

PROPOSAL 47

5 AAC 92.170. Sealing of marten, fisher, lynx, beaver, otter, wolf, and wolverine.

Require wolf harvest information be reported within 48 hours of recovery and sealing within 14 days in Unit 2 as follows:

5 AAC 92.170. Adjust the requirement for all wolves taken in Unit 2 to be reported via call in as follows: Wolves taken during either the hunting season or during the trapping season must be called in within 48 hours and sealed within 14 days of harvest.

Require hunters and trappers that kill wolves to call in harvest information to a recorded department line within 48 hours of recovery. As wolves are taken and reported, they should be numbered sequentially to assist the department in censoring the wolf from the mark-recapture study. Very general location data should also be provided in the call-in. Sealing requirement remain the same (within 14 days). An area office, or a wolf sealing station, on Prince of Wales Island would make reporting and sealing requirements easy for the public, and provide other useful information.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? To manage wolves sustainably, the annual mortality the population experiences must be sustainable. The best way to ensure that is to monitor the harvest during the season, and close it if necessary to avoid over-harvest. It is a standard management practice with many fish and wildlife populations, especially where the economic valuation is high (e.g. herring), or where the populations are small and relatively vulnerable (e.g. bowhead whales, musk ox). Historically, harvest information has been gathered when hunters and trappers present the wolf hides for sealing, typically within 30 days after the season closes. While presentation of the animal for sealing yields beneficial data (including genetic samples), a late report does not benefit the Spatially Explicit Capture–Recapture (SECR) population estimation technique, nor does it signal to the department when an overharvest is being approached.

The sooner a report is filed with the department, the better they can manage. We suggest a cell phone call to a recorded department line within 48 hours of recovery. This is a light burden to impose and does not affect a large number of people. During RY10–RY14 an average of 12 trappers per year were successful (range 10–17).¹ If one doubles it for safe measure, the reporting burden still falls on relatively few shoulders.

¹ Porter, B. 2018. Wolf management report and plan, Game Management Unit 2: Report period 1 July 2010–30 June 2015, and plan period 1 July 2015–30 June 2020. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Species Management Report and Plan ADF&G/DWC/SMR&P-2018- 10, Juneau.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Wildlife Alliance

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