

USE OF HARVEST DATA IN MANAGING FURBEARERS IN ALASKA

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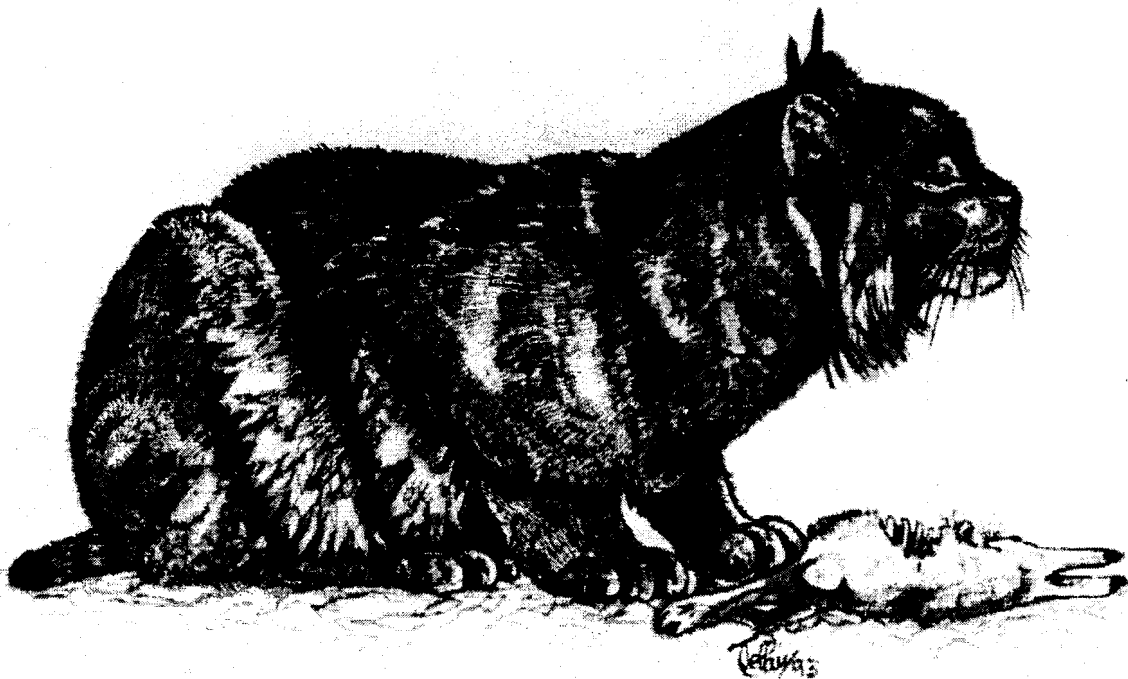
Abstract: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) monitors and manages the harvest of 18 species of furbearers. Four harvest reporting sources are used: (1) pelt sealing certificates, (2) fur export reports, (3) fur-dealer acquisition reports, and (4) trapper questionnaires. Pelt sealing monitors harvest of six species with high management importance. Beaver (*Castor canadensis*), wolverine (*Gulo gulo*), marten (*Martes americana*) (in Southeast and parts of Southcentral Alaska), lynx (*Felis lynx*), river otter (*Lutra canadensis*), and wolf (*Canis lupus*) pelts are sealed. The latter three require Federal CITES seals. Trappers and hunters must seal pelts within 30 days of the close of trapping or hunting seasons. Fur export and fur dealer acquisition reports gather harvest data on all furbearer species from individuals exporting raw furs from Alaska and from fur dealers who acquire raw furs from trappers. Trapper questionnaires are sent annually to a sample of trappers who report their harvests, efforts, and observations. The reliability and utility of harvest data vary tremendously among sources and regions of Alaska. Sealing records are the most reliable, specific, and sensitive indicators of harvest. All sources report data on the trapper or hunter, furbearer species and number caught, and Game Management Unit of harvest, but sealing certificates also report specific area of harvest, date taken, method of take and transportation, sex, and pelt characteristics. All sources suffer from discrepancies and deficiencies in the reporting process, such as unreported harvest. The ADF&G is working toward improving this situation through education and increased cooperation among participants.

8TH NORTHERN FURBEARER CONFERENCE

In Conjunction With

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
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“Tradition and Transition -- Moving into the 21st Century”



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