

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

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

ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NO. W-33-10

PROJECT NO. 17.0

PERIOD: July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

PROJECT LOCATION: RI, RII, RIII and RIV

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

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

Region I Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters.

ADF&G Wildlife Conservation staff as well as Fish and Wildlife Protection Troopers and designated sealing agents sealed black bears harvested in the region. Area biologists and other staff tracked harvest trends and collected biological samples whenever possible. Where appropriate, harvest was monitored to keep it within the guideline levels established by the Board.

ACTIVITY 2: Collect data related to sex, age, body condition, and harvest location from black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

Black bear skulls were measured and the sex determined as bears were sealed. Except in cases where the hunter damaged the skull or external sex identifiers were removed, this data was collected on every bear presented for sealing. Approximately 666 hunter killed black bears were sealed in Region I during the period.

ACTIVITY 3: Work with USFS, Alaska Professional Hunting Association and other big game guides to implement recent board of game regulatory changes associated with black bear guiding.

The department engaged in several teleconferences and meetings with guides and the USFS to discuss implementation of the black bear management strategy that was agreed upon at the 2010 SE Board of Game meeting..

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

In Juneau, biologists communicate almost daily with the Juneau Police Department, Alaska Wildlife Troopers, and local refuse collection, as well as other municipalities such as Haines, Skagway, and Gustavus in identifying areas of bear activity and determining what types of structures are most effective in thwarting foraging bears. Biologists continue to work with the city-appointed bear committee to provide radio and TV news releases about urban bears and refuse management

In Petersburg and Ketchikan, the area staff worked with the local police department and Department of Public Safety Troopers to coordinate responses to nuisance bear complaints within the community.

Activities by Unit

Unit 1C

ACTIVITY 1: Reduce the number of nuisance bear problems and possible DLP kills resulting from improper refuse handling and disposal.

Biologists continue to work with the Juneau Police Department, Juneau city leaders, and the local refuse company to keep garbage unavailable to bears.

ACTIVITY 2: Capture one or two black bears opportunistically and monitor their movements using GPS radio collars to identify problem areas and to assist educational efforts towards better refuse management.

Biologists captured 5 black bears in the Juneau area and fitted them with GPS radio collars during this report period. Four of the bears were related to an illegal feeding site; and another was a high profile female with three yearling cubs. The goal of this program is to provide department staff, students and members of the community of Juneau with a better understanding of where, when, how and why bears use certain areas in the community. With a better understanding of these questions, we can learn things that can help us the community to minimize conflicts with black bears in this urban setting. Also, we hope this program will generate a greater appreciation of black bears that will prompt residents to accept greater responsibility in keeping bears from becoming human food conditioned.

ACTIVITY 3: Establish hair snare transects and conduct snaring operations in high density bear locations within the city and borough of Juneau.

No hair snares were deployed during the reporting period. Snares may be used during the next reporting period in conjunction with a black bear radio collaring project.

Unit 2

ACTIVITY 1: Collect genetic samples from Unit 2 black bears as part of a mark recapture effort using break away snares.

Data analysis for this portion of the study is just being completed.

ACTIVITY 2: Radio collar bears and monitor to assess demographics, life history and movement patterns.

During regulatory year 2011, ADFG staff captured and collared 16 black bears. Seventeen collars were retrieved. Three bears had collars swapped in the den. Twelve den sites were visited and catalogued.

Although data analysis is preliminary we are generally observing that females have small home ranges while males tend to have much larger ones due to long distance movements during the rut. Other movements are typically associated with timing of fish runs or berry production. It also appears that some bears may be specializing on deer fawns in spring. We are finding low cub production and cub survival rates. Denning structure is nearly

100% associated with large diameter trees (either stumps or old-growth). Several bears have multiple denning locations during the winter. We are experiencing high evacuation rates of bears from dens when we approach to re-capture. Bears are displaying a high degree of susceptibility to harvest by associating with roadways, with eight bears killed by hunters (6 confirmed, 1 confirmed wounding loss, 1 unconfirmed wounding loss).

Unit 3

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor the Kuiu Island nonresident harvest.

During the report period nonresident hunters harvested a total of 64 Kuiu Island black bears, including 10 during fall 2011 and 54 during spring 2012.

Submitted by: Neil L. Barten, Region I Management Coordinator

Region II Activities:

ACTIVITY : Draft a biennial Black Bear management report.

Black Bear management report was not due during this period. Staff continued to collect information in preparation for drafting next report.

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 for specimen collection and sealing. See area specific activities for additional information.

ACTIVITY : Evaluate the new harvest ticket reporting system.

All region II GMUs with black bear require hunters to obtain harvest tickets. At the time of this report deadline all reports have not been entered into the system.

Activities by Unit:

Unit 6

ACTIVITY 1: Black Bear Management Report not due this year.

ACTIVITY 2: Sealed 235 male and 162 female bears for a total of 397 reported thus far.

ACTIVITY 3: In Unit 6D, collected teeth from approximately 250 black bears harvested to be sent to a lab for aging.

Units 7 & 15

ACTIVITY : Monitor the black bear harvest through field observations, black bear sealing reports, and interviews with successful hunters. Collect data and determine the sex of black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

The preliminary 2011/12 harvest included

Males = 285 Females = 202 Unknown = 3 Total = 490

Unit 14C

ACTIVITY 1: Black Bear Management Report not due this year.

ACTIVITY 2: Black bear harvest was monitored through field observations, sealing reports and interviews with successful hunters.

ACTIVITY 3: Sex of black bears harvested were determined through sealing records.

Preliminary number of females taken: 18

Preliminary number of males taken: 22

ACTIVITY 4: 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

Number of bears shot in defense of life and property or agency kills:

Females: 2

Males: 6

Submitted by: Gino Del Frate

Date: 2 September 2012

Region III Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Prepare black bear management reports.

Prepared black bear management reports.

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

Monitored preliminary harvest of 273 black bears through field observations, sealing reports, community harvest reports and interviews with successful hunters and analyzed harvest data.

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

Collected preliminary data, determined sex and extracted a tooth for aging from 273 black bears presented for sealing by hunters.

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

Obtained estimates of ages from approximately 264 black bears.

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

Monitored and analyzed preliminary distribution of permits for 919 bait stations.

ACTIVITY 6: Provide black bear management information to State and Federal regulatory processes.

Provided information to 11 state advisory committees, 2 federal regional councils, and the state Board of Game concerning black bear management.

Activities by Unit

Unit 25D

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor movements of radiocollared bears and retrieve radiocollars.

Movements for radiocollared bears not monitored because project completed in June 2011, and radiocollars not retrieved because it was unnecessary.

Submitted by: Roy A. Nowlin, Region III Management Coordinator

Region IV Activities:

Project Location: Game Management Units 9, 11, 13, 14A, 14B, 16, and 17

ACTIVITY 1: Prepare a triennial black bear management report.

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

All bears harvested were sealed during this regulatory year.

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

	Males	Females	Total
<i>Unit 9</i>	2	3	5
<i>Unit 11:</i>	9	5	14
<i>Unit 13:</i>	88	27	115
<i>Unit 14A:</i>	39	30	69
<i>Unit 14B:</i>	8	15	23
<i>Unit 16</i>	175	90	265
<i>Unit 17</i>	10	2	12

Submitted by: Lem Butler, Region IV Management Coordinator

Date: 15 August, 2012