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PRESS RELEASE

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Warm January Prompts Extension of Kenai Peninsula Lynx Trapping Season

(SOLDOTNA) – The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has extended the lynx trapping season in Kenai Peninsula Game Management Units (GMUs) 7 and 15. The current lynx trapping season was scheduled to end at midnight January 31, but has been extended to end at midnight February 15, 2014.

Lynx trapping seasons in GMUs 7 and 15 are managed using a harvest tracking strategy. When snowshoe hare populations (the main food source for lynx) are low, trapping seasons are closed. As snowshoe hare populations increase, so do lynx numbers and trapping is allowed. Snowshoe hare populations eventually peak and then decline. The lynx population follows a similar pattern, lagging behind by a couple years, as their major food source becomes scarce. Currently, the snowshoe hare cycle is past its peak and declining.

This is the sixth year of an open lynx trapping season during this cycle and likely the last before lynx trapping seasons are closed until snowshoe hare populations again increase. Generally, lynx trapping is allowed only in January during the last year of the cycle. However, open water on Peninsula streams and a lack of snow due to this January's unseasonably warm temperatures limited many trappers from accessing traditional trap lines.

This 15-day extension will allow trappers who were unable to run their lines additional opportunity, will have little impact on the lynx population, and stays within the lynx harvest tracking strategy.

This extension applies to all state, federal and private lands currently open to trapping on the Kenai Peninsula.

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