least 1 black bear bait station for the spring season in Subunit 14A; 25 persons registered bait stations in Subunit 14B. Thirty-one bears, including 11 females (35%), were reported killed over bait.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: Total black bear harvests have exceeded the objective level for the second consecutive year. This is primarily due to DLP and illegal harvest. The percent of females in the 3-year average harvest (28%) is acceptable. With relatively long seasons and spring baiting opportunity, the human-use objectives were met.

Hunter harvest increased slightly from 1996–97, when 89 bears were killed. The 3-year average hunter harvest (78 bears) in Unit 14 has fulfilled the harvest objective (less than 80 bears). During 1997–98, in Subunits 14A and 14B, 11 of 17 females (65%) taken in spring were taken over bait. Overall, baiters reported taking 31 bears, including 11 females (35%).

We estimate the black bear population is stable or growing. The number of bears killed illegally and in DLP has increased. Most DLP bears are subadults, indicating the density of black bears in Unit 14 is high and young animals are seeking unoccupied habitat. We estimate Unit 14 contains 750–1350 black bears; therefore, the 3-year average harvest was less than 10% of the midrange estimate (1050).

Project Location: Unit 16 (12,300 mi²)
West Side of Cook Inlet

Project Objectives: Maintain a black bear population largely unaffected by human harvest. The human-use objective is to provide liberal opportunities to hunt black bears with an average annual harvest of less than 160 bears, including fewer than 12 females from Unit 16A and fewer than 50 females from Unit 16B.

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: During this period, we sealed 135 black bears for Unit 16. This included 42 bears taken in Subunit 16A and 91 taken in Subunit 16B. Sex was identified for 134 bears; 73% were males. Two male bears, both at new oil and gas exploration camps, were reported killed in DLP. A minimum of 49 and 35 hunters registered at least 1 baiting station in Subunits 16A and 16B, respectively. Thirty-six percent of the total harvest, and 33% of the female harvest, occurred over bait. This included 36 males and 12 females.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: The density of the bear population in Unit 16 was moderate to high. Total harvest increased since 1996–97 (111 bears), but the unit harvest was below the assumed sustainable level. Female harvest in 16A reached 16 bears, which exceeds the projected sustainable level for the second consecutive year. Trends in female harvest will be monitored carefully. The 3-year average harvest was 115 bears. All other human-use objectives were met.

Twenty-five percent of bears killed over bait were females. This is a decline from previous years and probably reflects the requirement that hunters using bait attend a bear baiting

clinic. While the total reported harvest was within objective levels, there may have been significant unreported harvest.

Project Location: Unit 17 (18,800 mi²)
Northern Bristol Bay

Project Objectives: Maintain existing populations of black bears with a sex and age structure that will sustain a harvest of at least 60% males.

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment: Preliminary data indicate a reported harvest of 13 black bears, including 10 males (77%) and 3 females (23%) during the 1997–98 season. Average skull size for males and females was 16.4 inches. Nonresident hunters reported killing 12 bears (92%), nonlocal residents killed 1 bear (8%), and unit residents killed no bears. All successful hunters reported using aircraft for access. Successful hunters spent an average of 4.7 days afield.

All 13 black bears were killed during the fall 1997 season; 20 were taken in Unit 17B and 3 in Unit 17C. Four bears (3 males, 1 female) were killed in August, and 9 (7 males, 2 females) in September. Meat was salvaged from only 1 bear (15%).

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: No objective data are available on the population density of black bears in Unit 17. Incidental observations during moose and caribou surveys and anecdotal reports by local residents indicate the black bear population along upper Nushagak River drainages has stabilized. Nothing is known about black bear populations in other portions of the unit. We have little historic data on harvests because there were no reporting or sealing requirements for black bears harvested before the 1995–96 season. The 1997–98 reported harvest was only half the 1996–97 harvest and similar to the reported harvests for 1994–95 and 1996–97.

Segment Period Project Costs:

	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Operating</u>	<u>Total</u>
Planned	60.7	1.1	61.8
Actual	60.7	1.1	61.8
Difference	0.0	0.0	0.0

Submitted by:

Michael G. McDonald
Assistant Management Coordinator

Project Title: Interior Black Bear Population and Habitat Management

Project Location: Unit 12 (9,978 mi²)
Upper Tanana and White River

Project Objectives and Activities:

1. Manage for a black bear harvest that maintains 55% or more males in the combined harvests of the most recent 3 years
2. Seal bears and analyze harvest data

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: Preliminary reported black bear harvest was 26 (19 males and 7 females). It was below the 5-year average of 31 bears. Males composed 73% of the 1997–1998 harvest and 76% of the harvest during the past 3 years. Twenty-three bears (88%) were killed during spring, with 15 (65%) of these taken over bait. On average, 71% of the annual harvest is taken during spring.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: Project objectives were met. I estimated the Unit 12 black bear population was between 700 and 1000, based on population estimates from other areas of the state with comparable habitat. An average annual harvest of 31 bears was well below sustainable harvest and did not limit the unit's black bear population. The meat was salvaged from 90% of harvested black bears, reflecting the importance of bear meat as a food source.

