Wildlife Management Report ADF&G/DWC/WMR–2017-3

2016 Alaska Trapper Report: 1 July 2016–30 June 2017

Brynn L. Parr

©2017 ADF&G. Photo by Patrick Jones.

2017

Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Wildlife Conservation

Wildlife Management Report ADF&G/DWC/WMR-2017-3

2016 Alaska Trapper Report: 1 July 2016–30 June 2017

Brynn L. Parr
ADF&G Trapper Questionnaire Coordinator
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
dfg.dwc.permits@alaska.gov

©2017 Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Wildlife Conservation
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

This project was supported by Pittman-Robertson funds from the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration program. Monies come from a manufacturer's excise tax from the sales of handguns, sporting rifles, shotguns, ammunition, and archery equipment. State matching funds were provided from the Fish and Game Fund.

Wildlife management reports are used to document general wildlife management issues or information. They typically summarize information related to a specific management issue, review management activities, and/or provide information about why a particular management approach has been taken or is recommended. They may be produced primarily for general or technical audiences. These reports are professionally reviewed by staff in the Division of Wildlife Conservation.

This wildlife management report was reviewed and approved for publication by Brynn L. Parr, ADF&G Trapper Questionnaire Coordinator for the Division of Wildlife Conservation, Douglas.

Wildlife management reports are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Division of Wildlife Conservation, PO Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526; telephone: (907) 465-4190; email: dfg.dwc.publications@alaska.gov; website: www.adfg.alaska.gov. The report may also be accessed through most libraries, via interlibrary loan from the Alaska State Library or the Alaska Resources Library and Information Service (www.arlis.org).

Please cite this document as follows:

Parr, B. L. 2017. 2016 Alaska trapper report: 1 July 2016–30 June 2017. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Wildlife Management Report ADF&G/DWC/WMR-2017-3, Juneau.

The State of Alaska is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Contact the Division of Wildlife Conservation at (907) 465-4190 for alternative formats of this publication.

ADF&G does not endorse or recommend any specific company or their products. Product names used in this publication are included for completeness but do not constitute product endorsement.

Cover Photo: Blue lynx trapped outside Bethel, Alaska. ©2017 ADF&G. Photo by Patrick Jones.

Contents

Code of Ethics ... 1
A Trapper's Responsibility ... 1
Introduction ... 3
A Profile of Trapping in Alaska ... 4
Trapper Information ... 4
Did You Trap? ... 4
Trapping Experience ... 5
Trapline Information ... 5
Trapping Area ... 5
Trapping Frequency ... 6
Trapline Composition ... 9
Trapping Efforts ... 9
Target Species and Fur Disposition ... 12
Target Species ... 12
Presence of Ectoparasites ... 13
Harvest Methods ... 15
Use of Predator Calls ... 15
Arctic Fox ... 16
Beaver ... 17
Coyote ... 18
Ermine ... 19
Fisher ... 20
Lynx ... 21
Marten ... 22
Mink ... 23
Muskrat ... 24
Red Fox ... 25
Red Squirrel ... 26
River Otter ... 27
Wolf ... 28
Wolverine ... 29
Species Relative Abundance and Population Trends ... 30
Furbearer Harvest Report ... 32
Furbearer Sealing Records Summary ... 35
Commercial Transactions Involving Furs ... 37
Average Prices Paid for Raw Furs ... 37
Minimum Estimated Fur Value ... 38
Fur Sealing Requirements ... 39
Regional ADF&G Fur Sealing Officers ... 40
Area Biologists and Game Management Units ... 41
Trapper Comments ... 42
Region I ... 42
Region II ... 45
Region III ... 53
Region IV ... 59
Region V ... 67
Author's Note ... 70

List of Figures

Figure 1. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation's regions and game management units. 2
Figure 2. A statewide 15-year trend of trapper age and experience, Alaska, 1 July 2002–30 June 2017. 5
Figure 3. Length of time spent trapping by region, Alaska. 6
Figure 4. Number of weeks Alaska trappers spent trapping during the 2016–2017 season by region. 6
Figure 5. Primary mode of transportation used by Alaska trappers to reach their traplines during the 2016–2017 season. 7
Figure 6. Primary transportation used by Alaska trappers to run their trapline during the 2016–2017 season. 8
Figure 7. Change in trapping efforts for the 2016–2017 season by region, Alaska. 10
Figure 8. Types of change in trapping effort for the 2016–2017 season, Alaska. 11
Figure 9. Factors affecting trapping effort by region during the 2016–2017 season, Alaska. 11
Figure 10. The number of trappers statewide ranking each species as the first, second, or third most important species they targeted during the 2016–2017 season in Alaska. 13
Figure 11. Use of predator calls by region during the 2016–2017 season, Alaska. 15

List of Tables

Table 1. Response to 2016 Alaska trapper questionnaire. 4
Table 2. Average trapline length and number of sets per trapline in Alaska for the 2016–2017 season. 9
Table 3. Species ranked[a,b] by importance at both statewide and regional levels, Alaska, 2016–2017 trapping season. 13
Table 4. Presence[a] of ectoparasites found on Alaska furbearers by species and region, 2016–2017 trapping season. 14
Table 5. Regionwide relative abundance[a] and trend[b] of furbearer populations, Alaska, 2016–2017 trapping season. 31
Table 6. Furbearer harvest as reported on the 2016 trapper questionnaire, Alaska. 32
Table 7. Trapper questionnaire totals as a percent of total number sealed, as reported on the 2016 questionnaire and in the regulatory year[a] 2016 sealing records, Alaska. 34
Table 8. Reported harvest from sealing records, Alaska, regulatory years[a] 2012–2016. 36
Table 9. Average fur prices (U.S.) published by the North American Fur Auction and Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc., regulatory years[a] 2012–2016. 37
Table 10. Fur value in Alaska, 2016–2017 trapping season. 38

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. The manual is available in Alaska book stores and from the Alaska Trappers Association for approximately $26.00.

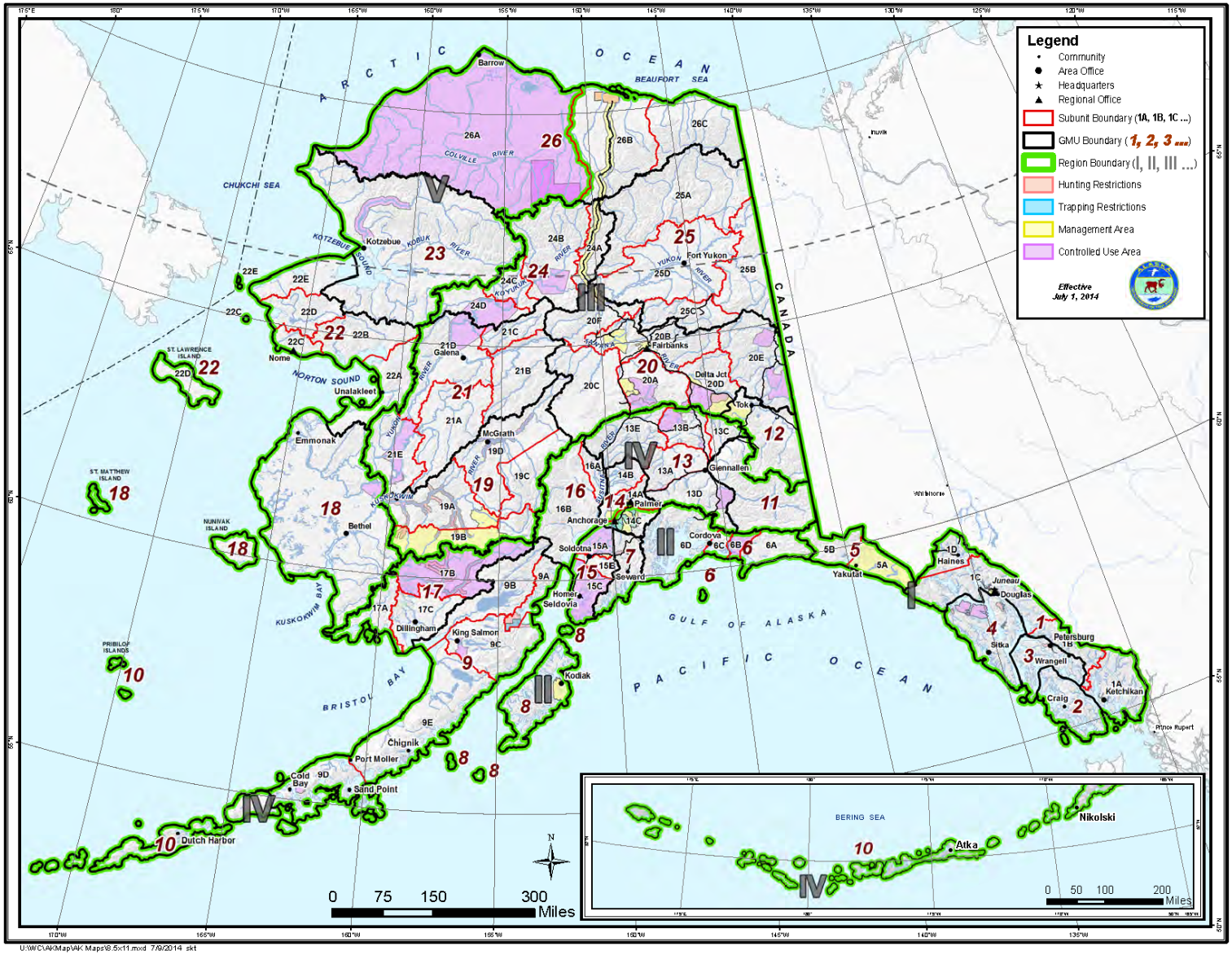


Figure 1. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation's regions and game management units.

Introduction

This *2016 Alaska Trapper Report: 1 July 2016–30 June 2017* contains information provided by trappers through the annual trapper questionnaire. On the following pages, you will find out how other Alaskans ran their traplines, what their primary target species were, how much effort they put into catching fur, 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 (ADF&G) and comments from trappers throughout the state.

