

ATTITUDES TOWARD AND RELATIVE VALUE OF ALASKAN BROWN BEARS TO RESIDENT VOTERS, RESIDENT HUNTERS, AND NONRESIDENT HUNTERS

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the social benefits obtained by and attitudes of 3 groups who obtain benefits from use of Alaskan brown bears. These groups are hunters who bought resident hunting licenses in 1990, hunters who bought non-resident licenses in 1990, and persons eligible to vote in Alaska. The voter sample also included many resident hunters but not the same individuals in the resident hunter sample. Each group was sampled by means of a mail survey designed to document their attitudes, knowledge, expenditures, and net economic value (value obtained from the resource in excess of what it cost to obtain it). Comparisons are made between groups and between species targeted and utilized by each group. Expanded total economic value to these 3 groups from activities related to brown bear hunting and viewing was \$xxx, this represented yyy% of the total value obtained by these groups from wildlife [values will be developed, not currently available]. Resident hunter groups assigned higher values to seeing wildlife on their hunting trips than on bagging target species while nonresidents put more importance on bagging target species. Alaska resident hunters, nonresident hunters, and Alaska voters were both willing to pay more for a day trip to view brown bears (\$404, \$365, and \$484, respectively than for other big game and marine species. Trip related expenditures and net economic value of hunting trips targeting brown bears was \$1,247 and \$208 for resident hunters, respectively, and \$10,677 and \$748 for nonresidents, respectively. Although, resident hunters and the Alaska voter sample placed high value on viewing wildlife, 74% of the resident hunters and 49.6% of the Alaska voters disagreed with the statement that more areas would be managed for wildlife viewing if that meant closing some areas to hunting. The implications of our findings on the conservation of brown bears in Alaska (98% of the US population and >60% of the North American population) are discussed.

ABSTRACTS

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