Project Location: Units 20A, 20B, 20C, and 20F (34,0790 mi²)
Fairbanks–Central Tanana (Tanana River and Middle Yukon River drainages)

Project Objectives and Activities:

1. Seal bear hides and skulls, collect and age teeth, and analyze data
2. Manage for a sustained harvest of black bears:
 - a. *Unit 20A*—Manage for a harvest of black bears that maintains 55% or more males in the combined harvests of the most recent 3 years
 - b. *Unit 20B*—Manage for a sustained annual harvest of ≤150 black bears, of which at least 55% are males
 - c. *Units 20C and 20F*—Manage for a harvest of black bears that maintains 50% or more males in the combined harvests from both units from the most recent 3 years
3. Investigate techniques to determine black bear densities in Unit 20B in order to estimate sustainable harvests by 1998

4. Use registration permits to monitor hunting and harvest of black bears at bait stations
5. Minimize human-bear conflicts by providing information and assistance to the public and to agencies

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: We registered black bear bait stations for qualified hunters. Number and location of bait stations were recorded, and successful hunters presented bears for sealing. Hunters provided the date and location of their kill, and we determined the sex, color, size, and reproductive status. We also collected teeth to determine age. We provided public information and assistance to minimize human-bear conflicts. Conflicts were investigated and recorded, including defense of life or property kills. We also discussed and evaluated new techniques for estimating black bear density.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: We met our objective of monitoring the hunting and harvest of black bears at bait stations. We also met objectives of a sustainable harvest based on sex ratios; however, information on bear densities and population dynamics remains incomplete. New techniques to estimate densities, such as DNA fingerprinting, may prove useful. I recommend extending the objective to determine density through the year 2000. We also met our objective to minimize human-bear conflicts by responding to complaints and working with the public and agencies to properly dispose of garbage.

Project Location: Unit 20D (5,633 mi²)
Central Tanana Valley near Delta Junction

Project Objectives and Activities:

1. Manage for a harvest not to exceed 15 black bears south of the Tanana River and 15 black bears north of the Tanana River
2. Seal bears and analyze harvest data

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: The preliminary reported harvest was 19 black bears during the 1997–98 regulatory year. Eleven bears were taken south of the Tanana River, including 8 males and 3 females. Eight bears were taken north of the Tanana River, including 7 males and 1 female.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: Management objectives were met this reporting period. Harvested bears were sealed and harvest data analyzed. Harvest met the management objective.

Project Location: Unit 20E (10,680 mi²)
Charley, Fortymile and Ladue River drainages

Project Objectives and Activities:

1. Manage for a black bear harvest that maintains 55% or more males in the combined harvests of the most recent 3 years
2. Seal bears and analyze harvest data

Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period: Preliminary reported harvest was 5 male black bears. This was below the 5-year average harvest of 19 bears. Four were taken during the fall. During the past three years, 66% of the black bears harvested were males.

Progress Meeting Project Objectives: Harvest was the lowest reported since 1990. The take was low because several families in Eagle that normally take several black bears for food did not hunt this year. Hunting pressure in Unit 20E is normally light, but black bears have been an important subsistence resource. Low annual harvests indicate hunting pressure rather than trend in the unit's black bear population. Incidental sightings of black bears and comparisons between annual average skull size and percentage of males in the harvest indicated the population was healthy and harvest was not a limiting factor. I recommend no changes in population and harvest objectives.

Segment Period Project Costs:

	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Operating</u>	<u>Total</u>
Planned	49.4	3.8	53.2
Actual	28.4	1.2	29.6
Difference	21.0	2.6	23.6

Explanation: During the last 7 months of this report period, Region III staff initiated a new time accounting procedure. In December 1997 staff began recording time spent on specific federal aid projects. Previously, staff had recorded only total time which was then prorated to either federal aid or nonfederal aid time according to a fixed percentage that varied among staff positions. Therefore, the "Actual" expenditures for "Personnel" in this report are estimates derived from 7 months of specific project time extrapolated to 12 months. The new procedure unavoidably resulted in what appears to be substantial discrepancies between "Planned" and "Actual" personnel expenditures for most of the FY98 federal aid projects. However, most "discrepancies" are not real, and the explanation and justification are presented in the explanation section of each project report. This is a transitional phenomenon and, unlike this year, the FY99 performance reports will reflect 12 months of actual project time accounting.

Personnel: Funds were apparently underspent. Most black bear management work occurs during the first half of the calendar year (spring and early summer). Therefore, the estimated expenditure in this case may be fairly accurate or perhaps an overestimate. If it is accurate, it may reflect a general overestimate of time staff typically spend on black bear survey and inventory activities, especially in years when management reports are not due such as this year. This issue will be addressed in the current fiscal year.