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

The accuracy and value of information provided in this report depends on the number of trappers who reply. To help the 2016 questionnaire reach trappers, we identified potential trappers using licensing and fur sealing records; we sent questionnaire invites to anyone who purchased a license authorizing them to trap in 2016. Of the 26,333 questionnaire invites mailed out, we received 1,051 responses, a 4.0% response rate. Of those responding, only 1.8% of responses were provided using the paper format, while the majority of respondents used the online version. The total number of responses was up from the previous year.

This year, trappers were assigned to the 5 standard regions found in Figure 1 based on their mailing address. If a trapper responded with his or her primary trapline in a region separate from their mailing address, we reassigned that trapper to the trapline's region. This was done in an attempt to accurately reflect trapping efforts and locations. Throughout this report, regions will be listed by a roman numeral in place of description (e.g., Region I instead of Southeast).

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 at:

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

A Profile of Trapping in Alaska

TRAPPER INFORMATION

Did You Trap?

This year, 26,333 questionnaire invites were mailed throughout the state and 1,051 were returned for an overall response rate of 4.0%. The response rate was highest from Region II and lowest for Region V. Statewide, 33.5% of respondents trapped during the 2016–2017 season.

Table 1. Response to 2016 Alaska trapper questionnaire.

Region	Trapped	Did not trap	No response	Total	% Responding
I	37	81	2,665	2,783	4.2
II	63	291	10,518	10,872	3.3
III	110	125	4,213	4,448	5.3
IV	106	169	5,715	5,990	4.6
V	36	33	2,171	2,240	3.1
Total	352	699	25,282	26,333	4.0

Photo by Lucas Byker

Statewide, 23% (n = 155) of respondents who did not trap in 2016 indicated they last trapped within the last 2 years, 36% (n = 236) indicated they last trapped more than 2 years ago, and the remaining respondents were not trappers (n = 272).

Trapping Experience

During the 2016–2017 season, trappers statewide averaged 17 years of experience trapping and 12 years of experience trapping in Alaska. This is down from the averages over the last 15 years, indicating there is a younger group of trappers in the field. However, this is up slightly from 2015, indicating Alaska is retaining its trappers. No data were collected in 2009 or 2014. Trappers in Region I averaged the highest trapping experience overall (20 years trapping), and trappers in Regions I and III averaged the most experience in Alaska (14 years trapping).

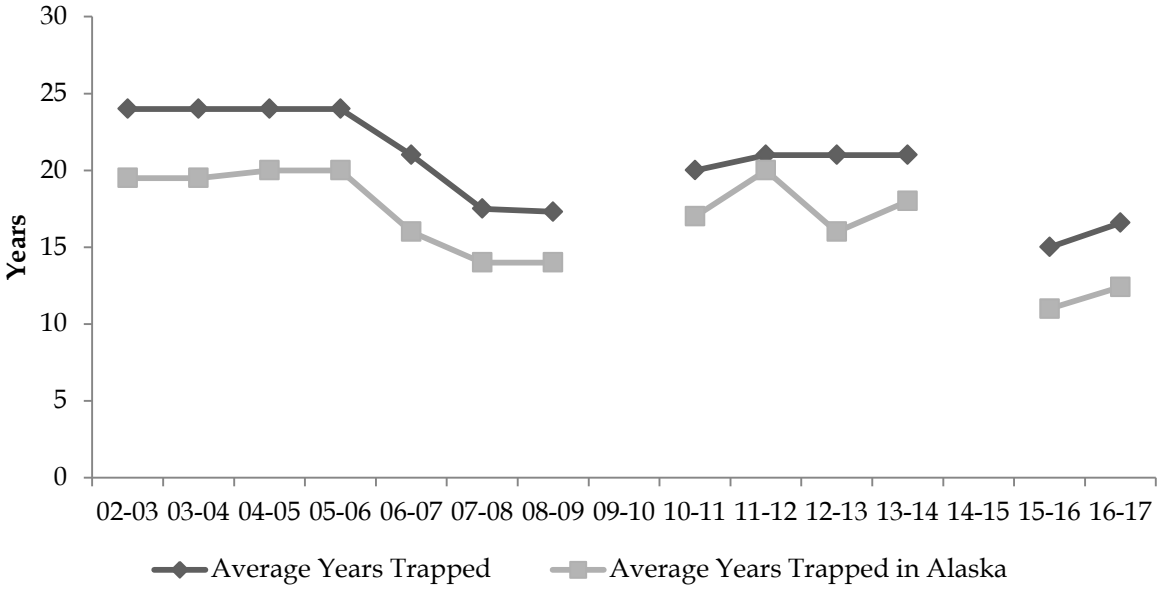


Figure 2. A statewide 15-year trend of trapper age and experience, Alaska, 1 July 2002–30 June 2017.

TRAPLINE INFORMATION

Trapping Area

Statewide, trappers have trapped in the same area for an average of 7 years. Trappers in Region I have spent the longest time trapping in the same area (9 years), while Region V trappers have spent the least amount of time in the same area (5 years). The longest time spent trapping in a single area was 45 years, reported out of Region IV.

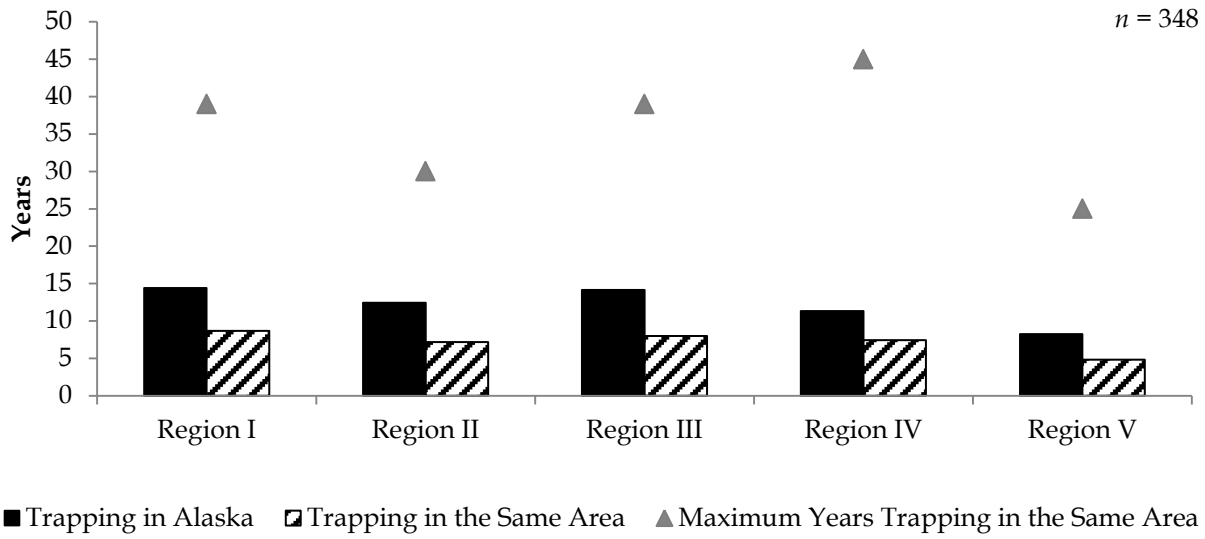


Figure 3. Length of time spent trapping by region, Alaska.

Trapping Frequency

During the 2016–2017 season, trappers averaged 7.7 weeks of trapping. Region III spent the longest time trapping (average of 9 weeks), while Region I and Region II spent the least amount of time trapping (average of 6 weeks). Statewide, 73% of trappers trapped 10 weeks or less.

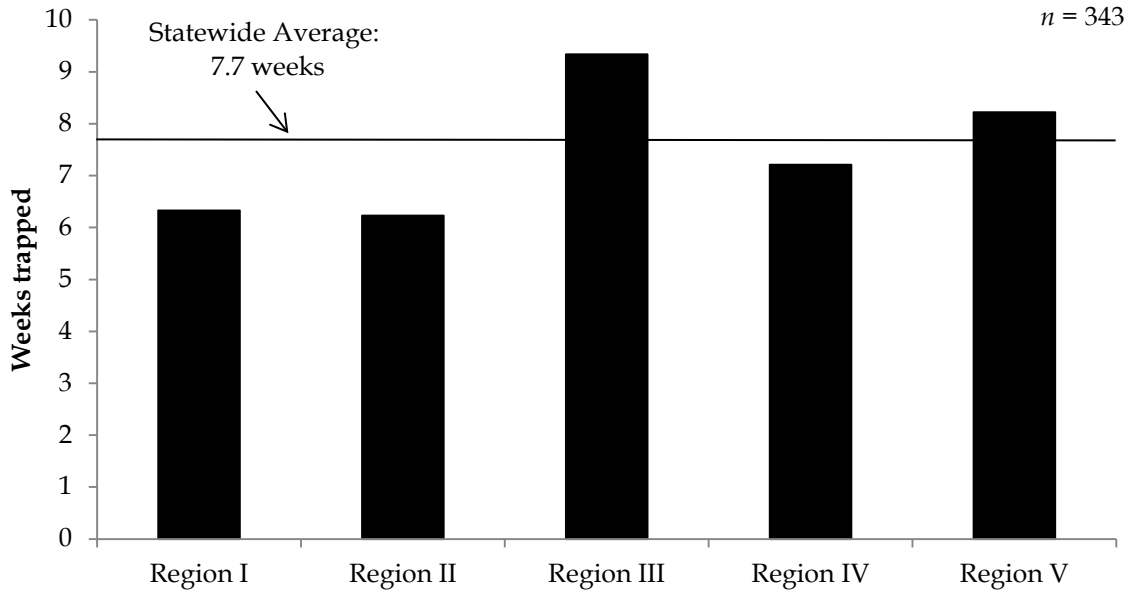


Figure 4. Number of weeks Alaska trappers spent trapping during the 2016–2017 season by region.

