

2023 Alaska Trapper Report:

1 July 2023–30 June 2024

Stephanie E. Bogle



Photo by Temple Dillard



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Cover Photo: 4-year-old Liam Dillard holds a hare he successfully snared. Photo by Temple Dillard.

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Photo by Matt Outbacker

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Code of Ethics

A TRAPPER’S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Respect other trapper’s “grounds” – particularly brushed, maintained traplines with a history of use.
2. Check traps regularly.
3. Promote trapping methods that will reduce the possibility of catching nontarget animals.
4. Obtain landowners’ permission before trapping on private property.
5. Know and use proper releasing and killing methods.
6. Develop set location methods to prevent losses.
7. Trap in the most humane way possible.
8. Dispose of animal carcasses properly.
9. Concentrate trapping in areas where animals are overabundant for the supporting habitat.
10. Promptly report the presence of diseased animals to wildlife authorities.
11. Assist landowners who are having problems with predators and other furbearers that have become a nuisance.
12. Support and help train new trappers in trapping ethics, methods and means, conservation, fur handling, and marketing.
13. Obey all trapping regulations and support strict enforcement by reporting violations.
14. Support and promote sound furbearer management.

This code of ethics is reprinted from the *Alaska Trappers Manual*. The manual was created in a joint effort between the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). The manual is currently available from the Alaska Trappers Association for \$26.00, including shipping, or from some bookstores in Alaska.



Photo by Jerry Bendza

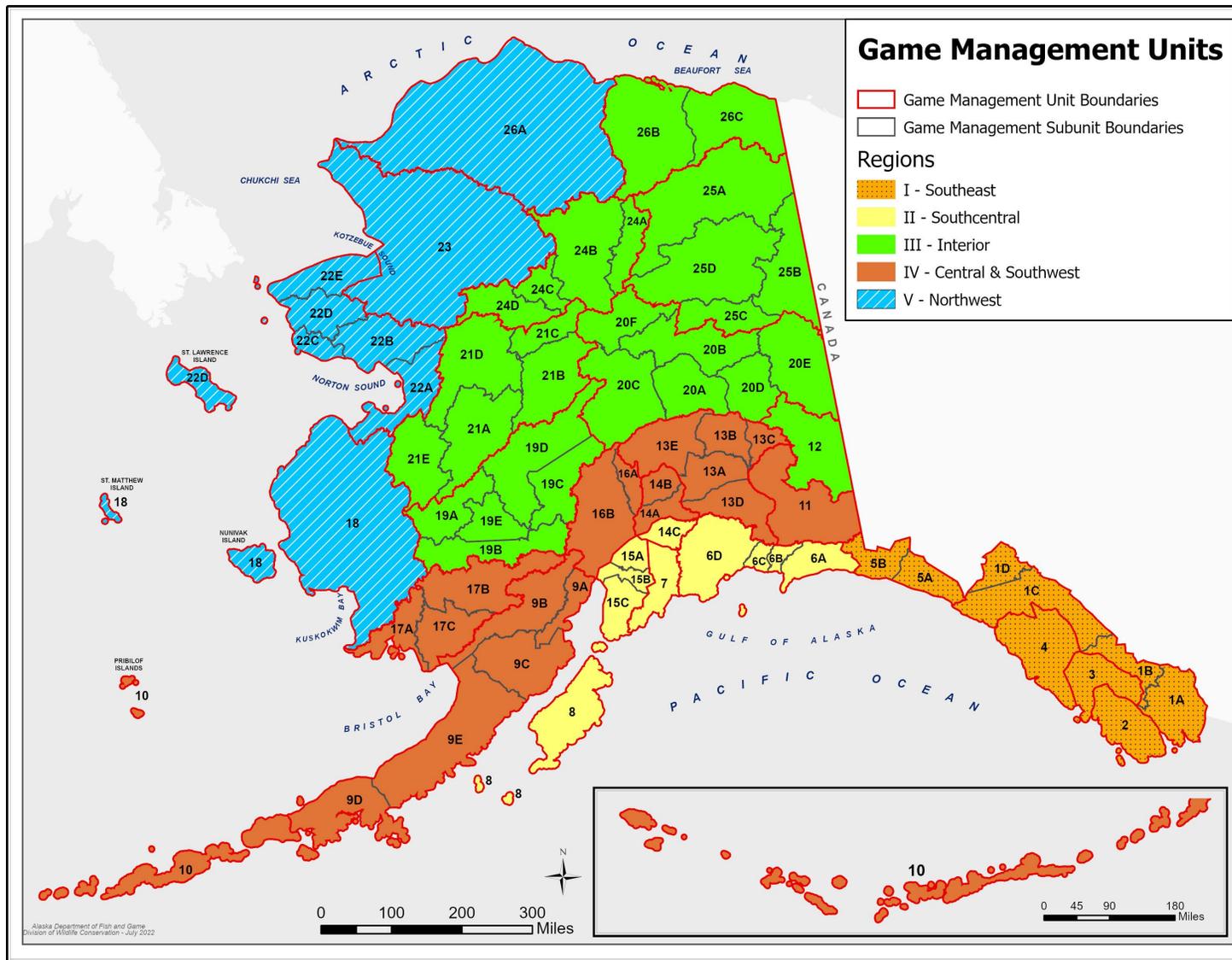


Figure 1. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation’s regions and game management units.

Introduction

This *2023 Alaska Trapper Report: 1 July 2023–30 June 2024* contains information provided by trappers through the annual trapper questionnaire. On the following pages, you will learn how other Alaskans ran their traplines, what their primary target species were, how much effort they put into catching furbearers, how abundant furbearer and prey species were on their traplines, and how many furbearers they trapped. You will also find fur sealing summaries from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as well as comments from trappers throughout the state.

In 2015, ADF&G began offering the questionnaire in an online format in hopes of improving the data. We continue to work to improve both the questionnaire and the reports generated from them. We hope trappers and managers alike can use the information in this report to enhance their efforts during future trapping seasons.

The accuracy and value of the information provided in this report depends on the number of trappers who reply to the questionnaire. To best reach trappers with this questionnaire, we identified potential trappers using licensing and fur sealing records. The 2023 questionnaire invites were sent to people who purchased a trapping license, hunt/trap combination license, or a hunt/trap/fish combination license authorizing them to trap in regulatory year 2023. Of the 4,711 questionnaire invites mailed or emailed out, we received 396 responses, yielding an 8.4% response rate. The response rate decreased from the 2022 survey response rate.

This year, trappers were assigned to the 5 standard regions found in Figure 1, based on their mailing address. If a trapper responded with a primary trapline that was in a region separate from his or her mailing address, we reassigned that trapper to the region where the primary trapline was. This was done in an attempt to accurately reflect trapping effort and locations. Throughout this report, regions will be listed by a Roman numeral in place of the description (e.g., Region I instead of Southeast): Region I = Southeast Alaska; Region II = Southcentral Alaska; Region III = Interior Alaska; Region IV = Central and Southwest Alaska; Region V = Arctic and Western Alaska.

As always, we maintain strict confidentiality. The names of individuals and references to specific traplines will not be included in any reports. We hope you find this report informative and welcome your suggestions for improvement.

Trapper questionnaire reports are mailed to all trappers who responded to the survey. This report and all previous reports can be found on our website:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=trapping.reports>.

A Profile of Trapping in Alaska

TRAPPER INFORMATION

Did You Trap?

This year, 4,711 questionnaire invites were mailed throughout the state, and 396 responded, for an overall response rate of 8.4% (Table 1a). The response rate was highest in Region I and lowest in Region II. Statewide, 52% of respondents who answered whether they “trapped” or “did not trap” (Table 1b) said they trapped during the 2023–2024 season, regulatory year (RY) 2023 (a regulatory year begins July 1 and ends June 30; e.g., RY23 = 1 July 2023–30 June 2024).

Table 1a. Response to the 2023 Alaska trapper questionnaire.

Responded to the questionnaire			
Region	Total invited	Percent responded	No response
I	596	5.4	564
II	1,519	3.7	1,463
III	974	5.4	921
IV	1,188	3.9	1,142
V	234	3.8	225
Not specified	200	–	–
Total	4,711	8.4	4,315

Note: En dash (–) indicates not applicable.

Table 1b. Response to “Trapped” or “Did not trap” in 2023 Alaska trapper questionnaire.

Answered “Trapped” or “Did not trap”			
Region	Trapped	Did not trap	Total responded
I	16	16	32
II	18	38	56
III	36	17	53
IV	27	19	46
V	5	4	9
Not specified	–	–	–
Total	102	94	196

Statewide, of respondents who reported they did not trap in RY23 but reported when they last trapped ($n = 90$), 30% ($n = 27$) had trapped within the past 2 years, and 39% ($n = 35$) had last trapped more than 2 years ago. The rest (31%; $n = 28$) said they were not trappers.

Trapping Experience

During the RY23 season, active trappers statewide averaged 15.51 years of experience trapping overall and 12.74 years of experience trapping specifically in Alaska (Fig. 2; $n = 99$). This is down from the averages over the last 15 years, suggesting there is a younger group of trappers in the field. However, the average for the past 3 years has held relatively steady. The average experience trapping in Alaska increased slightly compared to RY22. This suggests that Alaska may be retaining trappers. Trappers in Region V averaged both the most trapping experience overall (20.4 years) and the most experience in Alaska (20.4 years). No data were collected in RY09 or RY14.

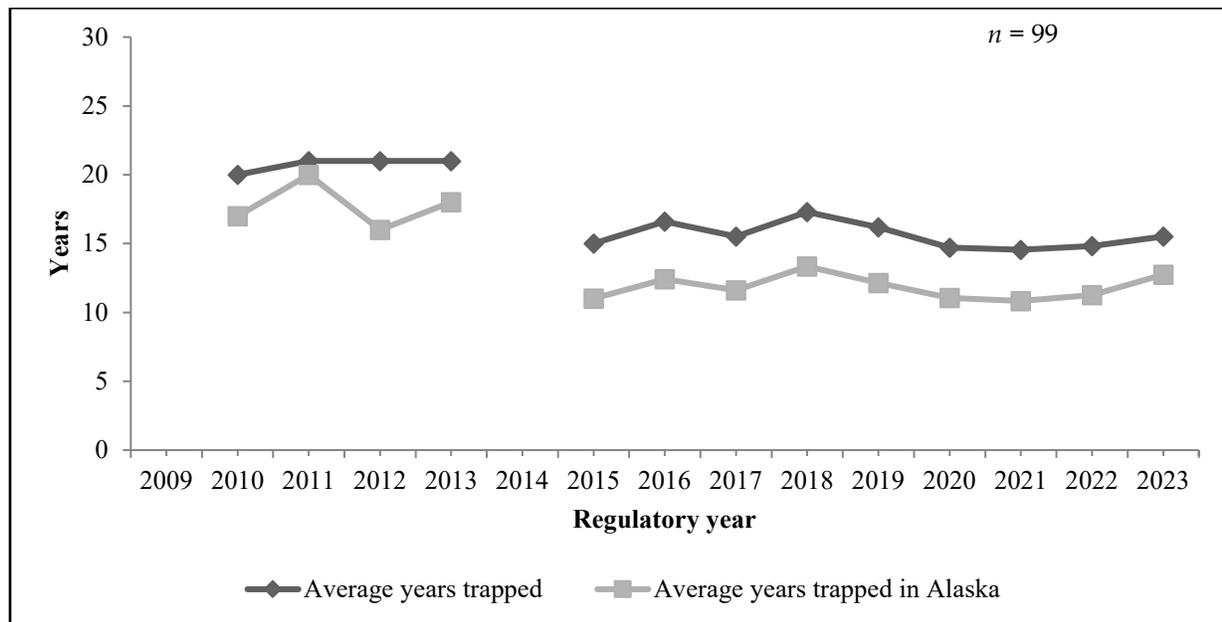


Figure 2. A statewide 15-year trend of trapper age and experience, regulatory years 2009–2023, Alaska.



Photo from ADF&G files



Photo by Andrew Dougherty

TRAPLINE INFORMATION

Trapping Area

Statewide, respondents have trapped in the same area for an average of 7.5 years (Fig. 3; $n = 99$). Trappers in Region V spent the longest amount of time trapping the same area (an average of 10 years), while Region IV trappers spent the least amount of time trapping the same area (an average of 5.7 years). The longest time spent trapping in a single area was 50 years, reported by a trapper in Region III.

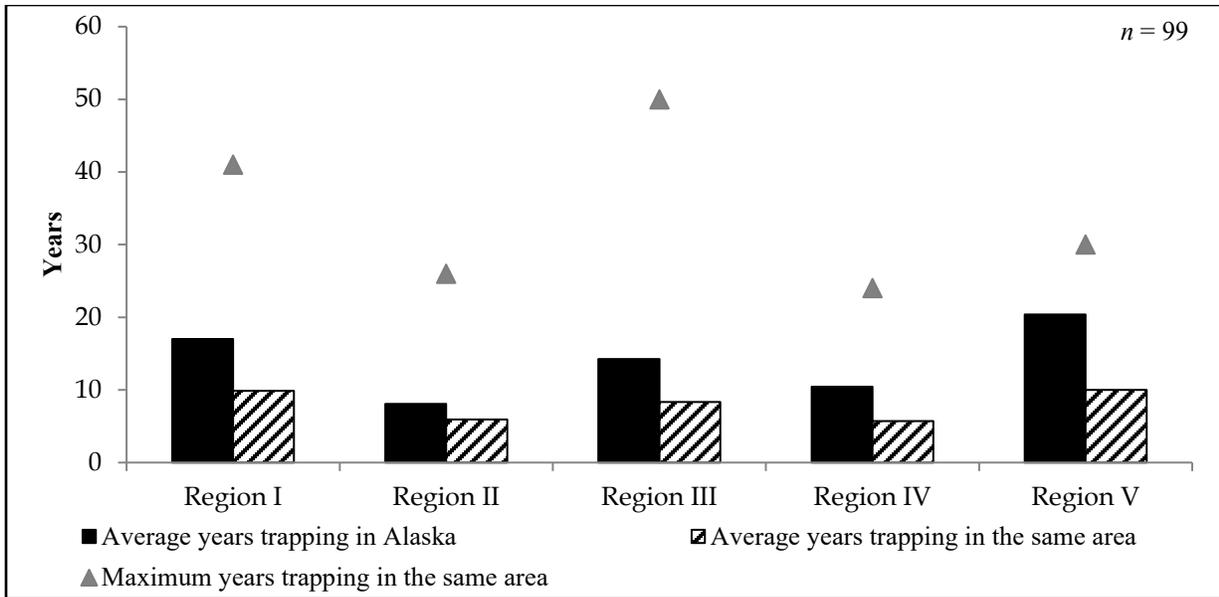


Figure 3. Length of time spent trapping by region, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Trapping Frequency

During the RY23 season, respondents averaged 8.1 weeks of trapping (Fig. 4; $n = 96$). Region V trappers spent the longest time trapping (an average of 10.4 weeks), while Region II trappers spent the least amount of time trapping (an average of 5.7 weeks). Statewide, 60% ($n = 58$) of respondents trapped a total of 8 weeks or fewer.



