

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

**Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Wildlife Restoration Grant**

GRANT NUMBER: AKW-10 Wildlife Restoration FY2016

PROJECT NUMBER: 17.0

PROJECT TITLE: The Status of Black Bear and Factors Influencing Their Populations

REPORT PERIOD: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

PROJECT LOCATION: Statewide

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This performance report describes black bear survey and inventory activities. Activities are listed by game management unit.

**The Status of Alaska Black Bears and Factors Influencing Their Populations in
Region I**

Statewide

Activity 1: Prepare triennial black bear management reports based on the regional reports.

Accomplishments:

Activity 2: Provide information to state and federal regulatory processes on black bear management.

Accomplishments:

Region-wide:

Activity 1: Provide information to state and federal regulatory processes on black bear management.

Accomplishments: Information on black bear harvest and management was provided to state and federal regulatory bodies as requested.

Activity 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

Accomplishments: Regional management staff monitored black bear harvest primarily through the sealing process, but also through conversations with hunters and guides and their own observations.

Activity 3: Collect data, determine sex, and extract a tooth for aging from black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

Accomplishments: Regional management staff recorded the full suite of data on all black bears submitted for sealing and including collecting a tooth for aging and determining sex from evidence attached to the hide.

Activity 4: Coordinate with community decision-makers on local bear issues.

Accomplishments: Regional management staff continued to work with local communities to address a variety of bear-related issues.

Activity 5: Reduce the number of nuisance bear problems and possible DLP kills resulting from improper refuse handling and disposal.

Accomplishments: Regional management staff continued to work with local communities, facility managers, and homeowners to educate people and resolve nuisance bear problems and minimize DLP killings.

Activities by Unit:

Unit 1C

Activity 1: Capture one or two urban black bears opportunistically and monitor their movements using GPS radio collars to identify problem areas and to assist educational efforts towards better refuse management.

Accomplishments: No bears were collared during this report period. However, this is an ongoing effort, and we plan to collar additional bears.

Activity 2: Capture up to 2 bears at Gustavus as part of an educational and information gathering effort.

Accomplishments: No activity during this report period.

Activity 3: Work with USFS to capture and radio collar 1 black bear near the Mendenhall Lake Recreation Area as part of a study to learn more about how bears in this area use the available habitats.

Accomplishments: No bears were collared during this report period. However, this is an ongoing effort, and we plan to collar additional bears.

Unit 2

Activity 1: Retrieve radio collars from black bears on Prince of Wales Island, investigate den sites, and radio track collared bears.

Accomplishments: The field portion of this study ended two years ago. During this report period the principle investigator, our Ketchikan Area Management Biologist, worked with the Research Coordinator, Management Coordinator, and bear biologist to analyze data and produce a poster presented at the International Bear Symposium in Anchorage.

Unit 3

Activity 1: Monitor the Kuiu Island nonresident harvest.

Accomplishments: Kuiu Island black bear harvest by nonresident hunters was monitored through the drawing permit and sealing process.

Unit 5

Activity 1: Monitor the annual harvest of glacier colored black bears.

Accomplishments: Harvest of glacier phase black bears in Unit 5 was monitored by recording hide color on sealing forms.

Submitted by: Tom Schumacher, Management Coordinator

The Status of Alaska Black Bears and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region II

Regionwide:

ACTIVITY : Draft a triennial Black Bear management report.

Black Bear management report was not due during the previous period. Staff collected information for future analysis and publication in new 5-year report and plan in 2019. This activity will be modified in the next annual work plan submission.

ACTIVITY : Monitor the Black bear bear harvest through field observations, bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

These are standard activities accomplished in each office. See Area specific activities.

ACTIVITY : Collect harvest data, determine the sex from black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

All bears taken in Region were presented to staff or appointed sealers for specimen collection and sealing. See area specific activities for additional information.

ACTIVITY : Provide information to state and federal regulatory processes on black bear management.

Staff routinely interact with federal staff and discuss management of black bear relative to the respective regulatory systems. Staff prepared information for presentation to the Board of Game meeting during the March region II Board of Game meeting.

ACTIVITY : Evaluate the new harvest ticket reporting system.

All region II GMUs with black bear seasons require hunters to obtain harvest tickets, registration permits, or drawing permits. Harvest ticket reporting is consistent throughout the region. Reports may be submitted in person, by mail, or online.