Primary Mode of Transportation from Home to the Traplines

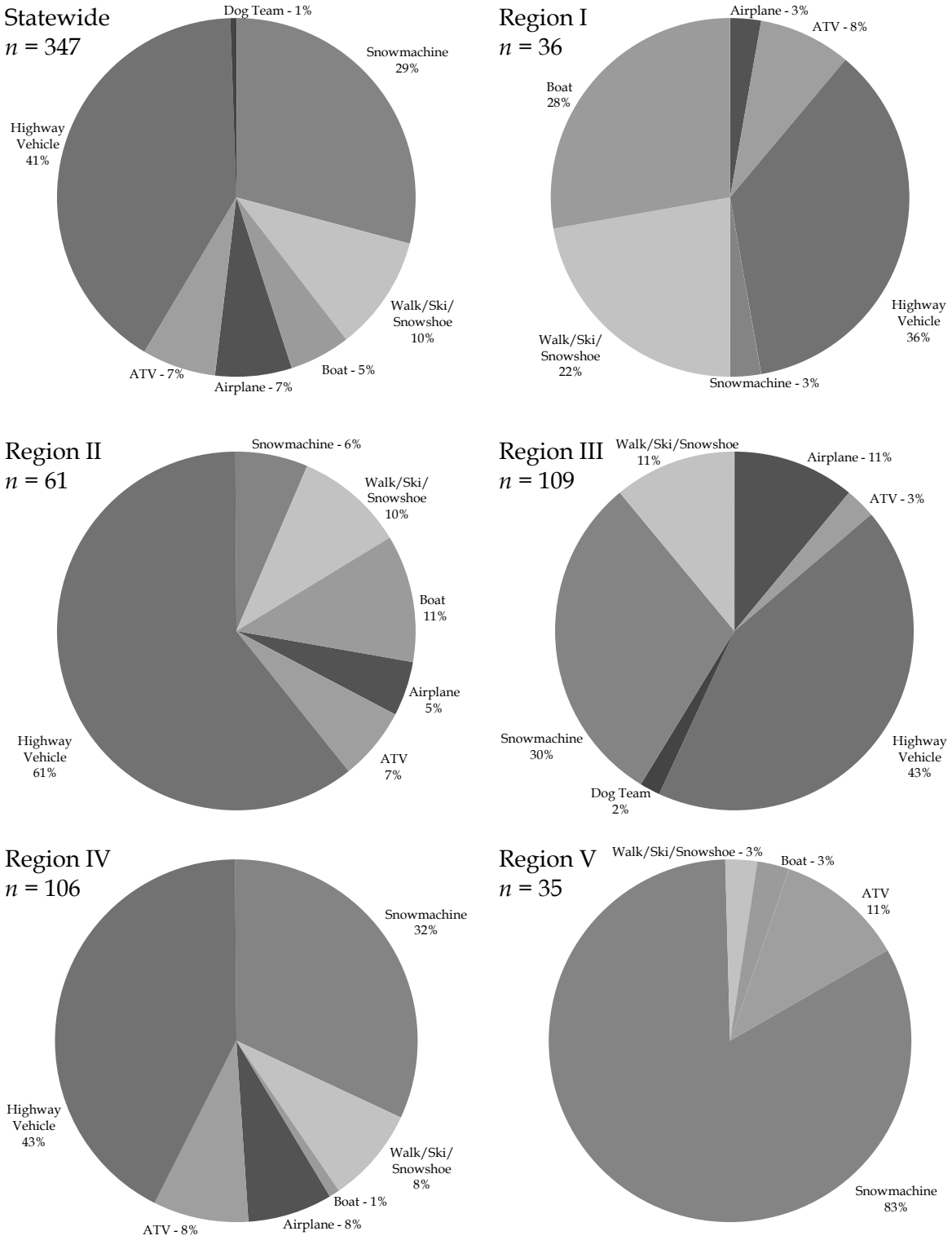


Figure 5. Primary mode of transportation used by Alaska trappers to reach their traplines during the 2016–2017 season.

Primary Mode of Transportation Used to Run the Trapline

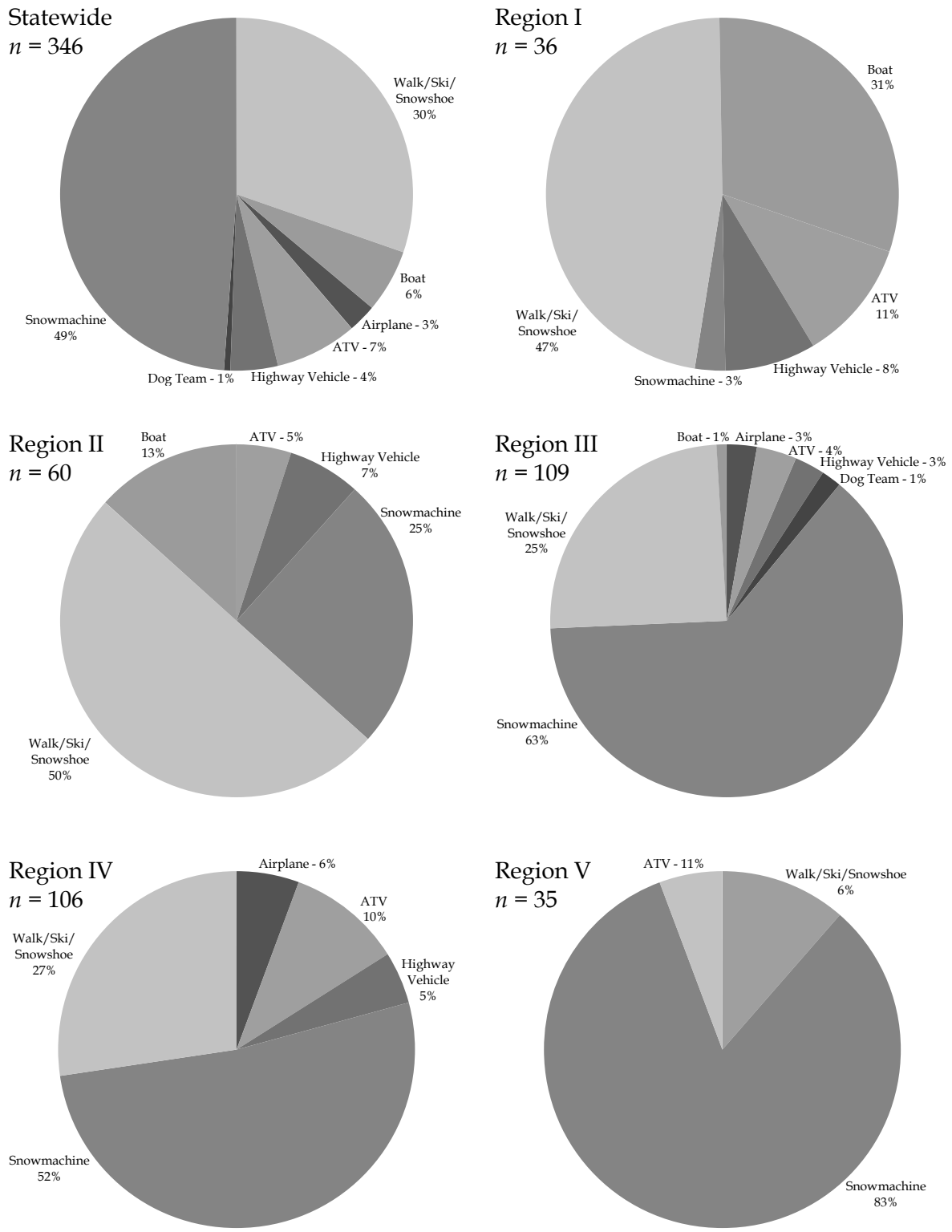


Figure 6. Primary transportation used by Alaska trappers to run their trapline during the 2016–2017 season.

Trapline Composition

Statewide, traplines averaged 16 miles in length with 25 sets. Region V had the longest traplines (27 miles), and Region III had the highest number of sets per trapline (32) on average. Region II had the shortest traplines (10 miles) and the least number of sets (19) per trapline.

Table 2. Average trapline length and number of sets per trapline in Alaska for the 2016–2017 season.

Region	Average trapline length (miles)	Maximum length (miles)	Average number of sets per trapline	Maximum number of sets per trapline
I	11	120	24	200
II	10	100	19	150
III	20	120	32	200
IV	13	115	22	200
V	27	210	25	200
Statewide	16	210	25	200

Photo by Steve Veal

Trapping Efforts

During the 2016–2017 season, 42% (*n* = 145) of Alaska trappers did not change their efforts compared to last season. Of those who did change their efforts (*n* = 199), 44% increased their efforts. As a result of those increased efforts, 76% of trappers (*n* = 67) saw an increase in their overall catch.

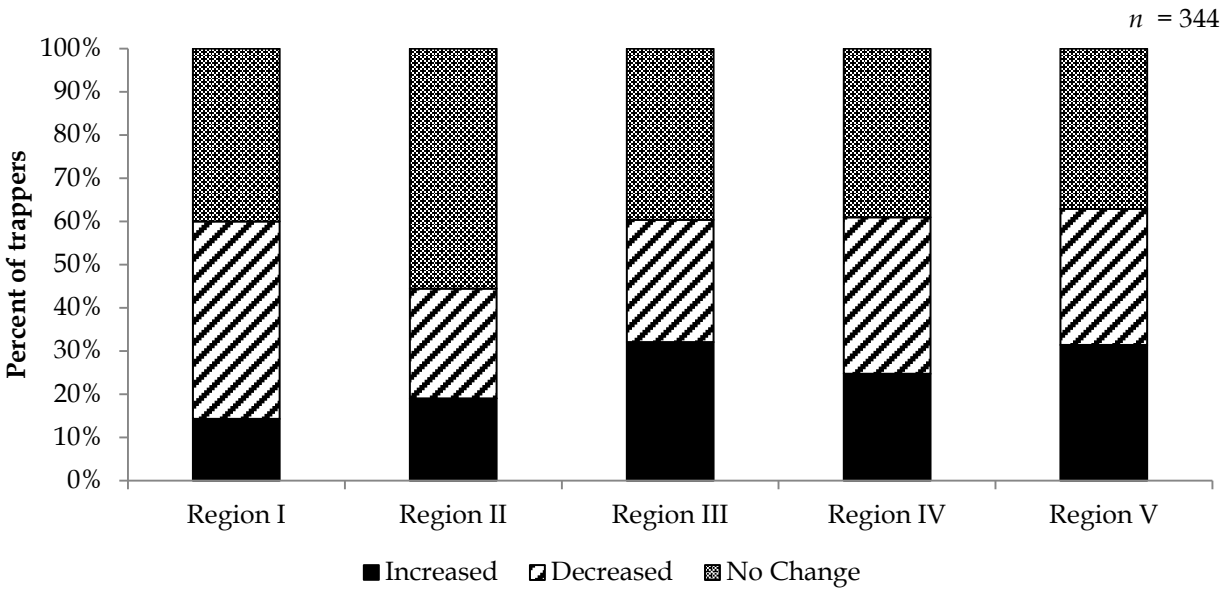


Figure 7. Change in trapping efforts for the 2016–2017 season by region, Alaska.