Photo from ADF&G files

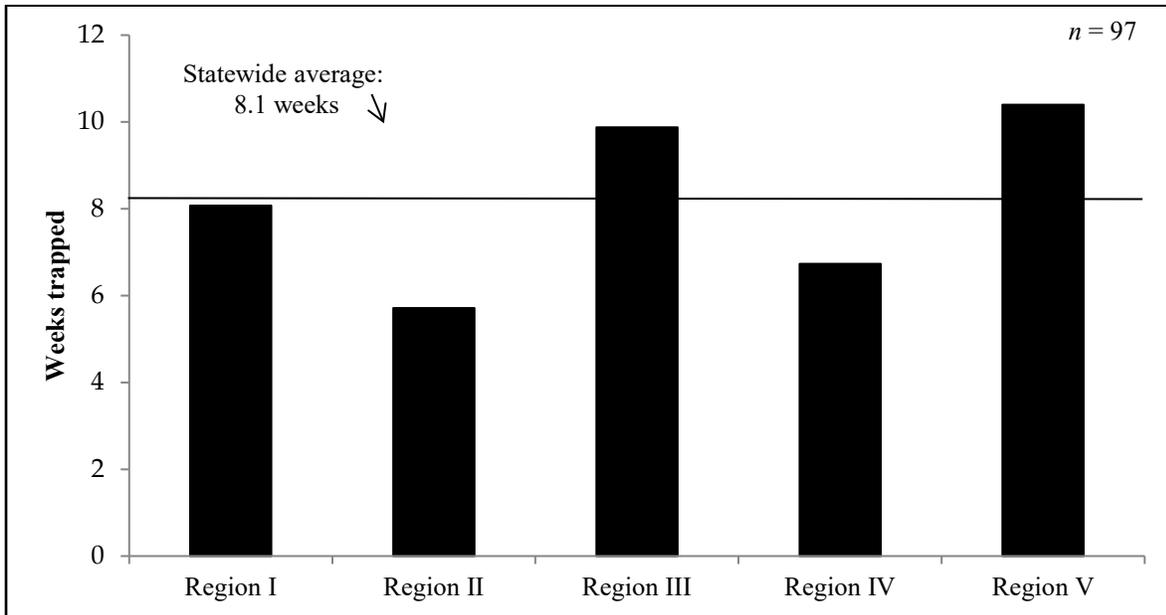


Figure 4. Number of weeks trappers spent trapping by region, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.



Photo from ADF&G files

Trapline Transportation

Trappers who received the 2023 questionnaire were asked what their primary mode of transportation was for both traveling to their traplines and for running their traplines during the RY23 season. Statewide, the most common mode of transportation used by trappers to get to their trapline(s) ($n = 102$) was highway vehicle (51%; $n = 52$; Fig. 5). Trappers in the state also commonly reported accessing their trapline(s) using snowmachines ($n = 24$). Highway vehicles were the most common mode of transportation to access traplines in Regions I–IV while snowmachines were the only mode of transportation in Region V.

The most common mode of transportation that trappers used in the state for running their trapline(s) ($n = 101$; Fig. 6) was snowmachine (45%; $n = 45$) followed by walking, skiing, or snowshoeing (38% combined; $n = 38$). Snowmachines were the most common mode of transportation for running traplines in Regions III–V; walking, skiing, or snowshoeing was the most common mode of transportation for Region II. Region I reported that using a boat and walking, skiing, and snowshoeing were equally common. Statewide, only 1 trapper reported using a dog team to get from their home to their trapline or for running the trapline.



Photo from ADF&G files

Primary Mode of Transportation from Home to the Traplines

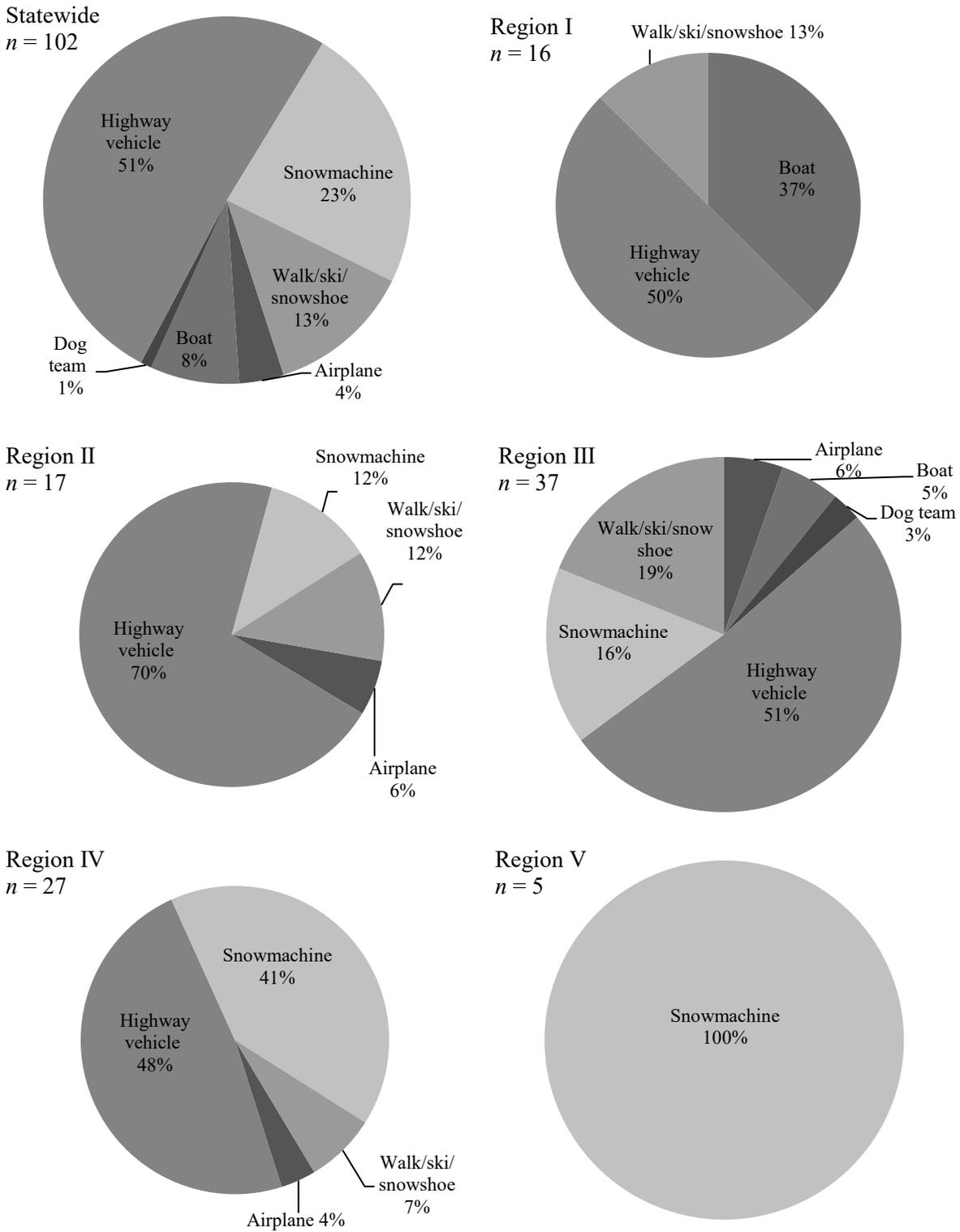
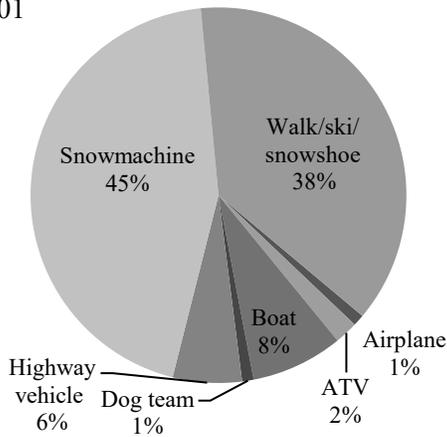


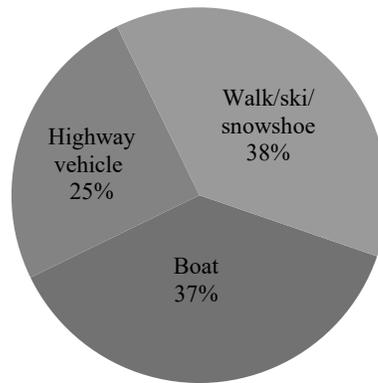
Figure 5. Primary mode of transportation used by trappers to reach their traplines, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Primary Mode of Transportation Used to Run the Trapline

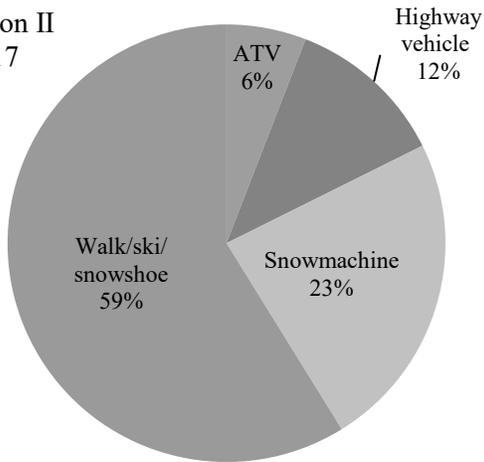
Statewide
n = 101



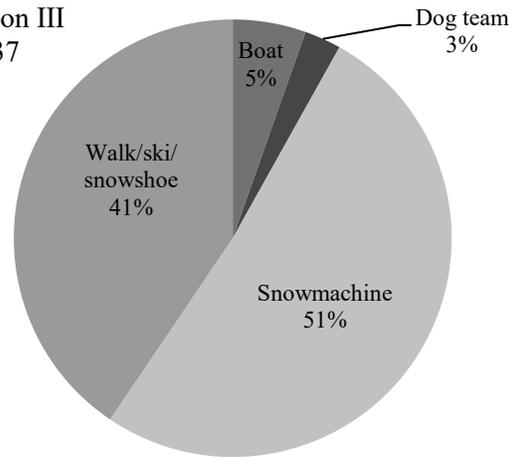
Region I
n = 16



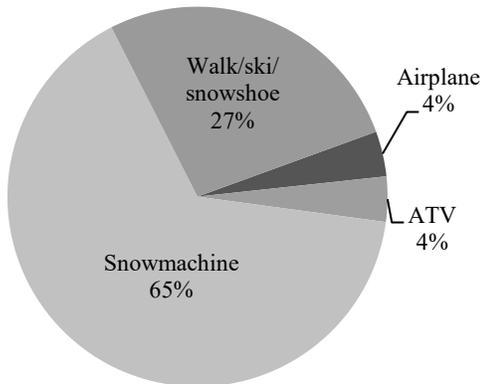
Region II
n = 17



Region III
n = 37



Region IV
n = 26



Region V
n = 5

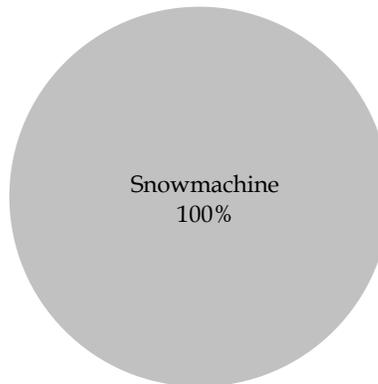


Figure 6. Primary mode of transportation used by trappers to run their traplines, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Trapline Composition

Statewide, traplines averaged 14.6 miles in length with an average of 27.4 sets per trapline (Table 2). Region III trappers had the longest average trapline length, at 150 miles. Region I had the highest maximum number of sets per trapline, at 400 sets. Region II trappers reported the shortest average trapline length (4.5 miles) and Region V reported the lowest average number of sets (50) per trapline.

Table 2. Average reported trapline length and number of sets per trapline, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Region	Average trapline length (miles)	Maximum trapline length (miles)	Average number of sets per trapline	Maximum number of sets per trapline
I	10.7	90	29.4	400
II	4.5	41	19.2	113
III	18.6	150	35.3	250
IV	13.3	48	20.7	160
V	52.4	110	16.0	50
Statewide	14.6	150	27.4	400



Photo from ADF&G files

Trapping Efforts

During the RY23 season, 41% ($n = 40$) of Alaska trappers who answered question 10 ($n = 98$) did not change their efforts compared to last season (Fig. 7). Of those who did change their efforts ($n = 58$), 64% increased their efforts. As a result, 70% ($n = 26$) of the trappers who increased their efforts also saw an increase in their overall catch.

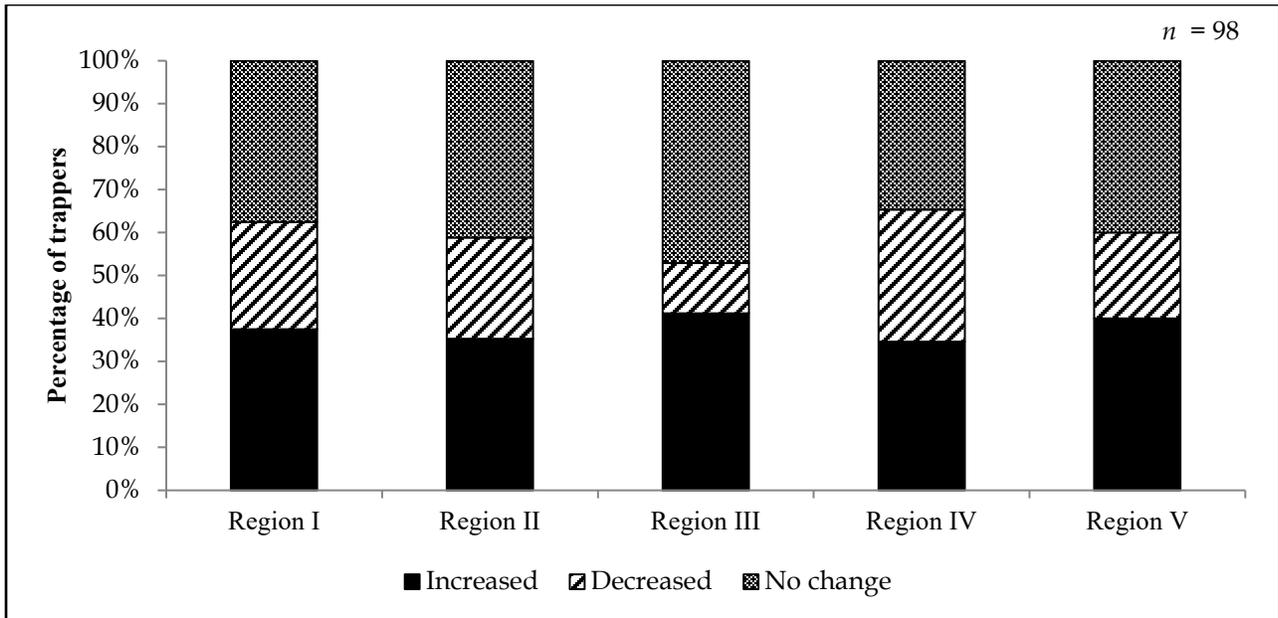


Figure 7. Change in trapping efforts by region, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.



Photo from ADF&G files

Trappers could select multiple responses on the questionnaire for how their efforts changed in the RY23 season (Fig. 8; $n = 161$ trappers). The 2 most common changes in effort across Alaska were an increase in the number of sets ($n = 29$) and trapping in a new area ($n = 22$). Trappers in Region III ($n = 18$) and Region IV ($n = 17$) changed their effort the most; Region III increased the number of sets ($n = 13$), while Region IV decreased both the number of sets ($n = 8$) and the number of weeks spent trapping ($n = 8$). Trappers in Region I showed the greatest change in effort by changing to a new species, ($n = 4$) and some trappers increasing their number of sets ($n = 4$) while others in the region decreased their number of sets ($n = 4$). Trappers in Region II showed the greatest change in their effort by increasing sets ($n = 13$), while Region V trappers showed the greatest change by decreasing the trapline length ($n = 2$) and by increasing the number of weeks spent trapping ($n = 2$).