Operating: The operating allocation was 2.8, a budgetary decision made after we submitted the Work Plan. Funds were underspent because tooth specimens from bears harvested in Unit

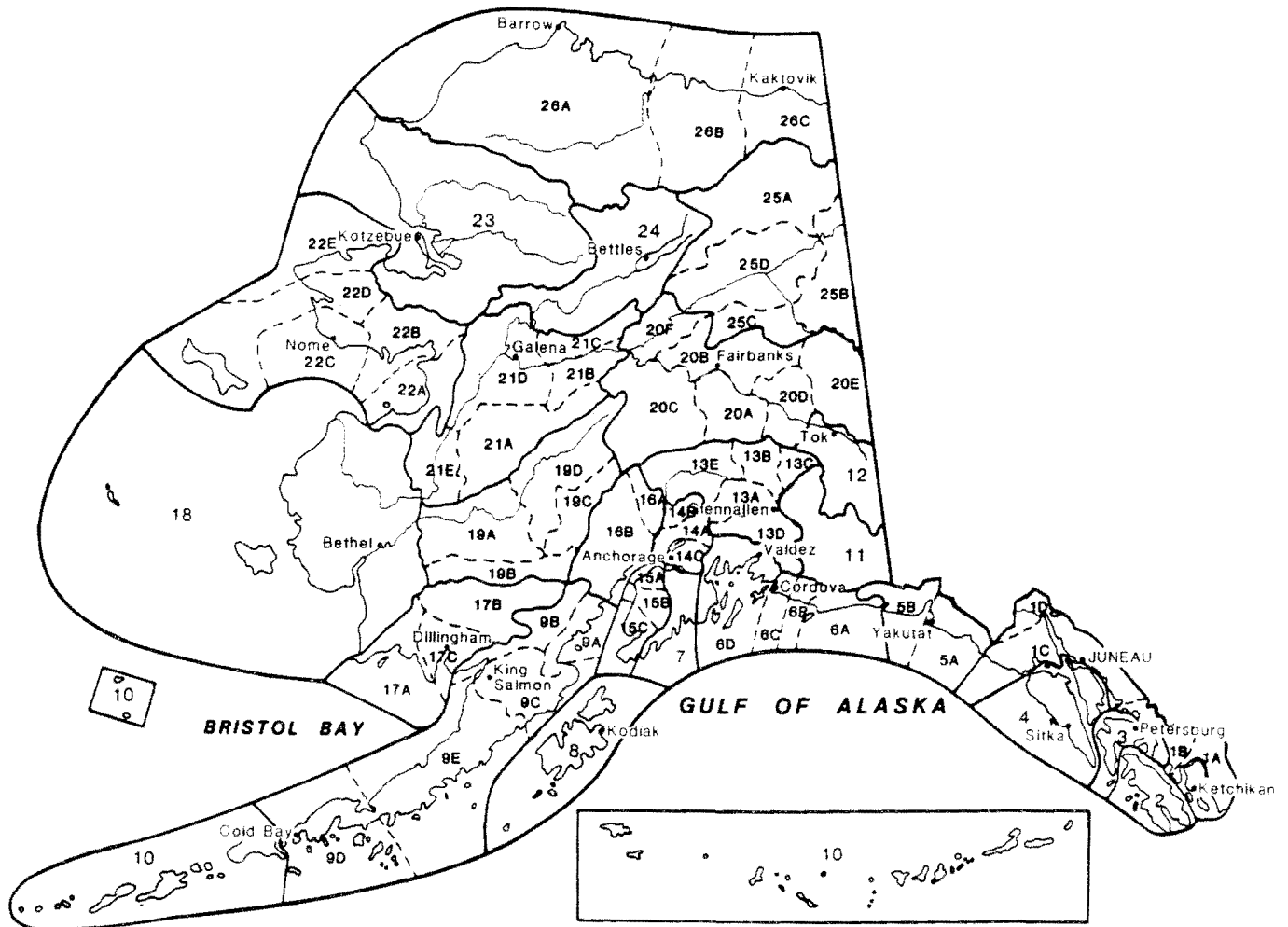
20 were not sent, as originally planned, to a commercial laboratory for age determinations. This resulted when the biologist responsible for this activity was transferred.

Submitted by:

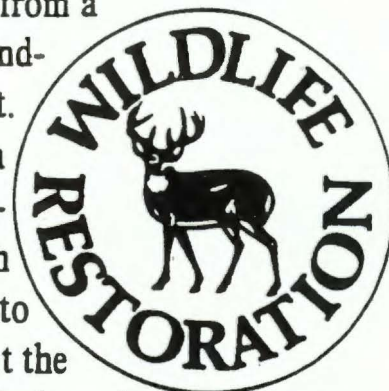
Roy A. Nowlin
Regional Management Assistant

David D. James
Management Coordinator

Alaska's Game Management Units



The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program consists of funds from a 10% to 11% manufacturer's excise tax collected from the sales of handguns, sporting rifles, shotguns, ammunition, and archery equipment. The Federal Aid program allots funds back to states through a formula based on each state's geographic area and number of paid hunting license holders. Alaska receives a maximum 5% of revenues collected each year. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game uses federal aid funds to help restore, conserve, and manage wild birds and mammals to benefit the public. These funds are also used to educate hunters to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes for responsible hunting. Seventy-five percent of the funds for this report are from Federal Aid.



Hyde