Photo by Casandra Partin

Trappers could choose multiple responses for how their efforts changed in the 2016–2017 season. The two most common changes in effort across Alaska were seen by decreasing the total number of sets (n = 88) and decreasing the number of weeks trapped (n = 94). In Regions I and II, trappers decreased the number of sets most frequently (n = 14, 14, respectively). Trappers in Region III increased the number of sets (n = 27) most often. Trappers in Regions IV and V changed their efforts most by decreasing the total number of weeks spent trapping (n = 34, 12, respectively).

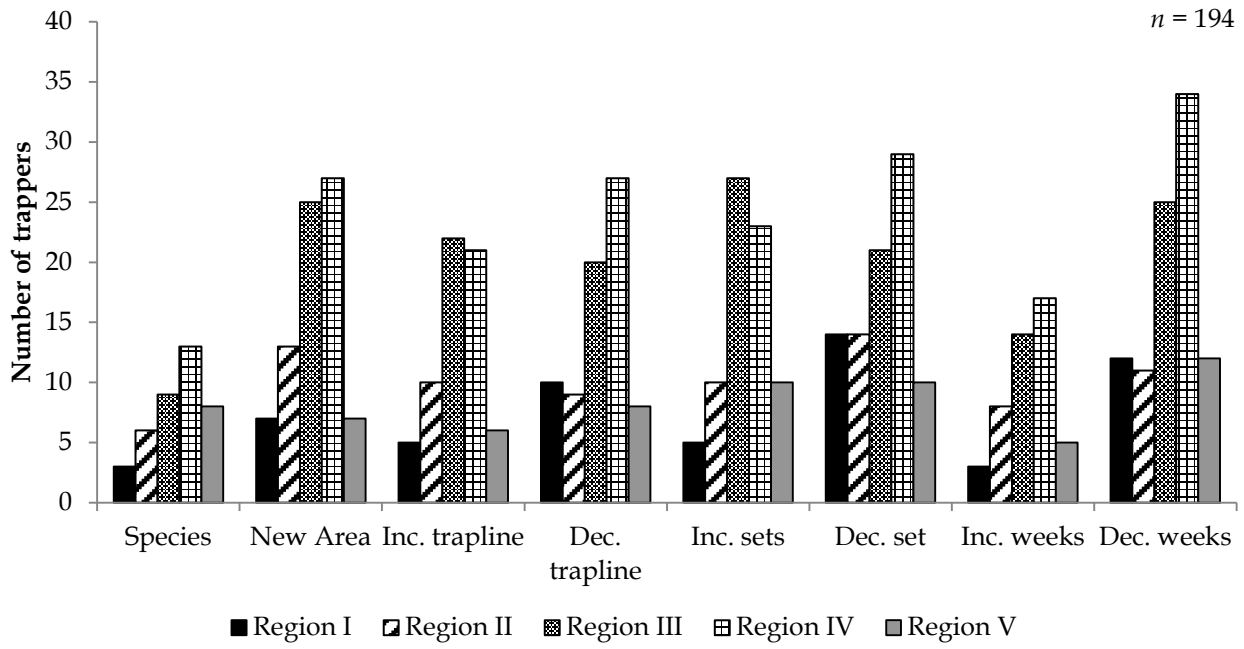


Figure 8. Types of change in trapping effort for the 2016–2017 season, Alaska.

During the 2016–2017 season, trapping conditions (weather, snow depth/cover, ice, etc.) was the leading factor statewide for both increasing (n = 63) and decreasing (n = 91) trapping effort. Other trappers (n = 40) and the previous season's prices (n = 39) were also large factors causing a decrease in trapping effort statewide.

Figure 9. Factors affecting trapping effort by region during the 2016–2017 season, Alaska.

TARGET SPECIES AND FUR DISPOSITION

Target Species

Table 3 below shows how each species ranked in order of importance by region, with 1 being most important and 14 being least important. 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. Repeats of rank indicate that 1 or more species tied for that rank. A double-dash indicates no trappers ranked that species as one of the most important.

Marten was once again the most important species across Alaska. Marten ranked as the most important species in Regions I, II, III, and IV, and fifth most important in Region V. Statewide, red foxes ranked as the second most important species, and wolves came in as the third most important species.

Photo by Austin Adler

Table 3. Species ranked[a,b] by importance at both statewide and regional levels, Alaska, 2016–2017 trapping season.

Species	Statewide	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V
Marten	1	1	1	1	1	5
Red fox	2	--	5	4	2	1
Wolf	3	4	9	2	3	4
Wolverine	4	6	6	5	5	2
Beaver	4	5	2	6	3	6
Lynx	5	--	10	3	4	7
Coyote	6	--	3	6	6	--
River otter	7	3	4	10	8	3
Mink	8	2	7	9	10	8
Muskrat	9	--	8	8	7	9
Ermine	10	4	7	11	9	--
Red squirrel	11	6	10	7	11	--
Arctic fox	12	--	10	10	--	10
Fisher	13	7	10	--	--	--

[a] Rank = 1–14; with 1 being most important and 14 least important.
[b] A double dash (--) indicates no trappers ranked that species as one of the most important.

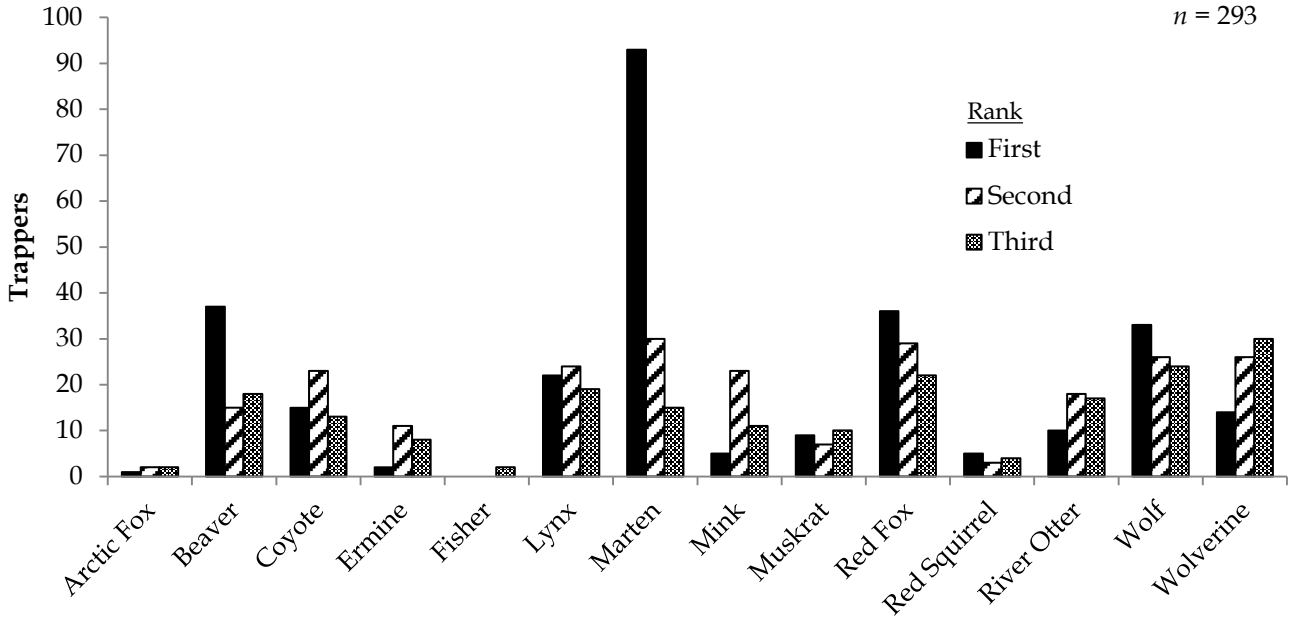


Figure 10. The number of trappers statewide ranking each species as the first, second, or third most important species they targeted during the 2016–2017 season in Alaska.

Presence of Ectoparasites

Trappers responding to the questionnaire overall indicated ectoparasites were scarce or not present across the vast majority of furs harvested. Lice were abundant on red squirrels in Region I. Some "other" ectoparasites noted on furbearers included red bugs on beavers in Regions II and V; mange on coyotes in Region IV, red foxes in Regions IV and V, and wolves in

Region IV; mites on muskrats in Regions III and IV and wolverines in Region IV; and tapeworms in wolves in Region III. 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. We created an arbitrary range of values 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.

Table 4. Presence[a] of ectoparasites found on Alaska furbearers by species and region, 2016–2017 trapping season.