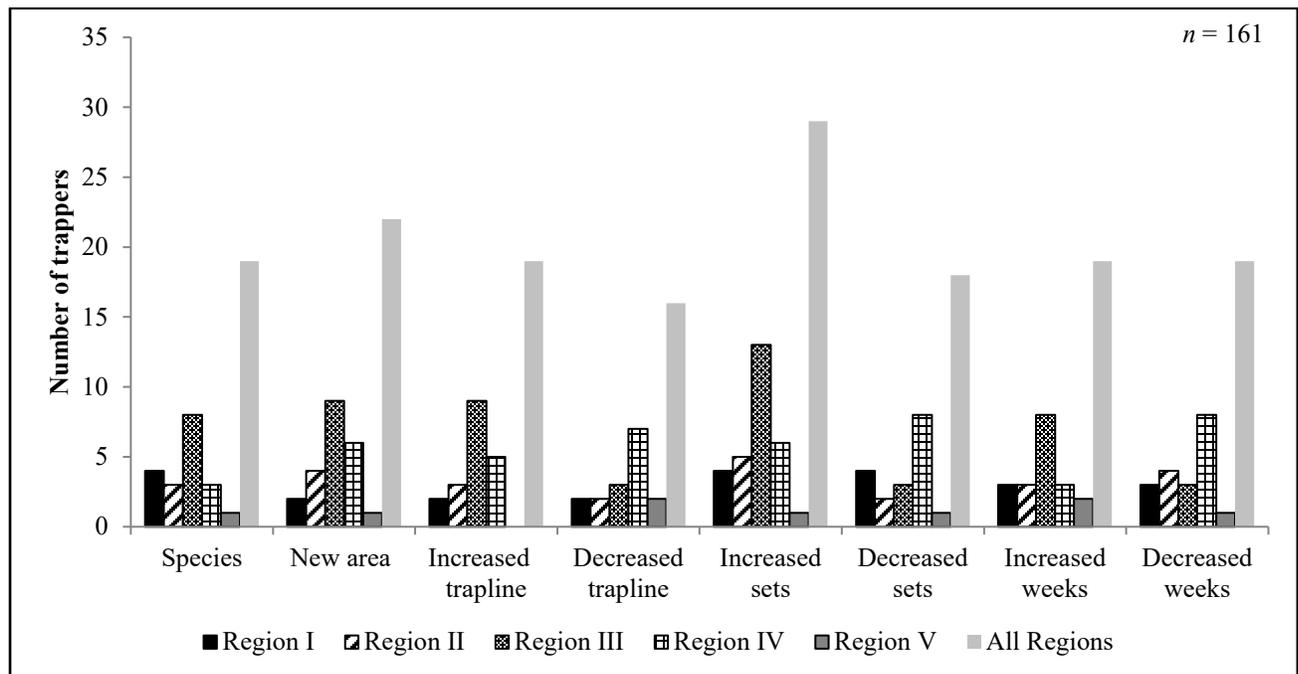
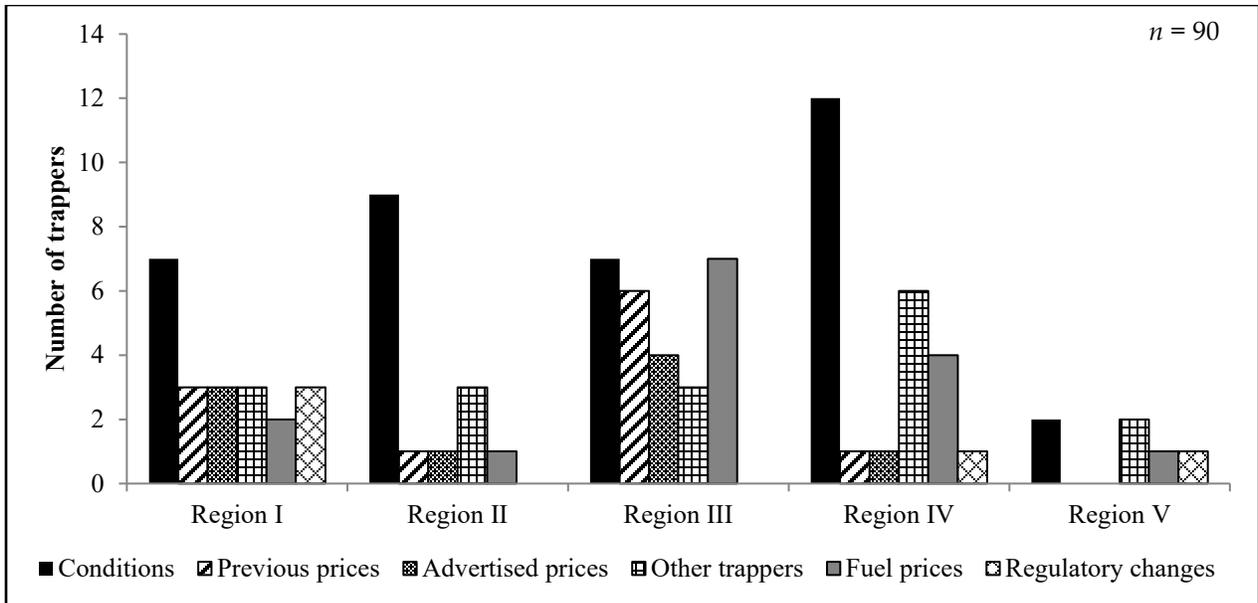


Figure 8. Types of change in trapping effort by region, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Statewide, trappers reporting factors that affected their efforts during the RY23 season ($n = 90$; Fig. 9) indicated that trapping conditions (weather, snow depth/cover, ice, etc.) was the leading factor influencing both an increase ($n = 19$) and decrease ($n = 18$) in trapping effort. Fuel prices ($n = 13$) and other trappers ($n = 10$) negatively influenced trapper effort, while previous season prices ($n = 8$) and pre-season advertised prices ($n = 6$) reportedly caused trappers to increase effort.



Note: Conditions include weather, snow depth and snow cover, ice, etc.

Figure 9. Factors affecting trapping effort by region, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

TARGET SPECIES AND FUR DISPOSITION

Target Species

Table 3 shows how each species ranked in order of importance by region, with 1 being most important and 14 being least important. Each rank was calculated by totaling the number of trappers who ranked that species as 1 of the 3 most important species they were trying to catch (Fig. 10).

Marten was the most important species across Alaska. Marten also ranked as the most important species in Region III, while river otter was ranked as most important in Regions I and II. Region IV ranked coyote as most important, while Region V ranked lynx. Statewide, wolf ranked as the second most important species.



Photo from ADF&G files

Table 3. Species ranked by importance at both statewide and regional levels, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Species	Statewide	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V
Marten	1	2	4	1	2	—
Wolf	2	4	4	3	4	2
Lynx	3	—	1	2	6	1
Wolverine	4	7	4	4	4	2
Beaver	5	3	1	5	7	4
River otter	6	1	1	—	7	4
Red fox	7	—	4	5	2	—
Coyote	8	5	8	8	1	—
Ermine	9	7	9	7	10	—
Mink	10	5	9	9	—	—
Muskrat	10	—	—	9	7	—
Arctic fox	12	—	—	9	—	6
Red squirrel	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fisher	—	—	—	—	—	—

Note: Rank = 1–14, with 1 being most important and 14 least important. Repeats of rank indicate that one or more species tied for that rank. En dash (–) indicates no trapper ranked the species as one of the most important.

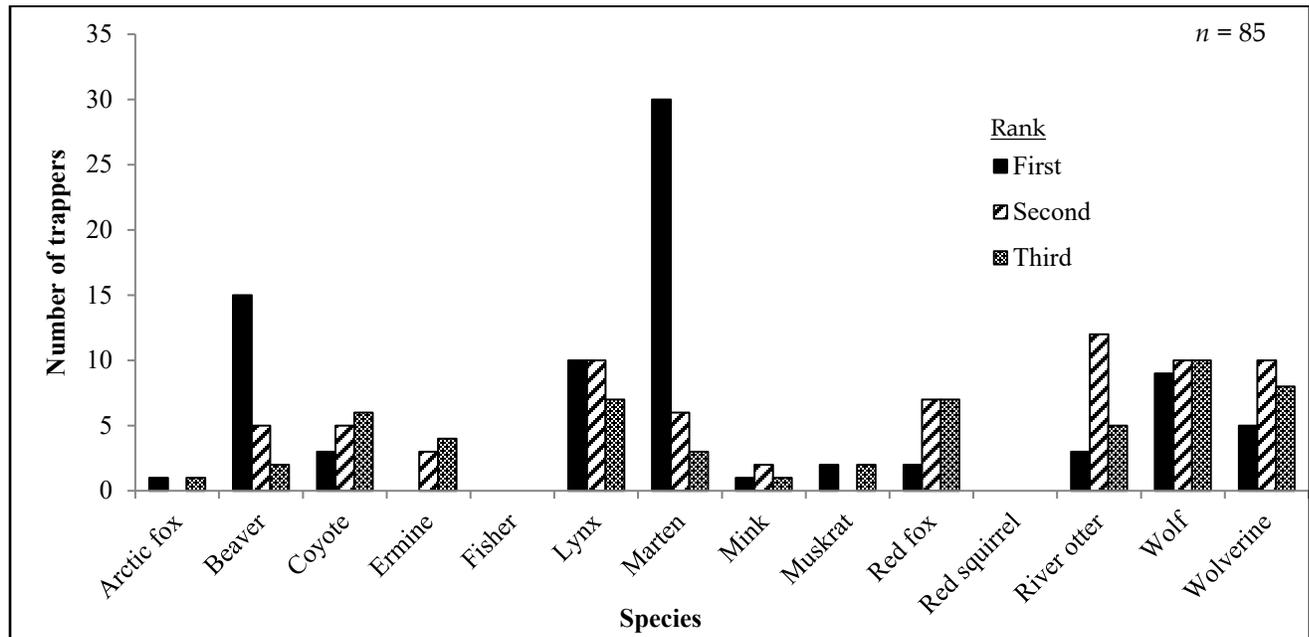


Figure 10. Number of trappers statewide ranking each species as the first, second, or third most important species they targeted, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Presence of Ectoparasites

Trappers who trapped during the RY23 season indicated that ectoparasites, including fleas, lice, ticks, and other species, were either not present or scarce across all furs harvested (Table 4). “Other” ectoparasites noted on furbearers included white mites, or lice, in marten and mink in Region I and a wolf that was bald in places with lice in Region V. Additionally, patches of hair on this wolf were curled and broken. A trapper in Region II also noted a red fox with matted fur and potential mange.

Regionwide ectoparasite abundance was determined by reassigning a numerical value to each category (not present = 0; scarce = 1; common = 2; abundant = 3) and averaging the sum of each region. An arbitrary range of values was created to classify the average opinions of trappers regarding ectoparasite abundance in an area: values of 0 indicated ectoparasites were not present, values >0 and <1.67 indicated scarce ectoparasite abundance, values of 1.67 – 2.33 indicated common ectoparasite abundance, and values >2.33 indicated abundant ectoparasite abundance. Fields with an en dash (–) indicate that no responses were received.

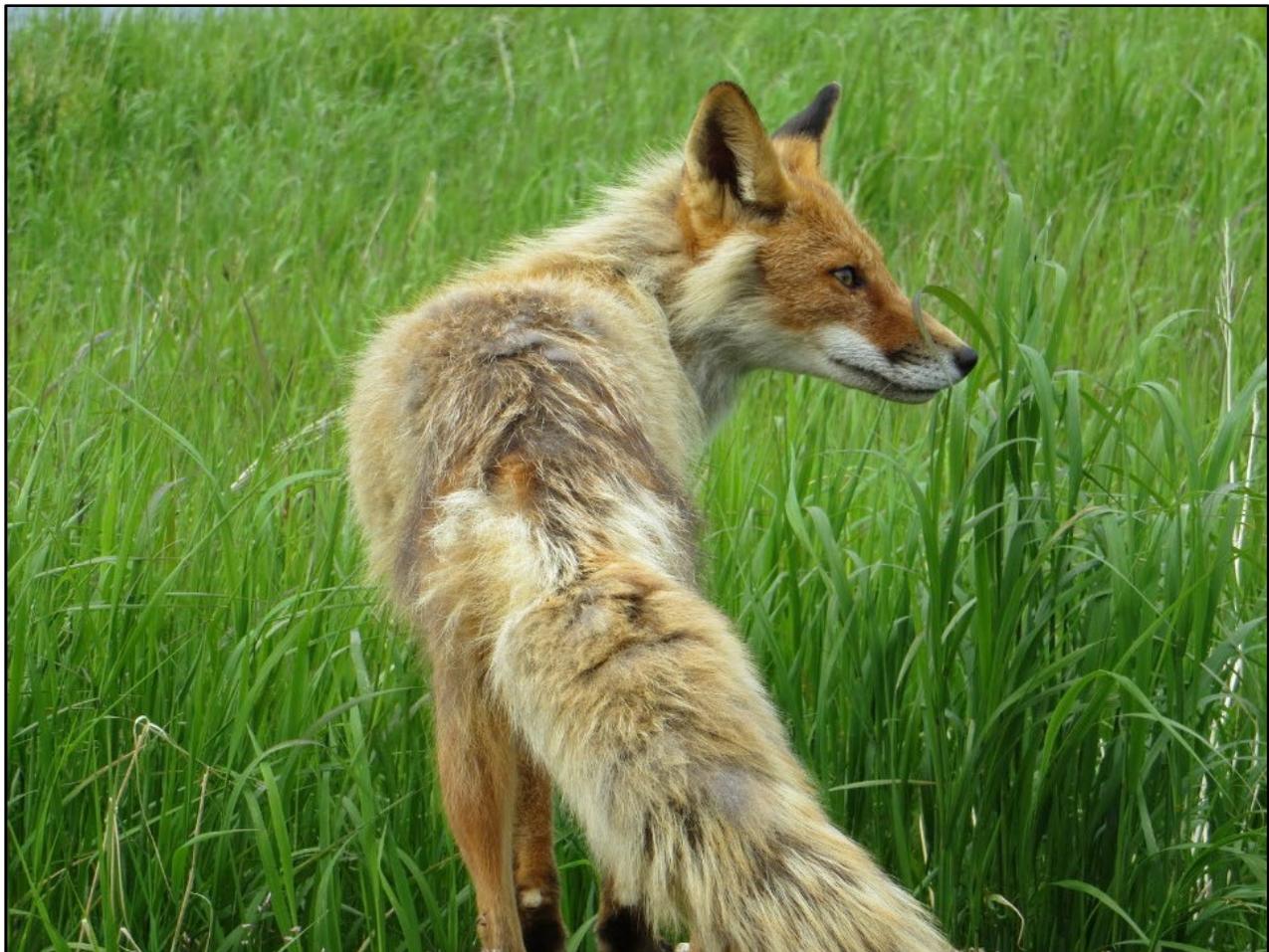


Photo from ADF&G files

Table 4. Presence of ectoparasites found on furbearers by species and region, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Region	Ectoparasite ^a	Species													
		Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
I <i>n</i> = 5	F	-	NP	-	S	-	-	S	S	-	-	NP	NP	S	-
	L	-	NP	-	-	-	-	NP	NP	-	-	-	NP	NP	-
	T	-	NP	-	-	-	-	S	NP	-	-	C	NP	NP	-
	O	-	S	-	-	-	-	S	S	-	-	-	NP	NP	-
II <i>n</i> = 4	F	-	S	NP	S	-	A	NP	-	-	-	C	NP	NP	-
	L	-	NP	NP	NP	-	NP	NP	-	-	-	NP	NP	-	-
	T	-	NP	NP	NP	-	NP	NP	-	-	-	NP	NP	-	-
	O	-	NP	NP	NP	-	NP	NP	-	-	S	NP	NP	-	-
III <i>n</i> = 14	F	NP	S	NP	S	NP	S	S	S	NP	S	S	NP	S	S
	L	NP	S	NP	NP	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	S
	T	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	O	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
IV <i>n</i> = 7	F	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	NP	NP
	L	NP	NP	NP	NP	-	-	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	T	NP	NP	NP	NP	-	-	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	O	NP	NP	NP	NP	-	-	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
V <i>n</i> = 2	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	NP	-
	L	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	-
	T	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	NP	-
	O	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	-

Note: Trapper responses in this table are abbreviated as follows: NP = not present; S = scarce; C = common. One other option that was offered but not used: A = abundant. Fields with an en dash (-) indicate that no responses were received.

