

HABITATS, MOVEMENTS, AND FOODS OF RIVER OTTERS  
IN COASTAL SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA

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Habitat use, movement patterns, and feeding habits of river otters inhabiting Cholmondeley Sound in southeastern Alaska were studied from June through August 1980 and during all of 1981. Otters avoided areas in which the trees had been clear-cut but used old growth, 60- to 70-year-old second growth, residual beach fringe, and island habitats in proportion to availability. Use of terrestrial habitat was usually restricted to a <20 m fringe of timber adjacent to convex shorelines with short intertidal lengths and consisting predominantly of bedrock. Otter burrows were within 0.9-22.9 m of beaches and were usually in cavities under trees or snags. Otter travel routes generally paralleled the shoreline. Home ranges overlapped and varied for radio-tagged otters from 8.9 km<sup>2</sup> to 24.8 km<sup>2</sup>. Fish occurred in 96% of 272 scats. Fish from the Cottidae, Scorpaenidae, and Hexagrammidae were the most commonly consumed. Recommendations are presented on ways to harvest timber so as to minimize impacts on otters.

# **ABSTRACTS**

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