Region	Ectoparasite[b]	Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red Fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
I	F		S		NP			S	S			S	S	S	
	T		NP		NP			S	NP			NP	NP	NP	
n = 9	L		S		NP			NP	NP			A	NP	NP	
	O		NP		NP			S	NP				NP	S	
II	F	S	S	S	S		S	S	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	S	S
	T	S	NP	NP	NP			NP	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	S	NP
n = 9	L	NP	NP	NP	NP			NP	NP	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	NP
	O	NP	S	NP	NP			S	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	NP	NP
III	F	S	NP	S	S		S	S	NP	NP	S	S	NP	NP	S
	T	NP	NP	NP	NP		NP	S	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	S	S
n = 26	L	NP	NP	NP	NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	O		NP	NP			NP	S	NP	S	S	NP	NP	S	S
IV	F	NP	NP	S	S		S	S	NP	NP	S	S	NP	S	S
	T	NP	S	S	NP		NP	S	NP	NP	S	S	NP	S	NP
n = 16	L	NP	NP	NP	NP		NP	S	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	O	NP	NP	S	NP		NP	NP	NP	S	S	NP	NP	S	S
V	F	NP	NP	S	NP		S	NP	NP	NP	S	S	NP	NP	S
	T	NP	S	NP	NP		S	S	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	NP	S
n = 14	L	S	NP	NP	NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	O	S	S	NP	NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	S	NP	S	NP	NP

[a] S = scarce; NP = not present; A = abundant.
[b] F = fleas; T = ticks; L = lice; O = other.

Harvest Methods

USE OF PREDATOR CALLS

Statewide, only 43 trappers used any type of predator call: 37% used only electronic predator calls, 35% of trappers used only manual (mouth) predator calls, and 28% of trappers used both electronic and manual predator calls.

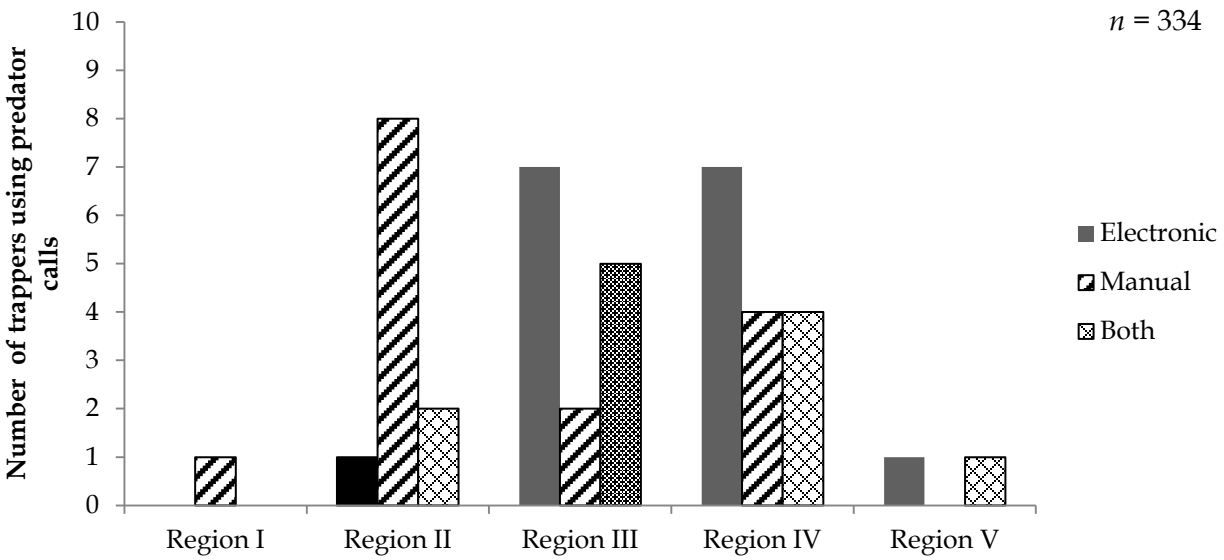


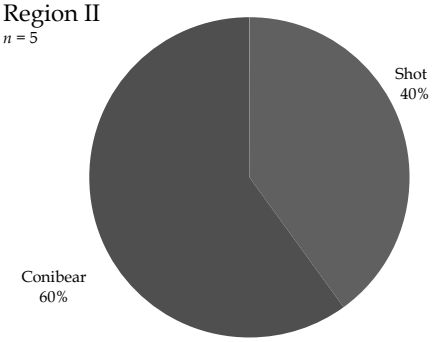
Figure 11. Use of predator calls by region during the 2016–2017 season, Alaska.

Photo by Travis Smith and Alexis Cronk

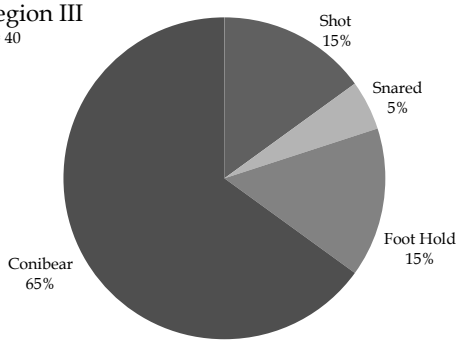
ARCTIC FOX

Region I
No harvest reported

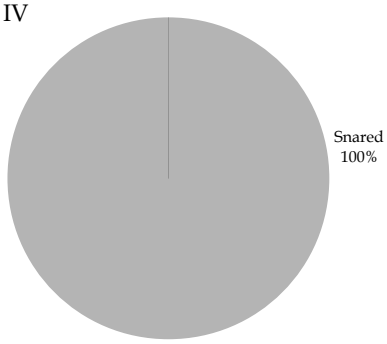
Region II
n = 5



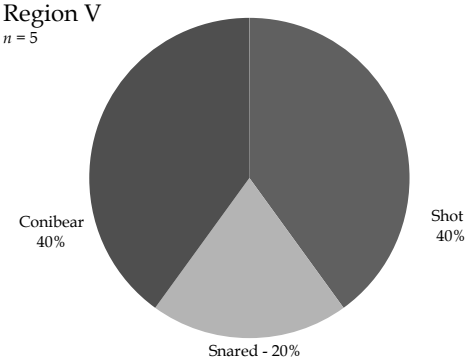
Region III
n = 40

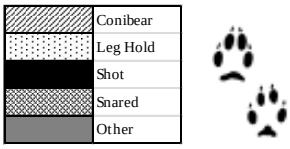


Region IV
n = 2

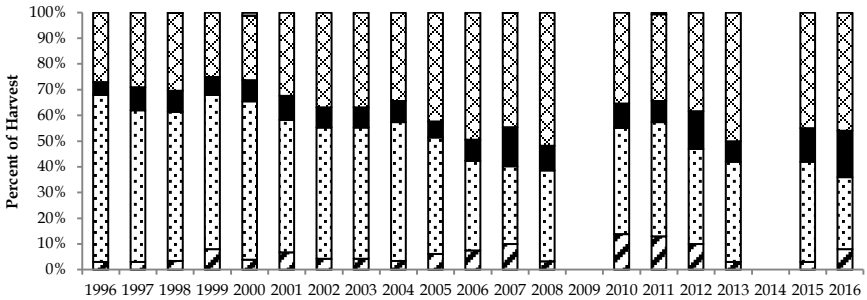


Region V
n = 5

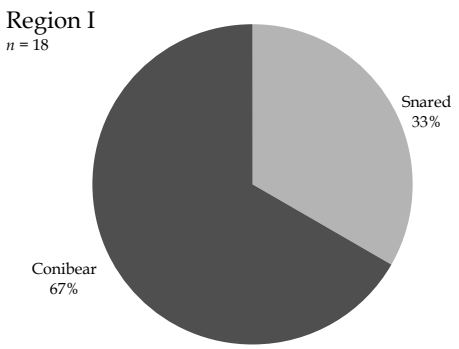


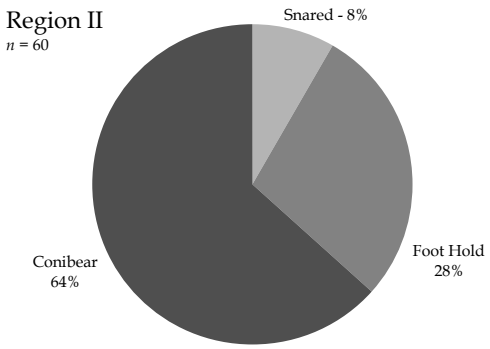


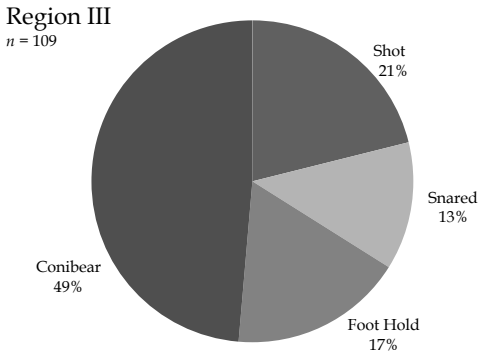
Statewide Trends in All Fox Harvest Methods

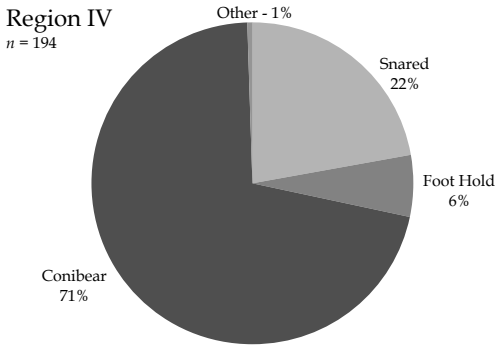


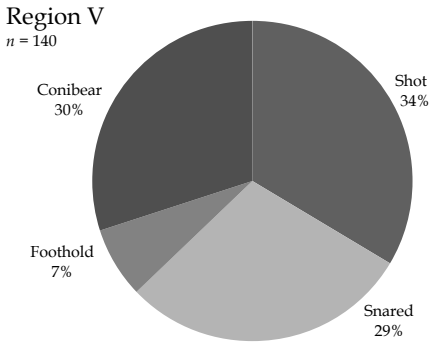
BEAVER



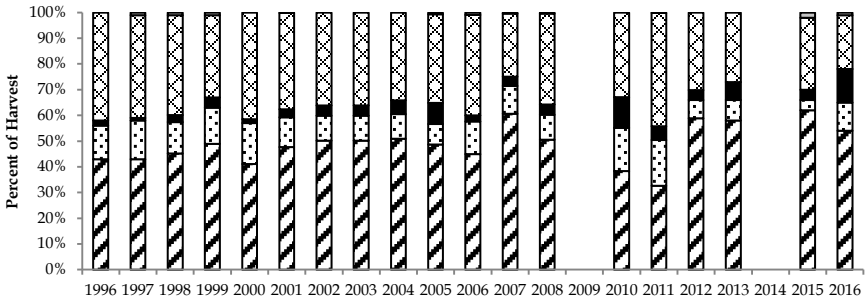








Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods



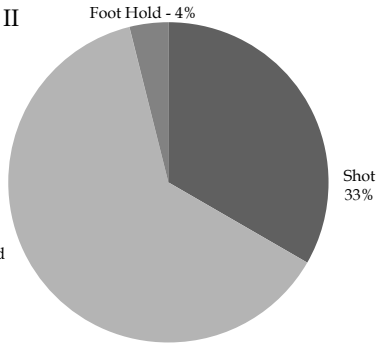
COYOTE

Region I

No harvest reported.