^a Ectoparasites are abbreviated as follows: F = fleas; L = lice; T = ticks; O = other.

Harvest Methods

USE OF PREDATOR CALLS

Statewide, only 7 trappers reported using any type of predator call. Of those trappers, 71% ($n = 5$) used only electronic predator calls, 29% ($n = 2$) used only manual (mouth) predator calls, and no one used both electronic and manual predator calls (Fig. 11). No trappers reported using predator calls in Region V.

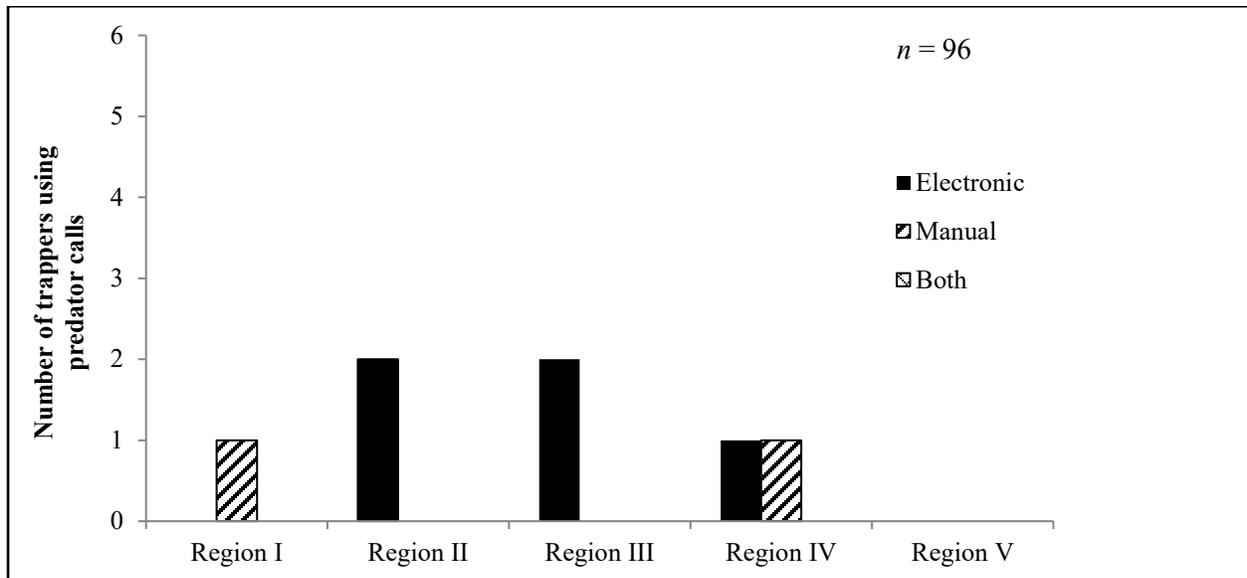


Figure 11. Use of predator calls by region, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.



Photo from ADF&G files

TRAPPING TECHNIQUES AND SUCCESS

Trappers responding to the 2023 questionnaire were asked to provide the number of pelts they took using each trapping technique (i.e., shot, snared, foot hold, Conibear, or other). Summaries of the number of pelts taken using each technique for each species harvested are provided in Figures 12–24.



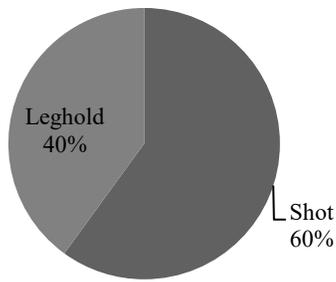
Photo from ADF&G files

ARCTIC FOX

Region I
No harvest reported

Region II
No harvest reported

Region III
n = 10



Region IV
No harvest reported

Region V
No harvest reported

Statewide trends in all fox (Arctic and Red) harvest methods

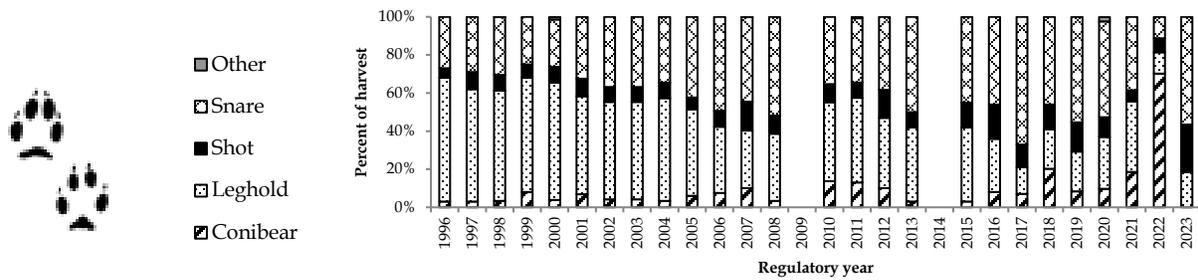
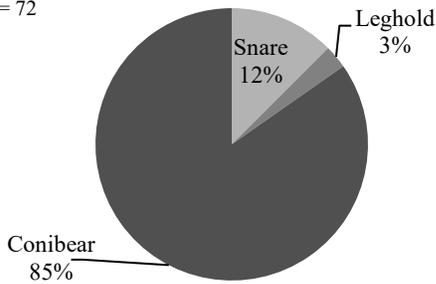


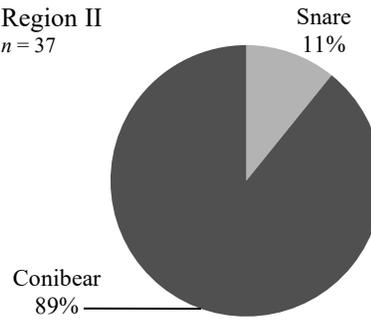
Figure 12. Arctic fox harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

BEAVER

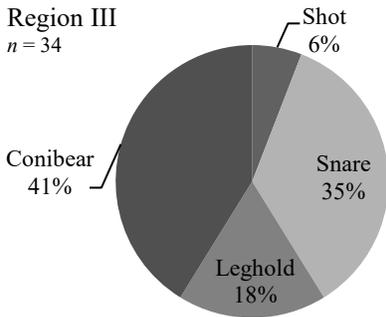
Region I
n = 72



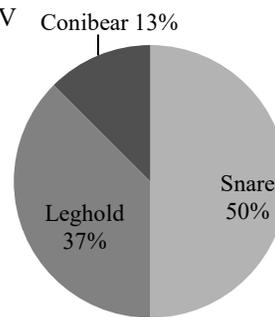
Region II
n = 37



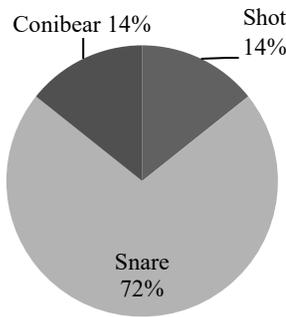
Region III
n = 34



Region IV
n = 24



Region V
n = 7



Statewide trends in harvest methods

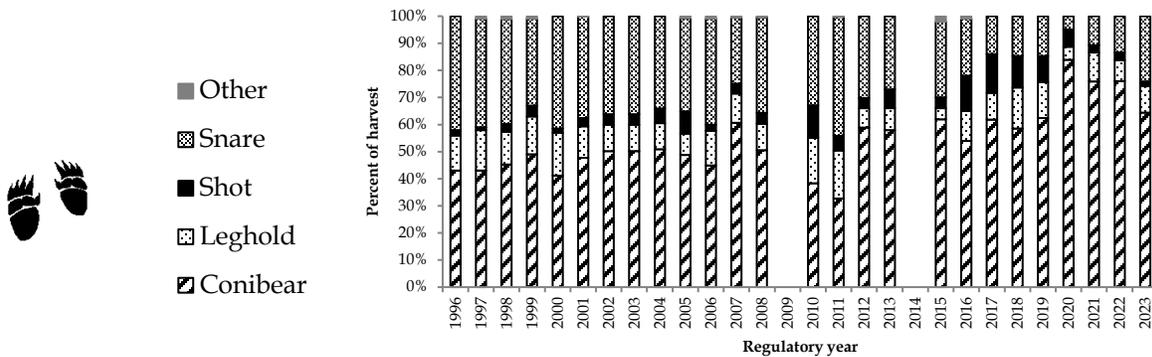
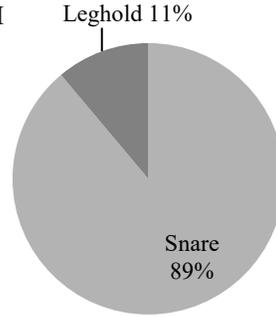


Figure 13. Beaver harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

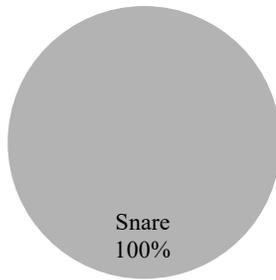
COYOTE

Region I
No harvest reported

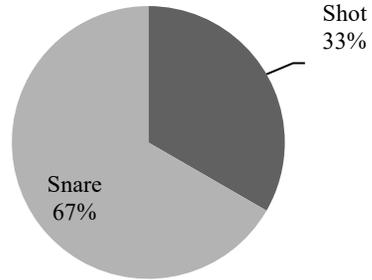
Region II
n = 9



Region III
n = 1



Region IV
n = 21



Region V
No harvest reported

Statewide trends in harvest methods

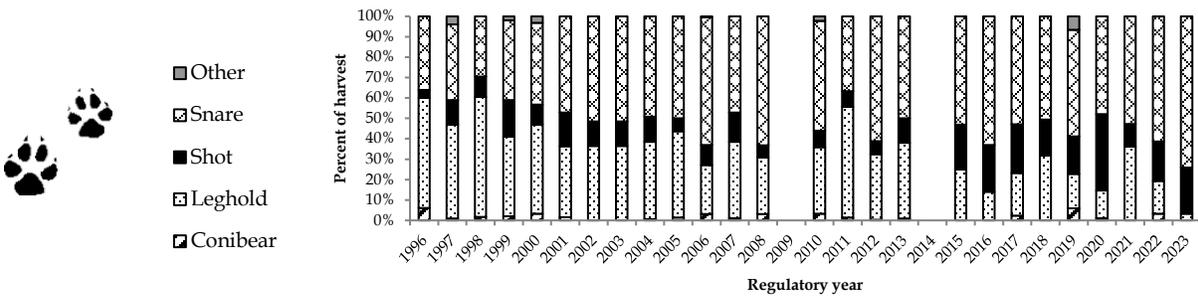
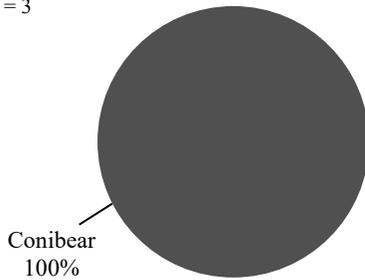


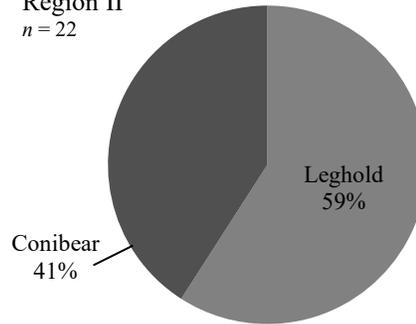
Figure 14. Coyote harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

ERMINE

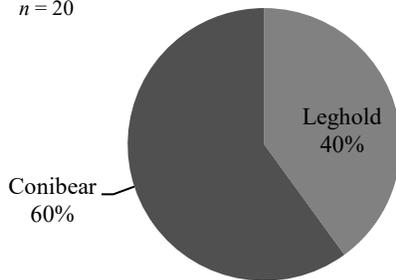
Region I
n = 3



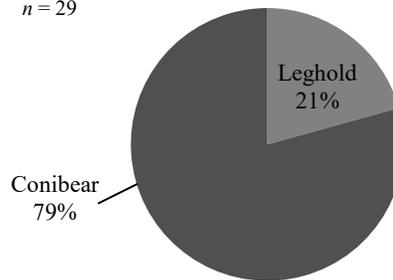
Region II
n = 22



Region III
n = 20



Region IV
n = 29



Region V
No harvest reported

Statewide trends in harvest methods

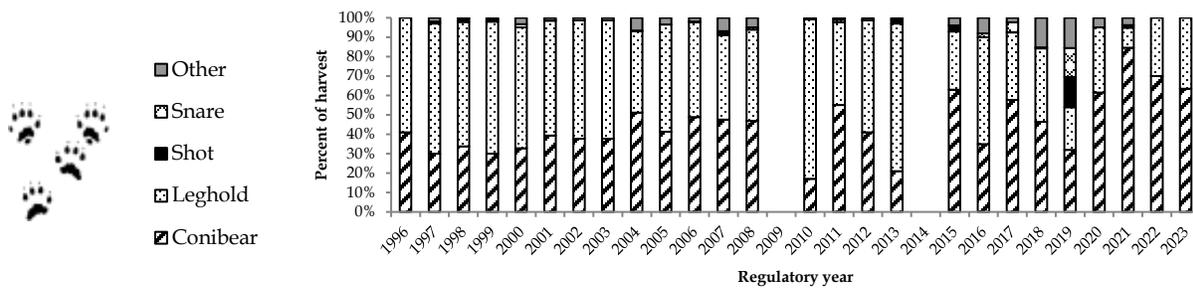


Figure 15. Ermine harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

FISHER

Region I-V
No harvest reported



Photo by Lou Eney

Statewide trends in harvest methods

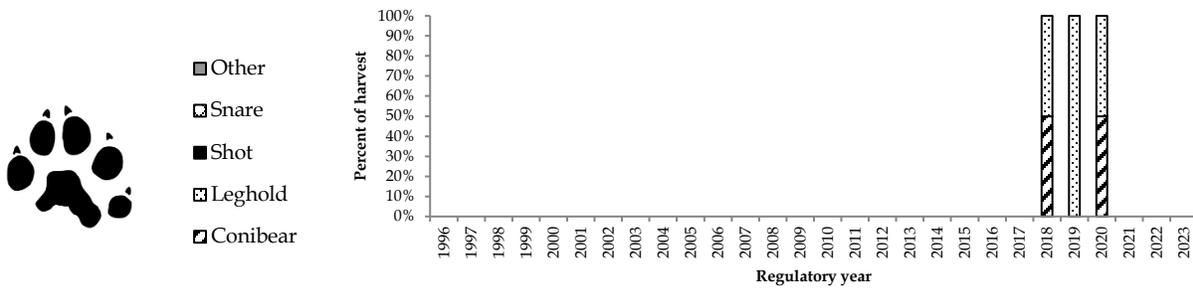
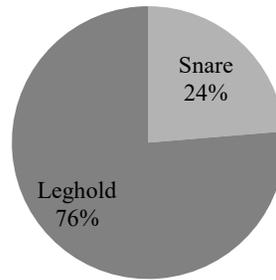