Activities by Unit:

Unit 6

ACTIVITY 1: Final data for 2014-2015 showed 122 harvested (73% males). For regulatory year 2015-16, the first year of registration hunt RL065, the preliminary total is 105 bears (76% males).

ACTIVITY 2: In Unit 6D, collected teeth from approximately 85 black bears harvested to be sent to a laboratory for aging.

Units 7 & 15

ACTIVITY 1: Preliminary data indicates that the 2015-2016 black bear harvest was the lowest harvest recorded in the last 26 years. The preliminary 2015-2016 harvest was 137 males and 51 females for a total of 188. Seventy-three percent of these bears (138) were harvested during the spring, of which 74 (53% of spring harvest) were harvested over bait. Harvest numbers are driven by take in Game Management Unit 15C. Female harvest is within management directives according to preliminary data.

Unit 14C

ACTIVITY 1: The preliminary 2015-2016 harvest was 28 males, 8 females for a total of 36. An additional 14 bears (10 males, 3 females and 1 of unknown sex) were taken by non-hunting related causes (2 by agency kill, 3 by motor vehicle accident, and 9 defense of life or property).

ACTIVITY 2: Worked with local residents of Anchorage to reduce bear attractants within the municipality. Worked with local garbage collection agencies to provide bear-resistant tipper carts for garbage in areas where human-bear conflicts are common.

Submitted by: Cynthia M. Wardlow

The Status of Alaska Black Bears and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region III

Region III Units 12, 20 and 25D

Region wide Activities:

1. Prepare triennial black bear management reports.

Compiled information and data for 5 five-year Black Bear Management Reports and Operational Plans for Units 12, 19, 20, and 25C.

2. Monitor black bear harvest through field observations, sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters and analyze harvest data.

Monitored the harvest of black bears in Units 12, 19D, 20, 25C through harvest reports, field observations, interviews with successful hunters and analyses of harvest report data. Additionally, harvest was monitored through sealing reports of all bears harvested in Unit 20B and in Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, and 25 by hunters who took their bear hides out of state either permanently or for tanning.

3. Collect harvest information and extract a tooth for aging from black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

Collected harvest data about black bears harvested in Units 12, 19D, 20, through harvest reports. Data were also collected through sealing reports of bears harvested in Units 20B by residents and nonresidents and by hunters who took their bear hides out of state either permanently or for tanning from Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, and 25. Premolar teeth were collected from black bears harvested in Units 20B and 20D and presented for sealing.

4. Obtain estimates of ages of harvested bears by tooth sectioning.

Obtained estimates of ages of bears harvested in Units 20B and 20D in FY15 by results of tooth sectioning and age analysis.

5. Monitor and analyze black bear bait station permit distribution.

Monitored distribution of 842 bait stations located in Units 20, 21, 24, and 25 and analyzed harvest data of bears taken at these bait stations.

6. Provide black bear management information to state and federal regulatory processes.

Communicated and coordinated with and attended meetings of 15 local Fish and Game Advisory Committee, the Alaska Board of Game, 2 Federal Regional Advisory Councils, the Federal Subsistence Board, numerous local village councils, Native corporations, and the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission about black bear management and to review and analyze regulation proposals for the Alaska Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board.

**The Status of Alaska Black Bears and Factors Influencing Their Populations in
Region IV**

Region wide Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Prepare a triennial black bear management report.

The triennial black bear reports were not due during this reporting period.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

Bear harvests were monitored through the sealing program, where bear sealing is required, and through harvest ticket reporting in all other areas.

ACTIVITY 3: Collect data and determine the sex of black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

| | Males | Females | Unk. | Total |
|------------------|-------|---------|------|-------|
| <i>Unit 9</i> | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| <i>Unit 11:</i> | 10 | 2 | 1 | 13 |
| <i>Unit 13:</i> | 99 | 46 | 0 | 145 |
| <i>Unit 14A:</i> | 25 | 12 | 1 | 38 |
| <i>Unit 14B:</i> | 18 | 7 | 1 | 26 |
| <i>Unit 16:</i> | 119 | 66 | 2 | 187 |
| <i>Unit 17:</i> | 4 | 1 | 0 | 5 |

Submitted by: Todd A. Rinaldi, Region IV Management Coordinator