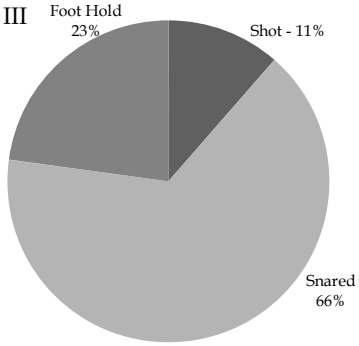
Region II

n = 51



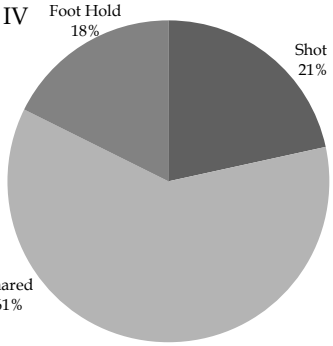
Region III

n = 35



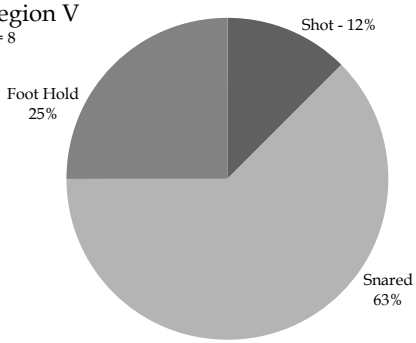
Region IV

n = 51

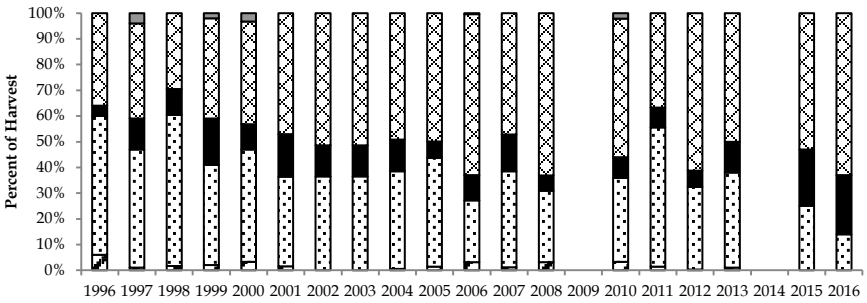


Region V

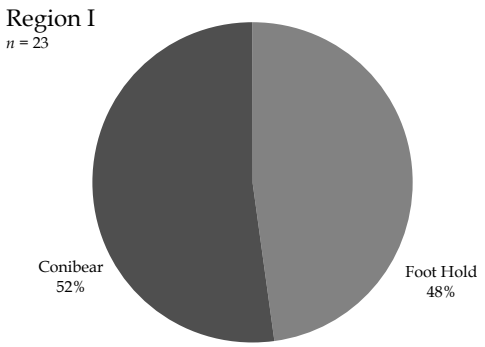
n = 8

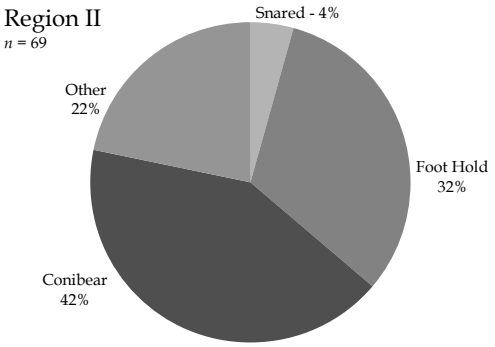


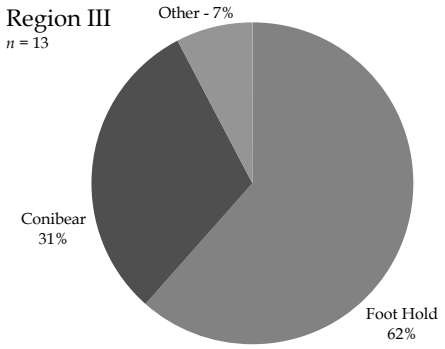
Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

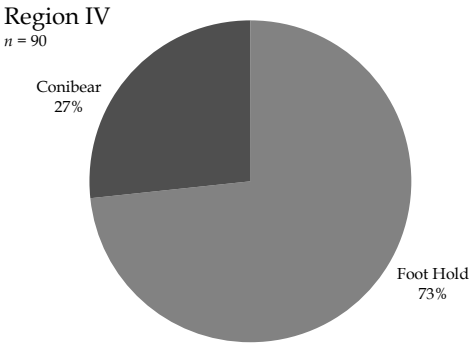


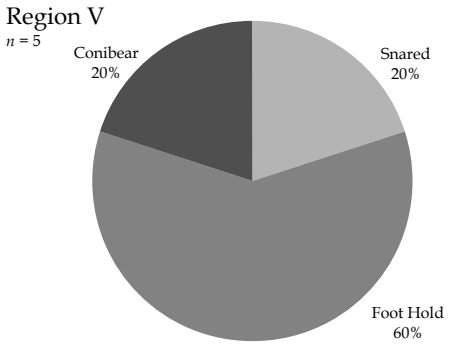
ERMINE

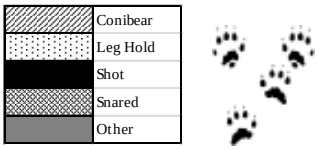




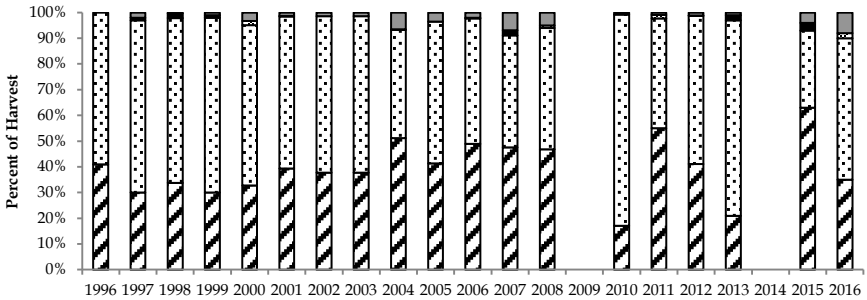








Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods



FISHER

No take reported.

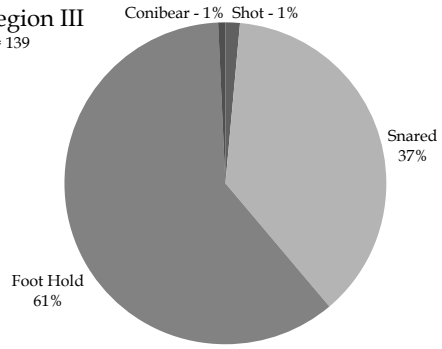
Photo by John Jacobson

LYNX

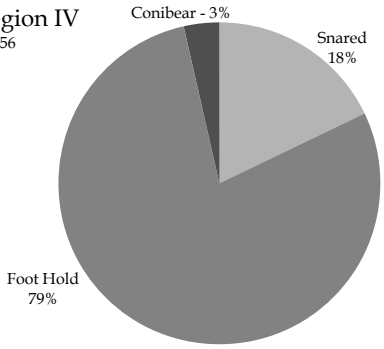
Region I
No harvest reported.

Region II
No harvest reported.

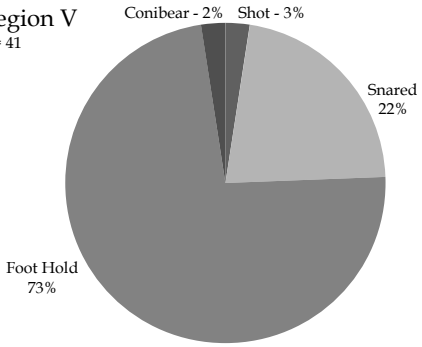
Region III
n = 139

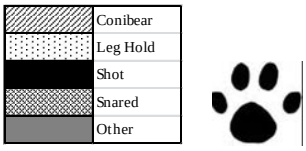


Region IV
n = 56

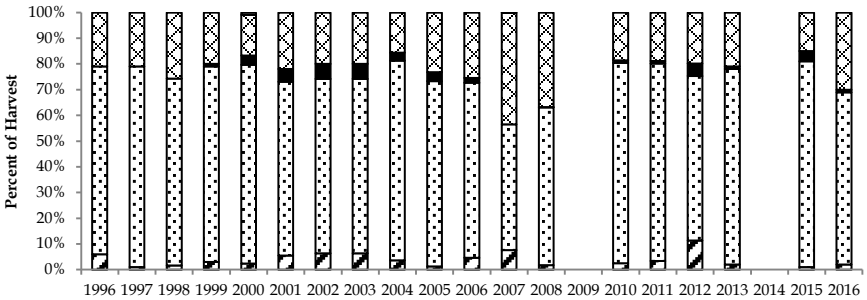


Region V
n = 41

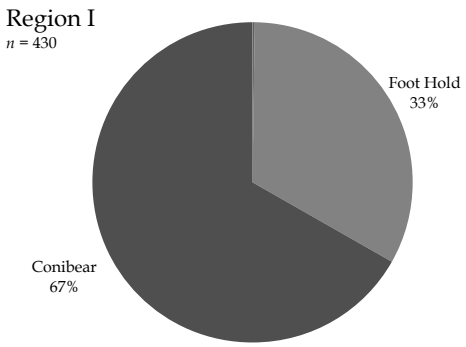


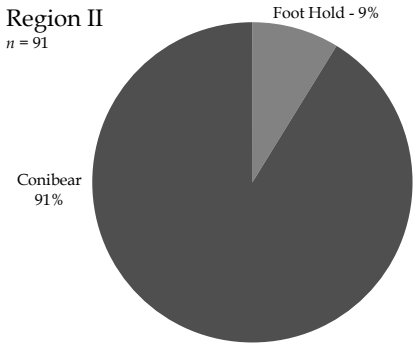


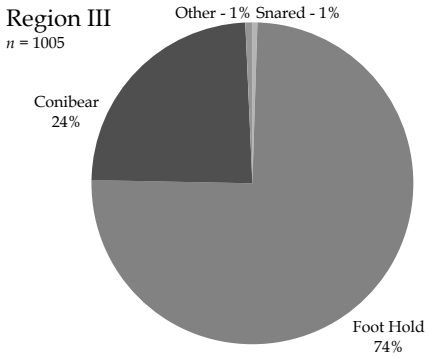
Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