Figure 16. Fisher harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

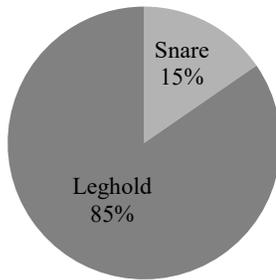
LYNX

Region I
No harvest reported

Region II
n = 38

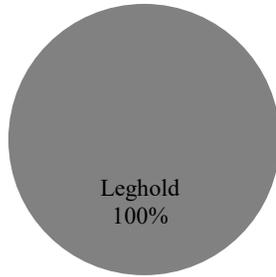


Region III
n = 13



Region IV
No harvest reported

Region V
n = 16



Statewide trends in harvest methods

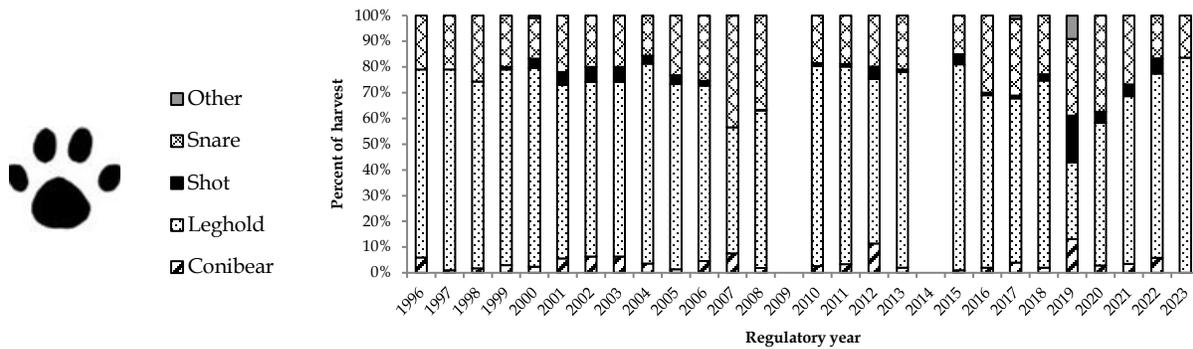
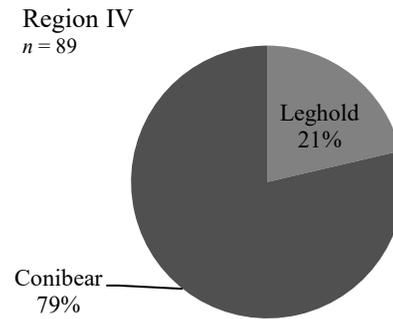
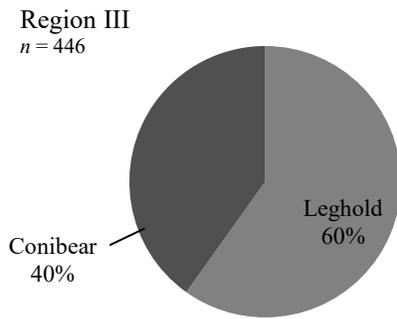
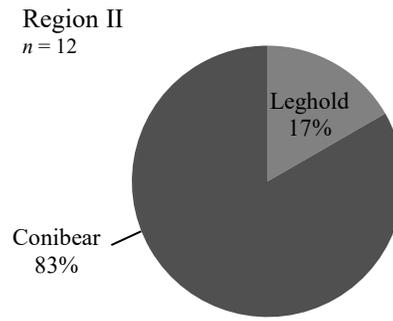
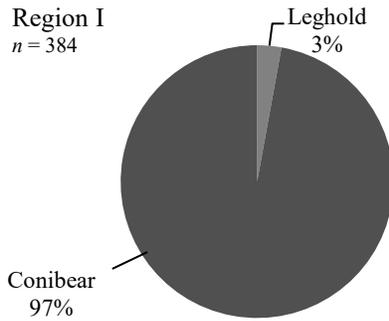


Figure 17. Lynx harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

MARTEN



Region V
No harvest reported

Statewide trends in harvest methods

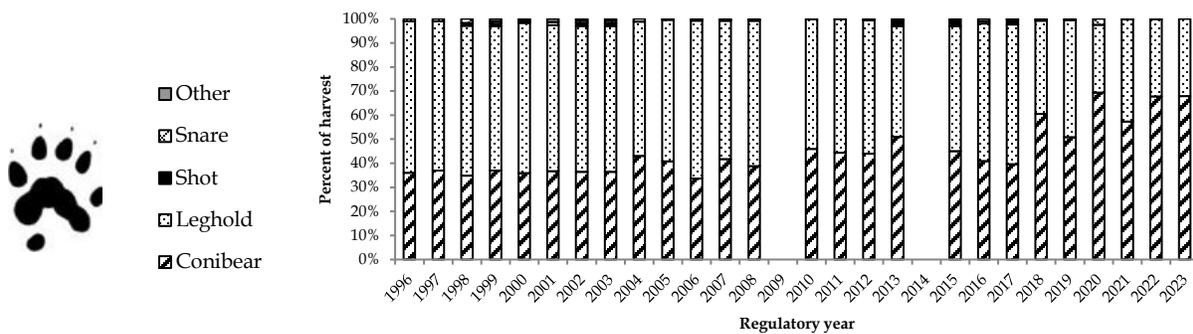
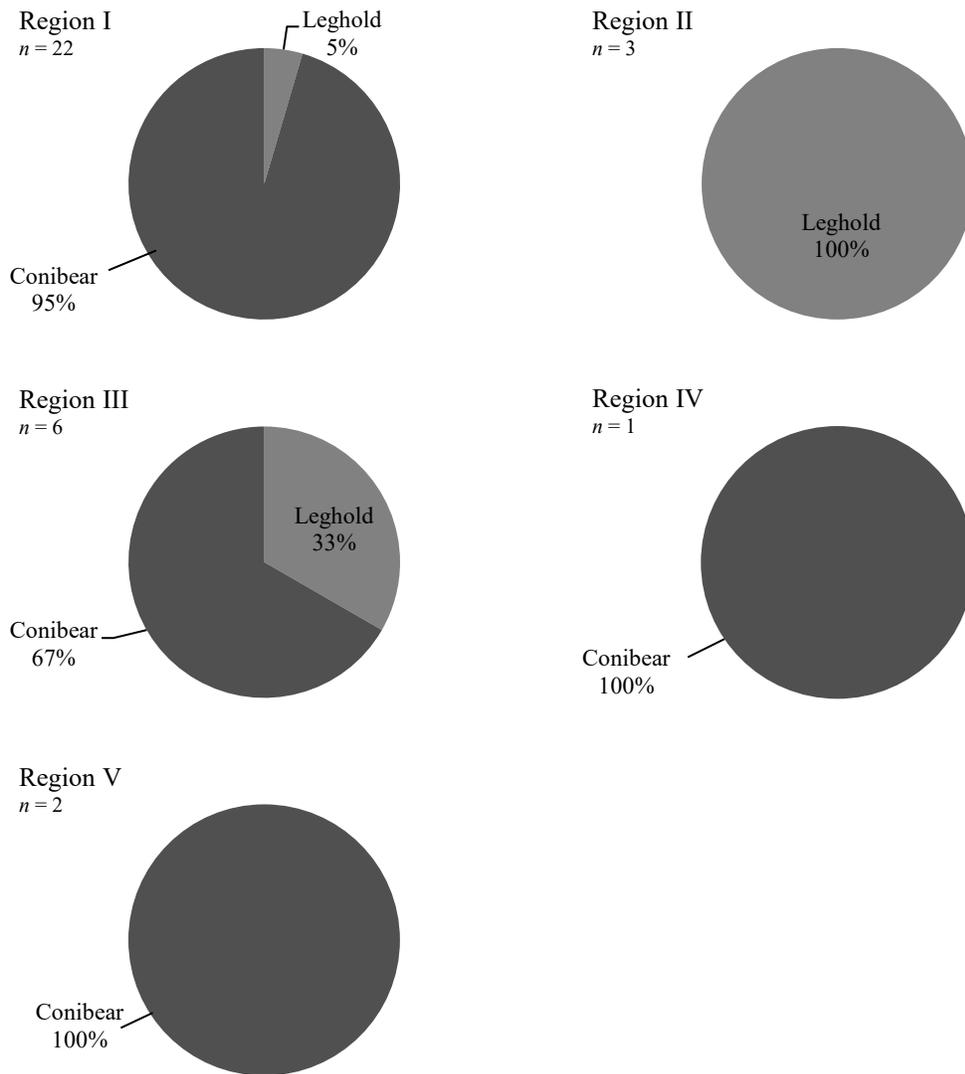


Figure 18. Marten harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

MINK



Statewide trends in harvest methods

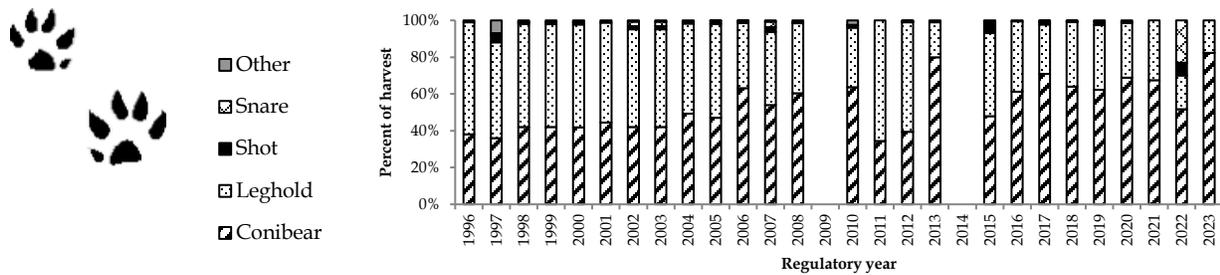
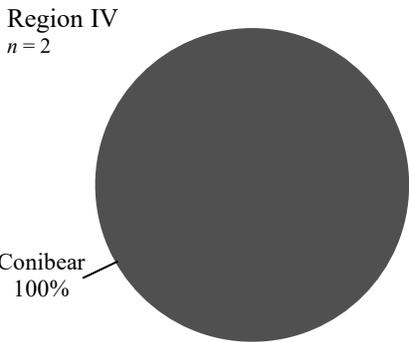
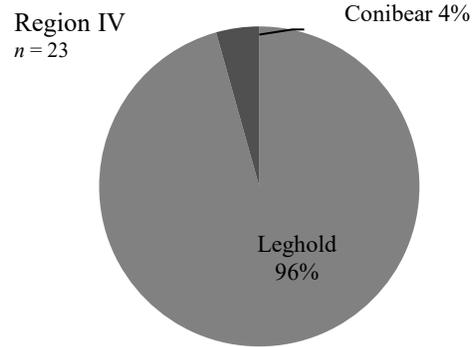
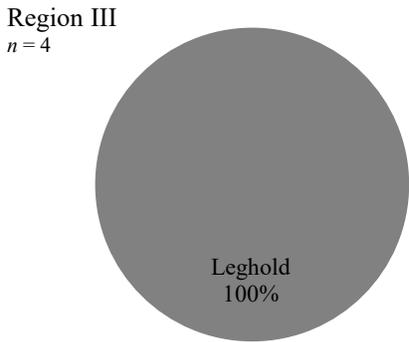
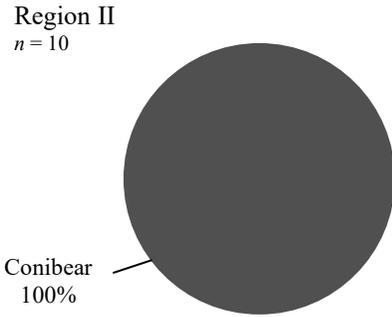


Figure 19. Mink harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

MUSKRAT

Region I
No harvest reported



Statewide trends in harvest methods

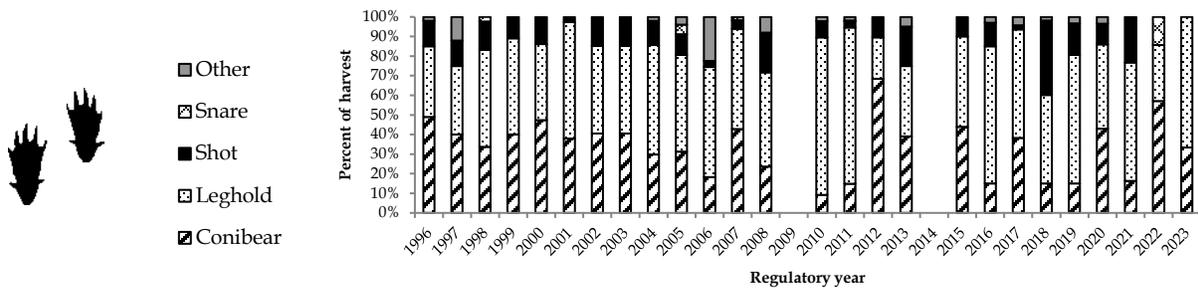
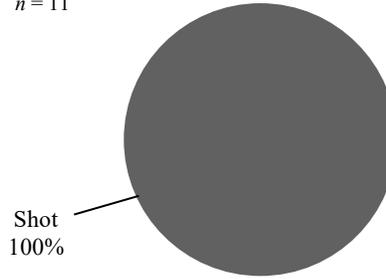


Figure 20. Muskrat harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

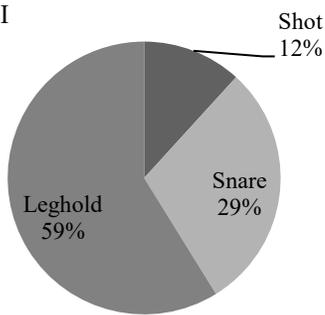
RED FOX

Region I
No harvest reported

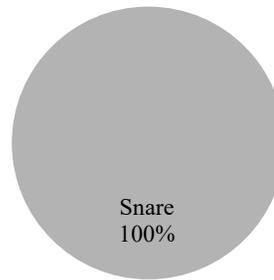
Region II
n = 11



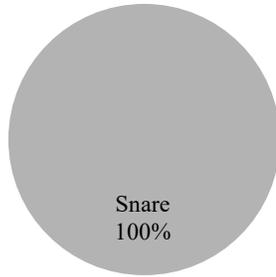
Region III
n = 17



Region IV
n = 22



Region V
n = 16



Statewide trends in all fox (Arctic and red) harvest methods

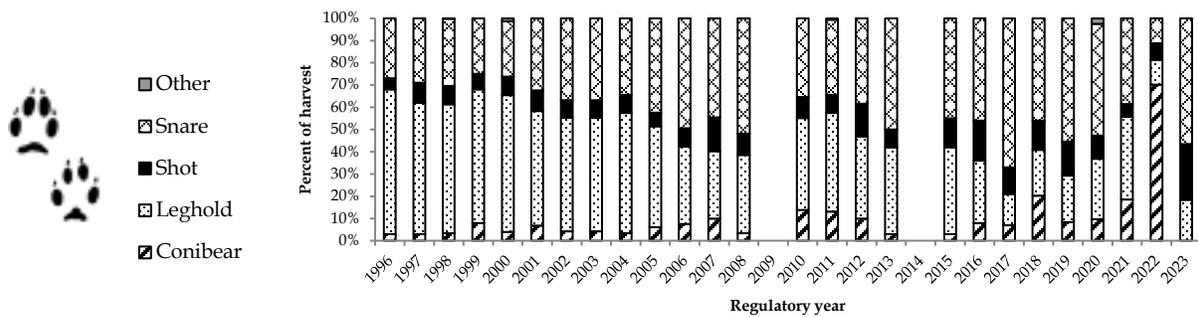
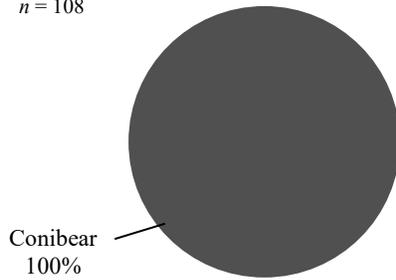


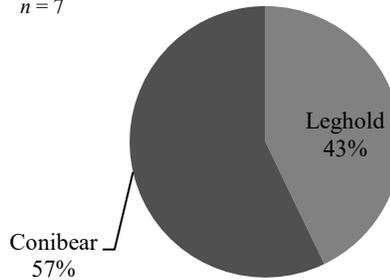
Figure 21. Red fox harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

RED SQUIRREL

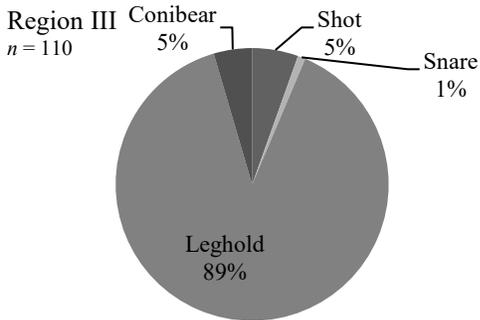
Region I
n = 108



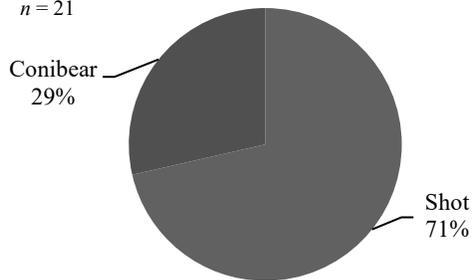
Region II
n = 7



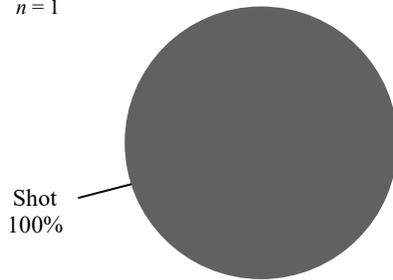
Region III
n = 110



Region IV
n = 21



Region V
n = 1



Statewide trends in harvest methods

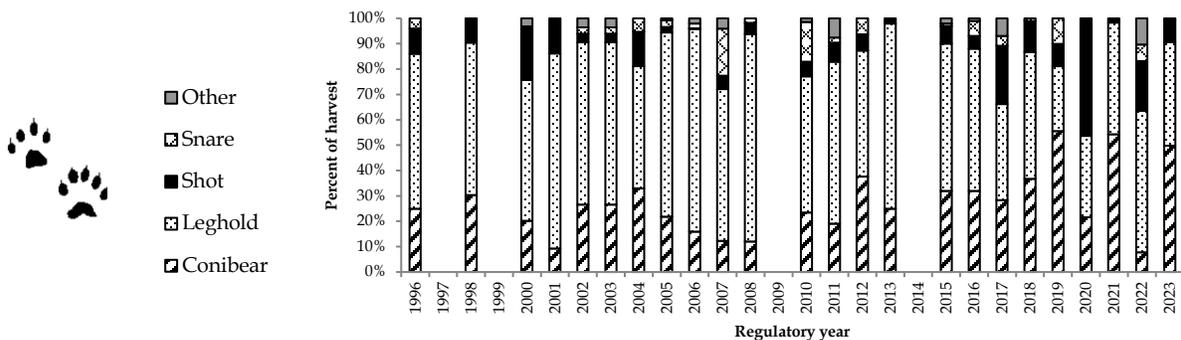
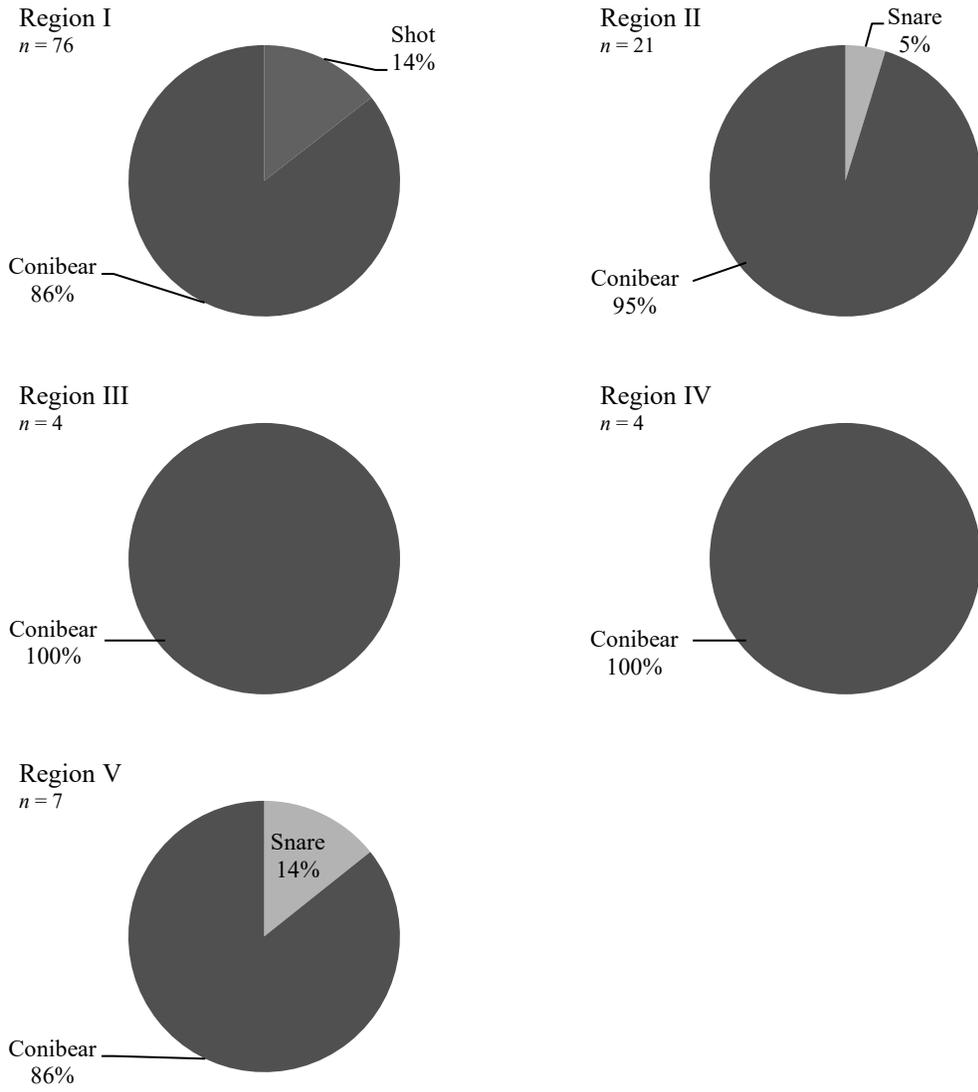


Figure 22. Red squirrel harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

RIVER OTTER



Statewide trends in harvest methods

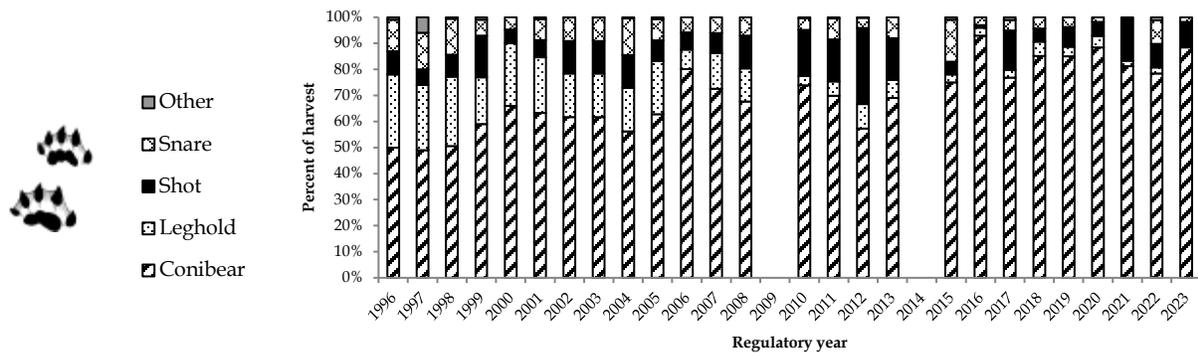
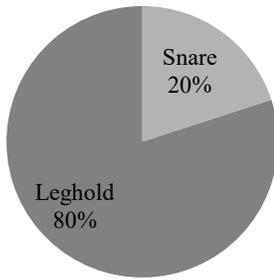


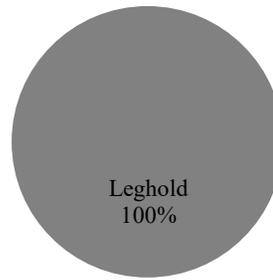
Figure 23. River otter harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

WOLF

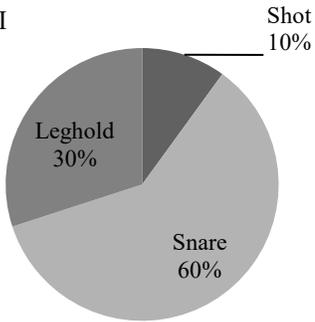
Region I
n = 5



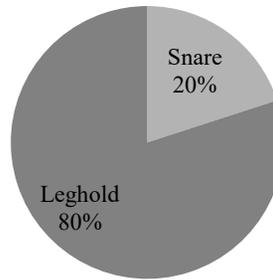
Region II
n = 2



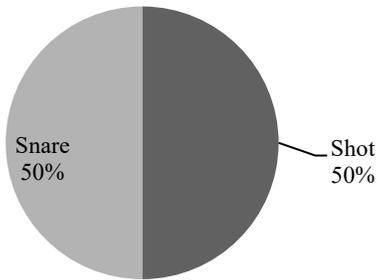
Region III
n = 30



Region IV
n = 5



Region V
n = 6



Statewide trends in harvest methods



- Other
- ▨ Snare
- Shot
- ▨ Leghold
- ▨ Conibear

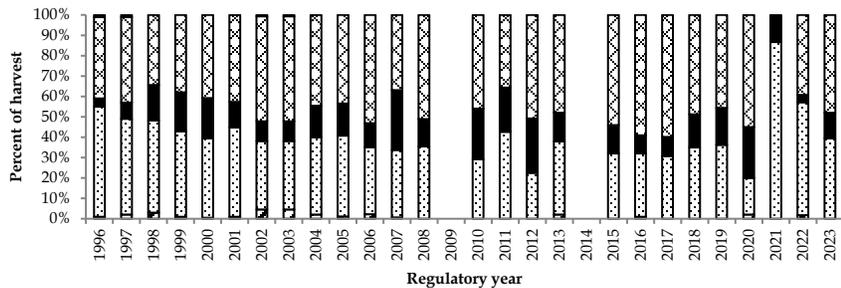
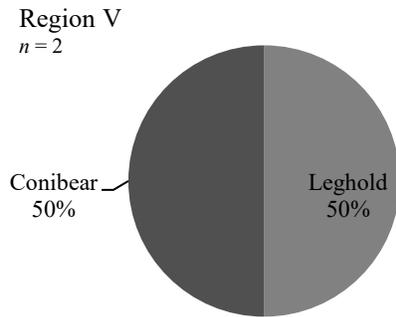
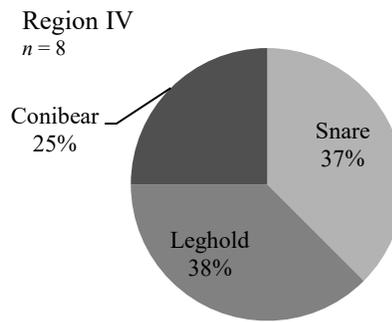
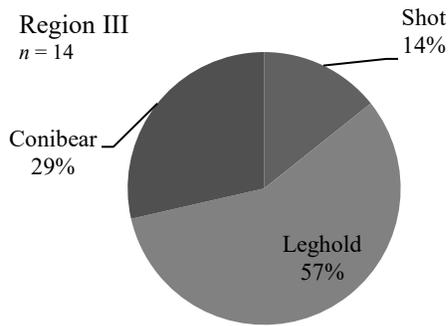


Figure 24. Wolf harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

WOLVERINE

Region I
No harvest reported

Region II
No harvest reported



Statewide trends in harvest methods

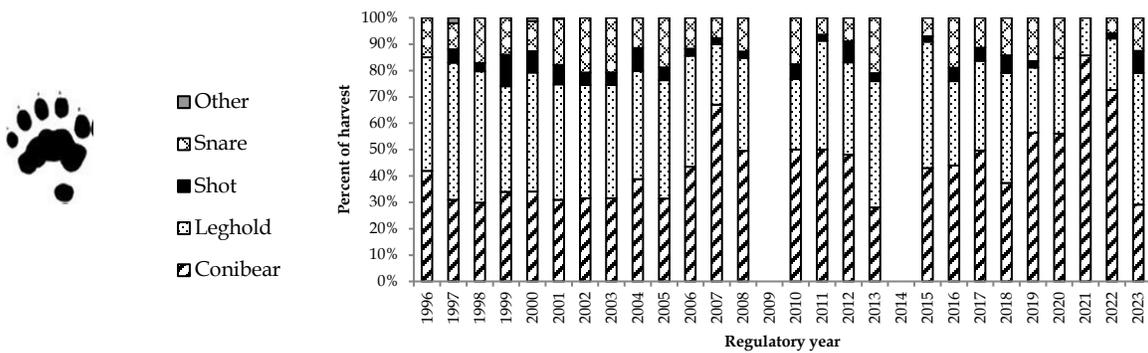


Figure 25. Wolverine harvest methods used by trappers, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Species Relative Abundance and Population Trends

The species relative abundance index is based on work done with snowshoe hares in Alberta, Canada, by Christopher Brand and Lloyd Keith (1979).¹ They took responses they received from a trapper questionnaire and compared them to estimates of hare densities based on their fieldwork, and found there was a good relationship between these 2 measures. They developed an index for the responses they received from trappers on the questionnaire. A numerical value was assigned to each of 3 responses, where 1 = scarce, 2 = common, and 3 = abundant. The value of the abundance index was derived from a mathematical equation that expressed the cumulative response value of trappers in a given region as a percentage of the range of possible values:

$$I = \left[\left(\sum_{i=1}^n (R_i) - n \right) / 2n \right] \times 100$$

Where I = abundance index

R = numerical value (1 = scarce; 2 = common; 3 = abundant)

n = number of trappers reporting

The abundance index (I) ranged from 0% to 100%. Index values of 0–19% indicated animals were scarce, 20–50% indicated animals were common, and values greater than 50% indicated animals were abundant. In the following tables, the index values were converted to the appropriate category: scarce, common, or abundant.

It is unknown whether the same ranges of percentages are appropriate for animals in Alaska, as they were established for snowshoe hares in Alberta. However, this index does provide a way to compare trappers' interpretations of species abundance in a given area over time in general. Such comparison is helpful when used in conjunction with other abundance indicators and sources of information.

The numerical trend index indicates whether trappers felt animals were fewer, the same, or more numerous than the previous year. This index is slightly different than the relative abundance index. The trend index was calculated by assigning a 1 if the “fewer” box was checked, 2 for the “same,” and 3 for “more” animals. The average was then calculated for all trappers in an area. Since we do not have an independent measure of trend to compare the index values to as we did for relative abundance, it is necessary to select arbitrary ranges of values to classify the average opinion of trappers in an area. For purposes of this report, an average trend value of <1.67 represents fewer (-), a value >2.33 represents more (+), and intermediate values represent no change (n/c) in trend.

¹ Brand, C. J., and L. B. Keith. 1979. Lynx demography during a snowshoe hare decline in Alberta. *The Journal of Wildlife Management* 43(4):827–849.

Due to the relatively small sample size in RY23, we presented species relative abundance and trend at a regionwide level rather than the game management unit (GMU) level. Sample sizes were too small to provide useful data on a smaller geographic scale.



Photo by Arin Underwood

Table 5. Regionwide relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Species	Region I		Region II		Region III		Region IV		Region V	
	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 11	Trend <i>n</i> = 11	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 12	Trend <i>n</i> = 10	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 28	Trend <i>n</i> = 23	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 20	Trend <i>n</i> = 16	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 4	Trend <i>n</i> = 4
<i>Furbearers:</i>										
Arctic fox	not present	--	not present	n/c	scarce	n/c	not present	n/c	not present	–
Beaver	common	n/c	scarce	–	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	abundant	n/c
Coyote	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	+
Ermine	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c
Fisher	not present	--	not present	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	not present	n/c
Lynx	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	–	scarce	n/c	common	+
Marten	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	+
Mink	abundant	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c
Muskrat	scarce	--	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	–
Red fox	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c
Red squirrel	common	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c
River otter	abundant	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c
Wolf	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	+	scarce	n/c	common	n/c
Wolverine	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	+
<i>Prey:</i>										
Grouse	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	+
Hare	scarce	+	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	+
Mice/rodents	common	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	+	common	n/c	abundant	n/c
Ptarmigan	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	+

Note: *n* is the total number of trappers who provided information on abundance or trend; not all trappers provided information on every species. Abbreviations and symbols in this table represent the following: n/c = no change in trend; + = increase in trend; – = decrease in trend; and -- = no data reported.