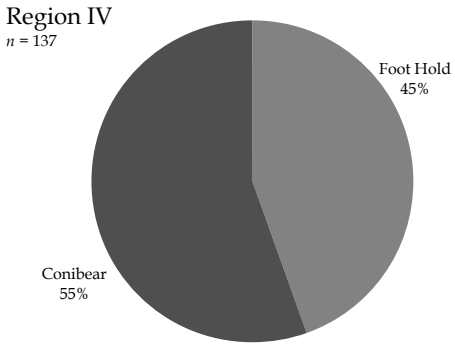


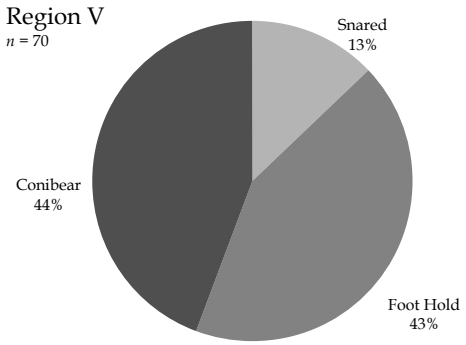
MARTEN

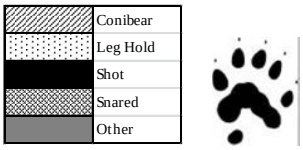




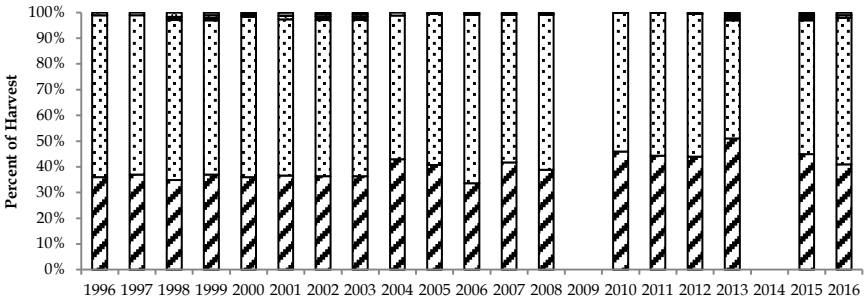




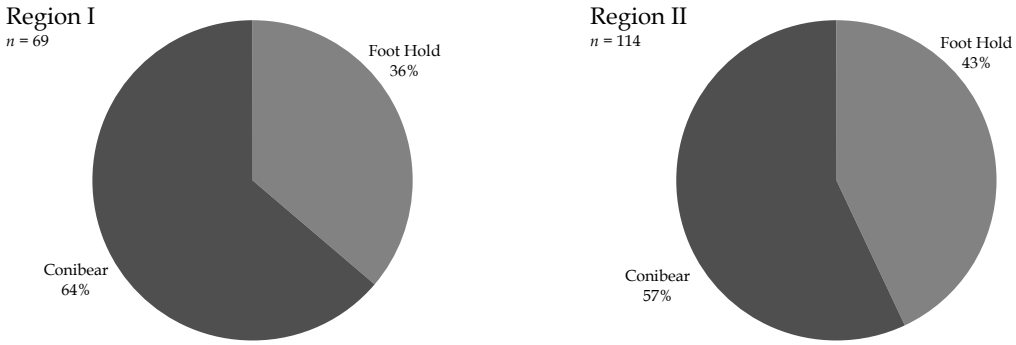


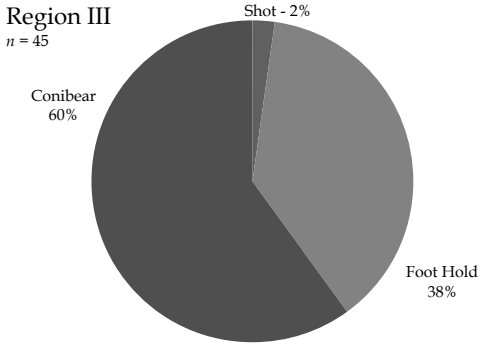


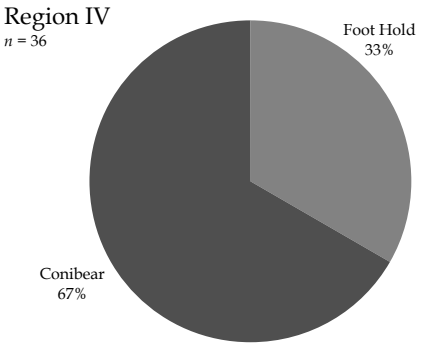
Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

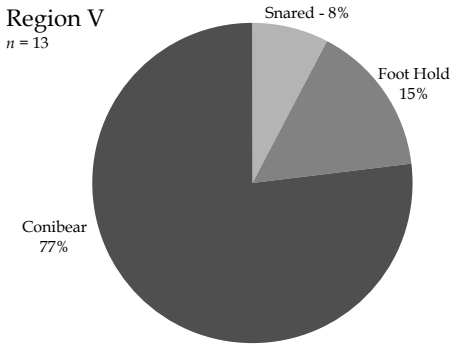


MINK

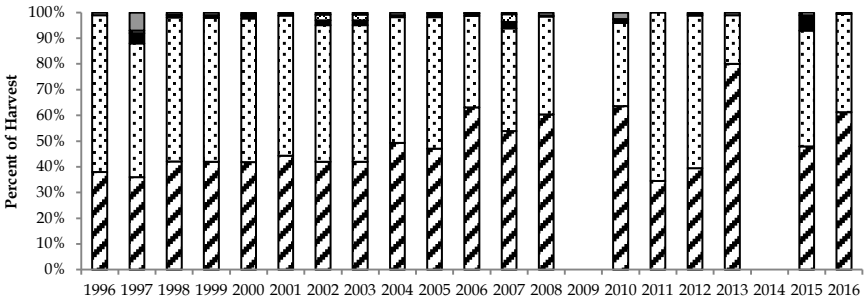








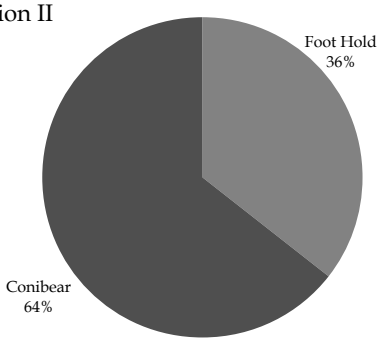
Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods



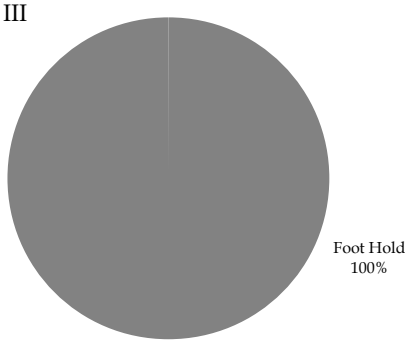
MUSKRAT

Region I
No harvest reported.

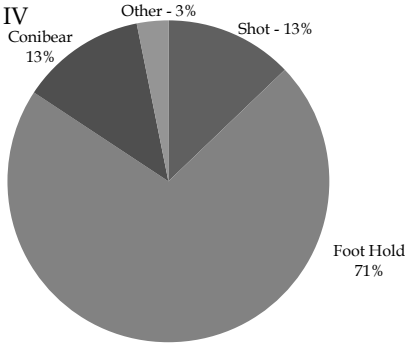
Region II
n = 59



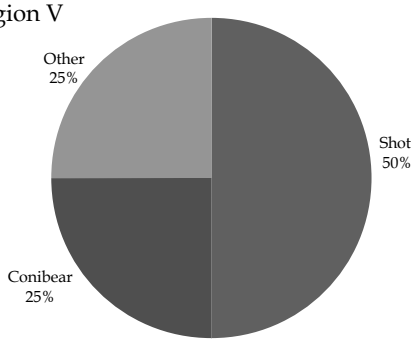
Region III
n = 30

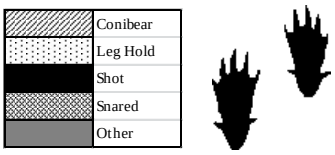


Region IV
n = 949

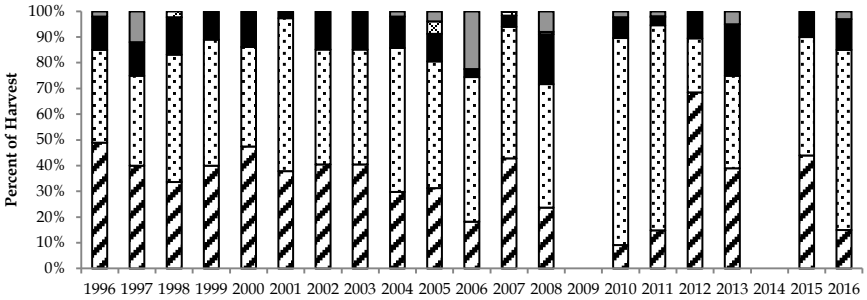


Region V
n = 4





Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods



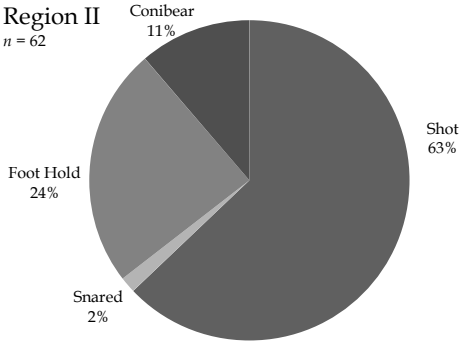
RED FOX

Region I

No harvest reported.