Furbearer Harvest Report

Only 4 of the 14 species defined as furbearers are required to be sealed throughout Alaska: lynx, river otter, wolf, and wolverine. Marten, beaver, and fisher are required to be sealed in some units but not statewide. Table 6 shows the number of each species that trappers reported harvesting in each subunit during the RY23 season. The letter Z indicates that while the unit was clearly indicated, the subunit was not specified. There were no reported results for fisher for RY23; therefore, fisher was not included in Table 6.

It would be helpful for ADF&G biologists to know the proportion of the actual total harvest that the questionnaire response numbers represent. For species that require sealing, the number sealed represents our best information about the statewide harvest. Table 7 provides the harvest totals reported on the questionnaire as a percentage of the total number sealed.



Photo from ADF&G files.

Table 6. Furbearer harvest as reported on the 2023 trapper questionnaire, Alaska.

Region	Subunit ^a	<i>n</i>	Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
I	1A	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	5	1	0
	1C	1	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	1Z	2	0	5	0	1	0	10	6	0	0	5	4	1	0
	2Z	3	0	26	0	0	0	43	1	0	0	0	8	3	0
	3Z	1	0	2	0	0	0	10	10	0	0	0	5	0	0
	4Z	2	0	24	0	0	0	306	12	0	0	103	51	0	0
	5A	1	0	5	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
I Totals		11	0	72	0	3	0	381	31	0	0	108	76	5	0
II	6C	3	0	15	0	4	0	2	3	4	0	3	6	0	0
	6Z	1	0	0	0	4	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	7Z	3	0	0	0	4	0	10	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
	8Z	3	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	6	11	0	11	0	0
	14A	6	0	0	4	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	15C	3	0	0	8	14	37	0	0	0	0	5	1	2	0
	15Z	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
II Totals		20	0	37	13	36	38	22	3	10	11	12	21	2	0
III	12Z	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	6	0	1	3	6
	19C	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	19Z	2	0	0	0	0	0	63	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	20B	13	0	21	0	5	4	84	0	4	18	44	1	2	0
	20C	1	0	0	0	1	2	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	20E	1	0	0	0	6	2	92	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	20Z	7	0	1	1	1	0	34	0	0	10	11	0	4	2
	21Z	2	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	24A	1	0	0	0	1	0	28	0	0	0	28	0	2	0
	24Z	1	0	6	0	3	3	24	6	0	6	36	2	9	2
	25C	2	0	0	0	1	1	70	0	0	3	64	0	8	1
	26C	1	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0
III Totals		33	10	37	1	20	13	445	6	4	49	183	4	30	18
IV	9C	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	13A	1	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	13E	1	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	13Z	3	0	0	1	4	0	2	0	0	9	2	0	3	2
	14A	6	0	3	0	0	0	20	0	23	0	0	0	0	2
	14B	1	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	14Z	2	0	0	0	1	0	8	1	0	1	6	0	0	0
	16A	2	0	0	0	7	0	29	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	16B	2	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	16Z	2	0	18	12	5	0	4	0	0	12	0	0	0	0

-continued-

Table 6 continued.

Region	Subunit ^a	<i>n</i>	Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
IV	Totals	21	0	24	17	18	0	84	1	23	22	8	4	5	8
V	18Z	2	0	4	1	0	16	0	2	2	16	1	5	6	2
	22B	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	22C	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
V	Totals	4	0	7	1	0	16	0	2	2	16	1	7	6	2
	Unknown	5	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	15	0	0	0
	Statewide	94	10	177	32	78	67	935	44	39	98	327	112	48	28

^a The letter Z indicates that while the unit was indicated on the survey, the administrative subunit was not specified.

Table 7. Trapper questionnaire reported harvest as a percentage of total number sealed by species and region where sealing was required, regulatory year 2023, Alaska.

Region	Percent of RY23 species harvest reported in questionnaire						
	Beaver	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
I	28	0 ^a	0 ^a	25	33	3	0 ^a
II	21	–	15	11	9	3	0 ^a
III	100	–	5	–	8	5	7
IV	12	–	0 ¹	22	3	1	5
V	–	–	17	–	10	8	3
Statewide	28	–	10	43	15	4	5

Note: En dash (–) indicates there was no sealed harvest.

^a No harvest reported in Trapper Questionnaire.



Photo by Jesse Ross

Furbearer Sealing Records Summary

Sealing refers to the placement of an official marker or locking tag (seal) by an authorized ADF&G representative on an animal hide and/or skull. The sealing process may also involve recording biological information about the animal and the conditions under which it was taken, taking measurements, and collecting biological samples. Lynx, river otter, wolf, and wolverine are required to be sealed statewide while marten, beaver, and fisher are required to be sealed only in certain units. The harvest totals reported below (Table 8) are based on fur sealing records.



Photo from ADF&G files

Table 8. Reported harvest from regulatory year sealing records, regulatory years 2018–2023, Alaska.

Species	Region	RY18	RY19	RY20	RY21	RY22	RY23
Beaver ^a	I	277	226	110	99	197	255
	II	195	157	115	125	170	173
	III	4	8	6	44	4	17
	IV	360	391	341	229	220	194
	V	0	0	3	0	0	0
	Total	836	782	575	497	591	639
Fisher ^b	I	5	1	3	2	1	2
	II	0	0	0	0	0	0
	III	0	0	0	0	0	0
	IV	0	0	0	0	0	0
	V	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	5	1	3	2	1	2
Lynx	I	16	25	30	9	6	1
	II	15	15	49	141	233	250
	III	2,608	1,783	1,496	423	272	249
	IV	647	993	966	411	234	62
	V	84	179	215	187	66	96
	Total	3,370	2,995	2,756	1,171	811	658
Marten ^c	I	2,858	1,381	1,761	927	1,361	1,573
	II	58	84	215	141	185	198
	III	0	0	0	2	7	0
	IV	209	275	555	259	253	382
	V	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	3,125	1,740	2,531	1,329	1,806	2,153
River otter	I	288	237	202	149	237	229
	II	142	146	102	154	185	247
	III	66	64	27	29	35	53
	IV	149	104	171	118	122	146
	V	61	78	68	24	51	73
	Total	706	629	570	474	630	748
Wolf	I	146	311	175	154	189	173
	II	24	34	17	39	29	61
	III	463	507	544	365	513	581
	IV	336	232	254	125	237	467
	V	53	84	93	33	96	71
	Total	1,022	1,168	1,083	716	1,064	1,353
Wolverine	I	27	12	26	22	25	29
	II	31	28	26	23	20	37
	III	247	219	264	214	249	270
	IV	128	99	173	130	169	162
	V	62	106	65	79	78	80
	Total	495	464	554	468	541	578

^a Beaver are required to be sealed in game management units (GMUs) 1–11, 13–15, and 17.

^b Fisher are required to be sealed in GMUs 1–5.

^c Marten are required to be sealed in GMUs 1–7 and 14–1

Commercial Transactions Involving Furs

AVERAGE PRICES PAID FOR RAW FURS

The prices published by Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc. during January–July in each of the previous 5 regulatory years were averaged to produce the prices in Table 9.

Table 9. Average fur prices applicable to Alaska published by Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc. from regulatory years 2019–2023.

Species	<u>Average price (U.S. dollars)^a</u>					
	RY19	RY20	RY21	RY22	RY23	Top price RY23
Arctic fox	–	–	51.10	59.50	58.48	96.00
Beaver	13.52	13.21	10.17	29.59	24.03	80.00
Coyote	75.52	50.4	47.70	30.78	24.08	86.00
Ermine	1.30	1.70	2.05	4.57	5.78	18.00
Fisher	–	–	24.87	39.48	56.93	80.00
Lynx	–	43.21	69.04	170.52	306.18	2000.00
Marten	–	20.69	30.54	41.21	56.19	100.00
Mink (wild)	–	–	5.69	6.20	13.40	24.00
Muskrat	2.90	2.54	5.07	–	2.35	6.70
Red fox	19.90	–	7.87	13.57	10.18	50.00
Squirrel	0.80	0.32	1.72	1.17	0.67	1.00
River otter	–	15.85	–	28.59	32.49	84.00
Wolf	120.47	111.73	264.50	238.43	232.56	730.00
Wolverine	195.66	239.05	346.56	424.53	422.31	750.00

Note: En dashes (–) indicate that data were not available.

^a Prices are averages from data published by Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc. during January–July in each regulatory year.



Photo from ADF&G files

MINIMUM ESTIMATED FUR VALUE

Table 10 below summarizes the minimum total estimated value of furs trapped during the 2023–2024 season (RY23). Average prices for the previous year (RY23) were obtained from Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc. The minimum total value was \$924,668.10, with wolf and wolverine accounting for more than half of that total. This table is intended to provide an estimate of fur values in Alaska and does not represent fur revenue. Average fur auction prices were used to calculate fur value. For beaver, fisher, lynx, marten, river otter, wolf, and wolverine, we used number of furs sealed. That means beaver, fisher, and marten values are certainly underestimated because the table includes only animals harvested from the areas in the state where sealing is required. For species that were not sealed, the number of furs is the harvest reported by trappers on the questionnaire.

Table 10. Minimum value of furs harvested in Alaska by species, regulatory year 2023.

Species	Total number sealed or reported ^a	Average price (U.S. dollars)	Minimum value (U.S. dollars) ^b
Arctic fox	10	58.48	584.80
Beaver	639	24.03	15,355.17
Coyote	32	24.08	770.56
Ermine	78	5.78	450.84
Fisher	2	56.93	113.86
Lynx	658	306.18	201,466.44
Marten	2,153	56.19	120,977.07
Mink	44	13.40	589.60
Muskrat	39	2.35	91.65
Red fox	98	10.18	997.64
Red squirrel	327	0.67	219.09
River otter	748	32.49	24,302.52
Wolf	1,353	232.56	314,653.68
Wolverine	578	422.31	244,095.18
Total minimum value			924,668.10

Note: This table is intended to provide an estimate of fur values in Alaska and does not represent fur revenue nor does it accurately portray actual total values.

^a For beaver, fisher, lynx, marten, river otter, wolf, and wolverine, we used the number of furs sealed only. For species that were not sealed, the number of furs in this column represents the harvest reported by trappers on the questionnaire.

^b Average fur auction prices were used to calculate fur value.

Fur Sealing Requirements

An authorized ADF&G representative must seal lynx, river otter, wolf, or wolverine taken anywhere in the state; marten in GMUs 1–7 and 14–16; fisher in GMUs 1–5; and beaver taken in GMUs 1–11, 13–15, and 17. If you ship furs of these animals to a buyer or an auction house that is out of state, the furs must be sealed prior to shipping.

If there is no authorized sealer near you, contact the nearest ADF&G office. A list of area biologists is provided in the next several pages and we can help you make arrangements to seal your furs. If you or someone you know would like to become a fur sealer, please contact one of the regional fur sealing officers listed in the next several pages.

- There are federal licenses and permits needed to ship within or outside the country. Please check with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service if you intend to ship fur out of Alaska or to another country, such as Canada. If you intend to ship wolf, lynx, or river otter skin (raw or tanned) out of the country (for example, from Alaska to a fur dealer in Canada), you must get a federal wildlife export permit (also called a Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, or CITES permit), a federal import/export license, and arrange for inspection of all furs by a federal agent.



Photo by Arin Underwood

Regional ADF&G Fur Sealing Officers

Region I
(GMUs 1–5)

Paul Converse
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 110024
Juneau, AK 99811-0024
(907) 465-4354

Region II
(GMUs 6, 7, 8, 14C, and 15)

Erik Bollerud
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, AK 99518
(907) 267-2357

Region III
(GMUs 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, and 26B,C)

Sara Longson
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701
(907) 459-7205

Region IV
(GMUs 9, 10, 11, 13, 14A, B, 16, and 7)

Keeley Wall
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
1801 S Margaret Dr Suite 2
Palmer, AK 99645
(907) 746-6396

Region V
(GMUs 18, 22, 23, and 26A)

Christopher Ta
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 1148
Nome, AK 99762
(907) 443-2271

Area Biologists and Game Management Units

<p>GMU 1(A), 2 Ross Dorendorf (AAB: Vacant) 2030 Sealevel Drive Suite 205 KETCHIKAN, AK 99901 Phone: (907) 225-2475 Fax: (907) 225-2771</p>	<p>GMU 1 (B), 3 Frank Robbins (AAB: none) P.O. Box 667 PETERSBURG, AK 99833 Phone: (907) 772-5235 Fax: (907) 772-9336</p>	<p>GMU 4 Steve Bethune (AAB: none) 304 Lake Street Room 103 SITKA, AK 99835-7563 Phone: (907) 747-5449 Fax: (907) 747-6239</p>
<p>GMU 1(C), 1(D), 5 Carl Koch (AAB: Hannah Manninen) P.O. Box 110024 JUNEAU, AK 99811-0024 Phone: (907) 465-4266 Fax: (907) 465-4272</p>	<p>GMU 6 Charlotte Westing (AAB: none) P.O. Box 669 CORDOVA, AK 99574 Phone: (907) 424-3235 Fax: (907) 424-3235</p>	<p>GMU 7, 15 Chris Bottom (AAB: Jason Herreman) 34828 Kalifornsky Beach Rd Ste B SOLDOTNA, AK 99669-8367 Phone: (907) 262-9368 Fax: (907) 262-4709</p>
<p>GMU 8 Nate Svoboda (AAB: Bill Dunker) 211 Mission Road KODIAK, AK 99615 Phone: (907) 486-1880 Fax: (907) 486-1869</p>	<p>GMU 9, 10 Amy Vande Voort (AAB: Evelyn Lichwa) P.O. Box 37 KING SALMON, AK 99613 Phone: (907) 842-1559 Fax: (907) 246-3309</p>	<p>GMU 11, 13 Heidi Hatcher (AAB: Vacant) P.O. Box 47 GLENNALLEN, AK 99588 Phone: (907) 822-3461 Fax: (907) 822-3811</p>
<p>GMU 12, 20(E) Jeff Gross (AAB: Aidan Hunter) P.O. Box 355 TOK, AK 99780-0355 Phone: (907) 883-2971 Fax: (907) 883-2970</p>	<p>GMU 14(A), (B), 16 (A), (B) Chris Brockman (AAB: Gerrit Van Diest) 1801 S Margaret Dr Suite 2 PALMER, AK 99645-6736 Phone: (907) 746-6325 Fax: (907) 746-6305</p>	<p>GMU 14(C) Cory Stantorf (AAB: Nick Docken) 333 Raspberry Road ANCHORAGE, AK 99518-1565 Phone: (907) 267-2185 Fax: (907) 267-2433</p>
<p>GMU 17 John Landsiedel (AAB: Evelyn Lichwa) P.O. Box 1030 DILLINGHAM, AK 99576 Phone: (907) 842-1599 Fax: (907) 842-5937</p>	<p>GMU 18 Patrick Jones (AAB: Keith Oster) P.O. Box 1467 BETHEL, AK 99559 Phone: (907) 543-2979 Fax: (907) 543-2023</p>	<p>GMU 19, 21 (A), (E) Josh Peirce (AAB: Mike Ebinger) P.O. Box 230 MCGRATH, AK 99627 Phone: (907) 524-3323 Fax: (907) 524-3324</p>
<p>GMU 20(A), (B), (C), (F), 25(C) Tony Hollis (AAB: Jeff Wells) 1300 College Road FAIRBANKS, AK 99701 Phone: (907) 459-7233 Fax: (907) 459-7332</p>	<p>GMU 20(D) Bob Schmidt (AAB: Vacant) P.O. Box 605 DELTA JUNCTION, AK 99737 Phone: (907) 895-4484 Fax: (907) 895-4833</p>	<p>GMU 21(B), (C), (D), 24 Glenn Stout (AAB: Justin Jensen) 1300 College Road FAIRBANKS, AK 99701 Phone: (907) 459-7218 Fax: (907) 459-7332</p>
<p>GMU 22 Sara Henslee (AAB: Alicia Carson) P.O. Box 1148 NOME, AK 99762 Phone: (907) 443-2271 Fax: (907) 443-5893</p>	<p>GMU 23 Christie Osburn (AAB: none) P.O. Box 689 KOTZEBUE, AK 99752 Phone: (907) 442-1712 Fax: (907) 442-2420</p>	<p>GMU 25 (A), (B), (D), 26 (B), (C) Mark Nelson (AAB: Jordan Pruszenski) 1300 College Road FAIRBANKS, AK 99701 Phone: (907) 459-7242 Fax: (907) 459-7332</p>
<p>GMU 26 (A) Carmen Daggett (AAB: none) P.O. Box 1284 BARROW, AK 99723-1284 Phone: (907) 852-3464 Fax: (907) 852-3465</p>	<p>RI Regional Supervisor – Tom Schumacher (907) 465-4359 RI Management Coordinator – Roy Churchwell (907) 465-4267</p>	<p>RII Regional Supervisor – Cyndi Wardlow (907) 267-2177 RII Management Coordinator – Jeff Selinger (907) 267-2529</p>
<p>RIII Regional Supervisor – Lincoln Parrett (907) 459-7366 RIII Management Coordinator – Jason Caikoski (907) 459-7300</p>	<p>RIV Regional Supervisor – Tim Peltier (907) 861-2123 RIV Management Coordinator – Todd Rinaldi (907) 861-2105</p>	<p>RV Regional Supervisor – Tony Gorn (907) 267-2421 RV Management Coordinator – Phillip Perry (907) 443-8189</p>

Trapper Comments

We are looking for ways to improve the trapper questionnaire; please feel free to provide your suggestions. We are also interested in your ideas for trapping in Alaska. Below are responses trappers provided on the 2023 questionnaire to the following question: “Do you have any other comments or suggestions for ADF&G or the Board of Game on how trapping can be improved in Alaska?” Please note that any information that may have identified someone has been removed.

NO REGION INDICATED

- In areas where there are leash ordinances. The ordinance should be enforced.
- I have never trapped but I want too anytime within a few years
- Not as of yet, I'm just getting started and have a lot to learn.
- VERY FEW ANIMALS
- Very windy and snowy season on my line. Heavy windy/snow made it very difficult to locate predator sign and set on it. Also suspect wide brush/tree removal path cut by DOT to facilitate bridge replacement impacted animal movement on line this season (mow area is across Bear creek and runs perpendicular to ridge line and river.
- We will eventually lose trapping, or at a minimum, face greater and greater restrictions if the trapping community does not embrace reasonable conditions for trapping, such as: increased frequency of trap checks; not trapping along trails or in areas utilized by non-trapping users; and continually seeking ways to minimize the of non-target catch (domestic and wild animals).
- We're just getting started, we intend to learn and do some trapping this next winter.

REGION I

- Create wildlife equally: Allow full wolf season on POW.
- Have the waterfowl season close Dec 15. Best for the hunter and trapper.
- I appreciate the opportunities that are currently available to me and pray that they are preserved not only for their cultural significance but also as a management tool. I take pride in being engrained in the landscape here and want to maintain balance and opportunity to fish, hunt and trap for years to come.
- I get trap license to help friends that do trap and run their lines with them. I do not trap myself.
- I haven't trapped but I like to keep my options open as I head towards retirement
- I know it would have perhaps fatal privacy issues, but perhaps something like a mining claim system where such things as trap lines can be looked up- it's frustrating to get out into what you think is a good spot only to find someone else's trapline signage. (On the other hand, we both know unscrupulous people would use this to "cork" others' traplines or steal from them. So maybe not such a good idea, unless someone can figure out some way to combat that..?)
- I suggest extending the mink season to match the otter season. This helps reduce illegal bycatch of mink, because you can keep it if you catch it.

- I wasn't successful this year because there were too many mice in the area stealing bait.
- I'm a hunter, but the trapping license comes with. A QR code on the post card would be super handy.
- More liberal season dates for units 1-5. Southeast Alaska trapping season dates are too restricted for no biological reason. This leaves trappers with very limited time afield, and wastes a resource that could otherwise be utilized, if trappers were given more access opportunity.
- No comment at this time
- Rather than mail cards about the survey and glossy booklet of results, please email them...save money on postage and paper. thanks
- Remove beaver sealing requirements in Unit 1 & 4.
- Trapping is mostly hobby based for most people these days since fur prices plummeted. I think operating costs become prohibitive for most people. Perhaps more in-state processing and marketing of furs would get more folks involved.
- Wolf season start date off November 15 is too early. Deer and waterfowl hunters are in the field creating user conflicts. Deer are commonly caught in snares, especially since the start date coincides with the rut. I've heard credible reports from other trappers of multiple black bears caught in snares. A December 1 start date would reduce this bycatch.
- You guys are doing a great job! Just keep fighting for us trappers and don't let the antis with outside interests persuade your judgement. Alaska is unique, and only the people living here year 'round should have any input in what happens with our fish and wildlife. You have a very hard and important job, your effort does not go unnoticed. Thanks!

REGION II

- Although I indicated that I am not a trapper, I do hunt annually on a trapping license and take wolves through the SDA predator control program. Accordingly, if you would like me to answer any of the questions differently, I am happy to do so.
- Close beaver trapping in Unit 15, they need a break. Probably the last year for lynx in Unit 15, based on trends....
- Encourage younger people to start trapping. Encourage trappers to trap away from high use areas
- Enforce laws protecting the legal right of trappers to engage in trapping and actually investigate claims of trapper harassment and property damage/theft.
- I am a very opportunistic trapper. I tend not to make plans for trapping but maintain a trapping license in case other outdoors activities afford me the opportunity/possibility to take game via trap or in accordance with trapping regulations while I'm in the field.
- I have no comment at this time
- I'm thankful for the opportunity to trap and utilize my trapping rights while accompanying my yearly hunting license, while in the field many opportunities exist for a resident

trapper, please continue to support a strong trapping right in Alaska for the residents of the state.

- Keep up the good work, thank you for promoting the open process that ensures well balanced management
- Maybe have a printable signage that states "current trapline" etc... with contact numbers for fish and wildlife, maybe also stating the laws against tampering with traplines etc.
- More education classes. It's extremely hard to learn trapping in Alaska. Most of the experienced trappers will not teach anyone because they don't want to give away their secret areas. I have been trying to learn for around 5 years now but it's difficult without guidance, and the last thing I want to do is make a preventable mistake and catch moose, eagles, or pet dogs. In other words, there is a very high barrier to entry for new trappers.
- No
- No
- No
- No
- No questions, but thank you all for doing a great job!
- None at this time
- Please increase the bag limit of beavers. This is an old statute.
- Protect Alaskan trappers' ability to trap. We have been seeing growing movements trying to hinder this.
- Require traps to be marked to hold trappers responsible, which wouldn't be a big issue for ethical trappers. ADFG could even provide trap tags for trappers if they want.
- The beaver and river otter season, at least in Unit 8, should have the same dates. We trap for otters in the exact same places we trap for beavers since they rotate throughout the beaver houses along our trapline. We trap beavers through April 30, which is 3 months longer than the river otter season. When you are trapping the beaver houses to keep the trails open through the very last day of the season, it would be nice to be able to keep the occasional river otter we get as bycatch.
- Trapping could be improved if areas where trapping occurred were marked. There's a lot of winter recreation that occurs across the state, aside from trapping, so it would be respectful to all other user groups if they were warned that they could be recreating in an area with traps and knew to keep an eye out. This is especially relevant for hunters with bird dogs. Also, instating a bounty on wolves (and particularly encouraging it in certain areas) could be an effective predator control measure and eliminate the need for controversial state-funded predator control tactics.
- We need more trapping regulations regarding public use trails and more trapping enforcement. There needs to be standards of how often traps need to be checked. I have personally come upon animals that have been stuck alive in traps for numerous days chewing their own legs off because unethical trappers set out too many and don't check them often enough. I am a lifelong Alaskan hunter and seeing the lack of responsibility a

lot of trappers have is horrendous. Not to mention a lot of them waste the animals that get stuck in their traps if they aren't the target species. If you don't believe me go to the Copper Basin and do some actual monitoring of the trap lines.

REGION III

- Actually make some freaking RULES and regulations for trapping. Maybe SOME restrictions on where trapping is allowed, as a means to protect the public (including children and pets) on public trails and in areas of high public use. It's 2024...not the 19th century.
- Allow electronic night vision devices for predators such as wolf and coyote. Allow electronic scopes and game cameras with wireless capability (wifi, bluetooth, cell, etc). This would keep Alaska hunting/trapping regulations in line with the rest of the US and allow for better game management.
- Allow small game, such as grouse and hares, to be harvested with firearms above the Yukon river, in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area. Grouse and Hare scraps are often used for trapping. It would be beneficial to be able to harvest these small game animals in the same location and use the scraps, after the meat has been salvaged for consumption, for trapping. I see no reason why furbearers can be targeted in the DHCMA with firearms under a trapping license, but small game cannot.
- Allow trappers to harvest various game with snare, and footholds when the season is open (i.e. wolves, with legholds, and snares). Per regulations: • It is against the law to trap a wolf with a steel trap or with a snare smaller than 3/32 inch in diameter in Units 12, 19D, 20D, 20E, 21A, and 25D during April or October, or in Units 19A, 19B, 19C, 19E, 20A, 20B, 20C, 20F, 21B, 21C, 21D, 21E, 24, 25A, 25B and 25C, during April. • It is against the law to trap a wolf in Units 9, 10, 13, 14B, 16 and 17 in October or April and in Units 9, 10, 13, and 16 from Nov 1-Nov 9, with a steel trap or with a snare smaller than 3/32 inch in diameter.
- I am interested in learning to trap.
- I have gotten my trapping license with the intent to trap but have not been able due to life circumstances
- I only purchase a trapping license to help fund furbearer research and management.
- I submitted a proposal to expand muskrat open water opportunities in September in the Interior, mostly to get my kids out on kayaks/canoes before it gets cold and to avoid drilling through 3 feet of ice to catch a \$2 muskrat. Much to my surprise, it was approved. Just wanted give a kudos to ADFG for their democratic, common sense process to regulation. It is a breath of fresh air coming from over-regulated states.
- Keep the regulations open, do not restrict trappers
- Keep up the good fights
- Length the trapping season on wolves. Start earlier in the October and extend it to the end of May. Introduce a bear trapping (foothold only) season everywhere. Start the beaver season earlier in September in all the unit 20 game units. Start muskrat season earlier in September in 20E.

- Lots of large adult male and adult female marten this season, not many juveniles. Continued research into marten population cycles could be interesting and beneficial.
- Most of my trapping was for safety and health concerns for the villages that I work in, so Fox were the main target this year was well below last year's abundance.
- My son and I truly enjoy trapping in Alaska. Thankyou ADF&G and ATA for your efforts.
- No comment. Just fyi, I buy a license every year because my husband traps so I buy a license so I can help out if I am out on the line with him.
- No comments
- Not a big trapper just do it for fun 1 week a year
- Not at the moment, love being out side and enjoying something in the winter months. Noticed a lot more moose kills with more wolves being present this winter. Saw wolves in 2 areas that I haven't normally seen wolves over last couple of years.
- Quit unlimited shooting of beaver on the Chena River. Heard of some guys shooting 50 a day. Hurts my beaver trapping in fall.
- Should ask that trappers who have partners not duplicate this survey to avoid double data sets.
- The board of Fish and Game has always supported trapping and education of such. I feel the Dept. of F.& G. is the best in the U.S.
- The majority of wolves in the area have Follicular Displasia. I heard that ADF&G can treat it and has in the past. It would be nice to see less wolves with this disorder.
- The reason I did not trap has nothing to do with ADFG. It's more about costs of gas, snow machines, trucks, etc. It is really hard to justify the costs of trapping at this time.
- Trapping school/class on road system for anyone born after 2024 before getting trapping lic.

REGION IV

- Align the seasons for Marten and Wolverine for unit 16A to end at the end of February when Lynx ends.
- As things change with the growth of the population please keep the trappers in mind as conflicts with other users come up. Offering information and suggestions on how to avoid conflict with other user groups would at least show effort from ADF&G and could help as we struggle to keep areas open. I know this will not avoid the conflict but it would at least show some effort towards education for trappers and other users. On a side note even though I did not trap for beavers I did spend a little time this spring looking around my area. I think there were a lot less beavers in the area than there was around 10 years ago. However I can't say I've been able to trap much in the last 5 years. I also talked with a friend about his beaver trapping in units 14, 15 & 16. He saw a lot less beavers than has in recent years. I'm afraid that their numbers are down.

- Even though government screws up everything it interferes with, perhaps the State is the right forum to start a trap line registry so newcomers can plan lines which don't cross other trap lines resulting in the over harvest of the resources.
- Have not started trapping, but keep getting a license in case the opportunity to learn with someone comes up.
- I buy trapping license when I buy hunting and fishing only to support ADFG
- I only get the trapping license as its part of the package.
- I purchase the trapping license in order to have the option of harvesting other small game. I do not / have not trapped. I intend to continue purchasing a trapping license, and may eventually begin trapping.
- I would like to see longer seasons for unit 14 A/B/C. Access to some of these areas are very challenging and access is weather related.
- I would like to the state to consider concessions. These would only exist in remote/semi-remote areas so that beginning, smalltime, limited trappers have access to everything within a mile of the road or river or easily accessible areas. I just makes sense that licensed trappers that want to make a big effort have an area to manage for sustained fur harvest. I got sick of fighting people and dealing with gear/fur thieves. Consider two trappers per concession so it isn't "exclusive".
- Include traditional knowledge into trapping education.
- It would be beneficial to have more pullouts available and plowed along the parks to open up some areas that are currently inaccessible to trucks and trailers.
- No
- No real suggestions for improvement other than keep the regulations as simple as possible. I will continue to buy a trapping license but I may not actually trap again until I get retired in a few years and have enough time to do it in remote country and enjoy the experience
- None
- Not really, I'm not very good at it mostly because it's a hobby an I don't rely on trapping to survive. I wish people would get off the road a few miles instead of roadside pullout trapping.
- Pay a bounty for wolves to improve the moose population

REGION V

- No
- Seeing a lot more Bald Wolves. Not sure what it is from. Yukon razor backs, lice. Don't know. Good to see the ptarmigan coming back. Not as good as they were, but better than previous few years.

Author's Note

Thank you to ADF&G Information Services and our Division of Wildlife Conservation lead webmaster for their efforts and assistance in perfecting the online version of the questionnaire, compiling data, and running some of the analyses for this 2023 report.

I would also like to extend my thanks to everyone responding to the questionnaire. I hope we can continue to improve the questionnaire in a way that will lead to an increased response rate and more valuable information for those using this report. For many of the species involved in this report, you are our primary source of knowledge. Your responses are used to determine what is happening with the furbearers to better manage those populations for future generations to enjoy. Please continue to respond to the questionnaire in the future and encourage others to do the same. If you know of anyone who wants to receive future questionnaires, please have them contact me by phone or email (see below).

Lastly, I want to extend a special thanks to the trappers who provided pictures. It's important to document your efforts, especially to help pass along proper techniques to the next generation of trappers in Alaska. I greatly appreciate your willingness to share those experiences with me and with other trappers.

Thank you and good luck this season!

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Photo by ADF&G