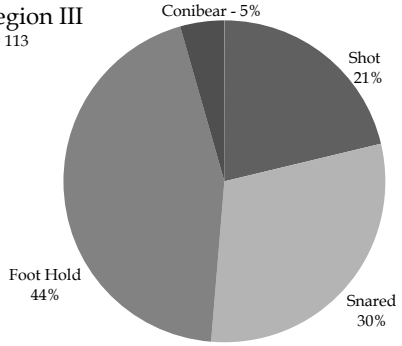
Region II

n = 62



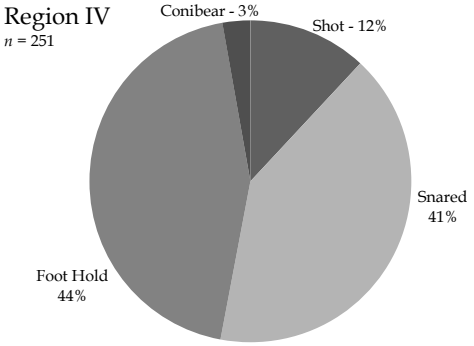
Region III

n = 113



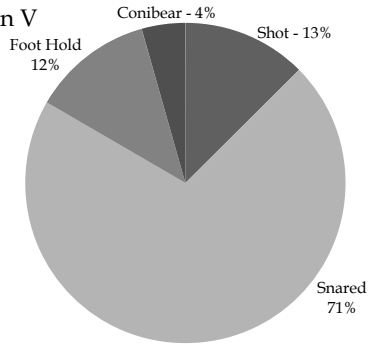
Region IV

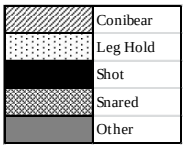
n = 251



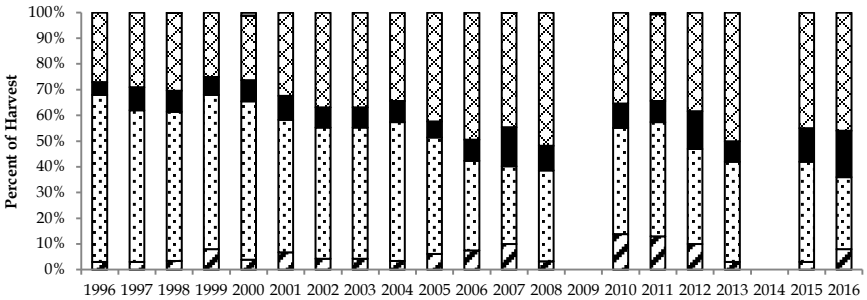
Region V

n = 295

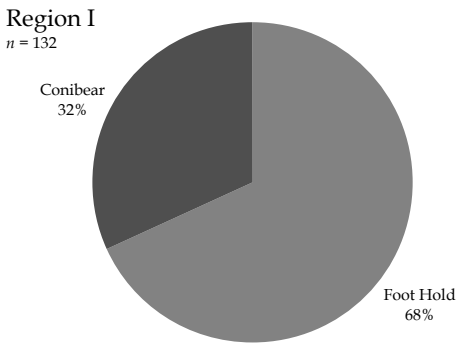


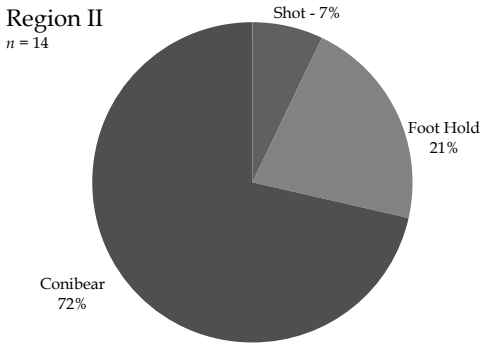


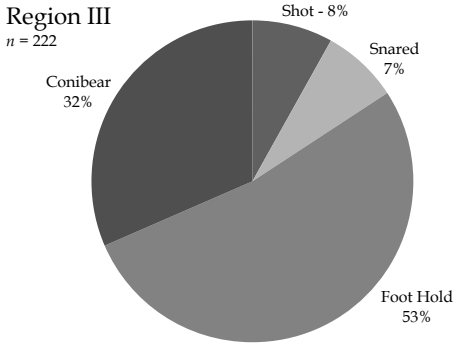
Statewide Trends in All Fox Harvest Methods

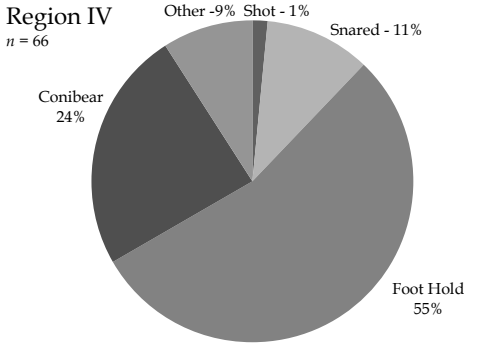


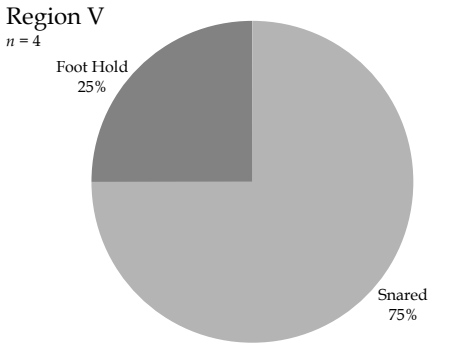
RED SQUIRREL

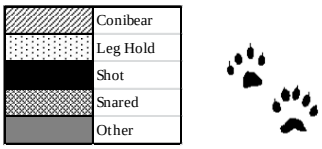




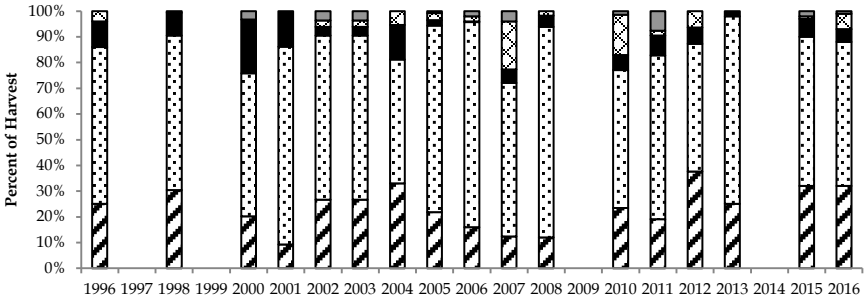




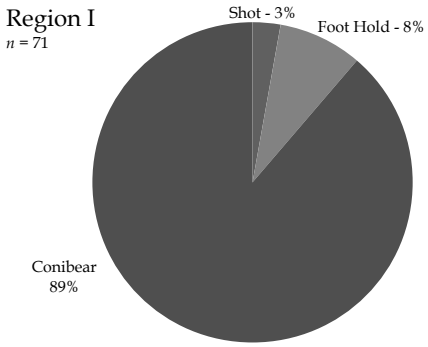


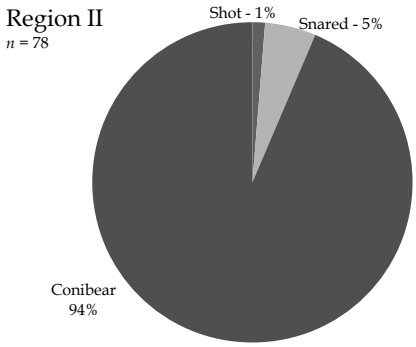


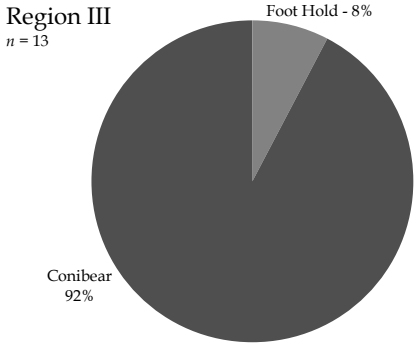
Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

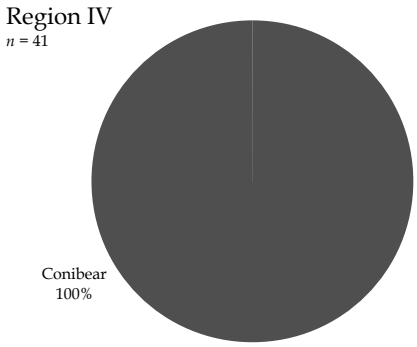


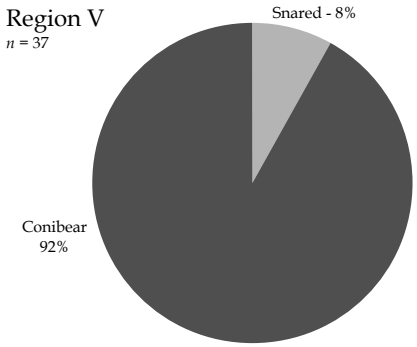
RIVER OTTER

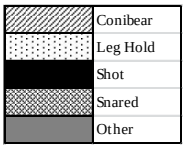




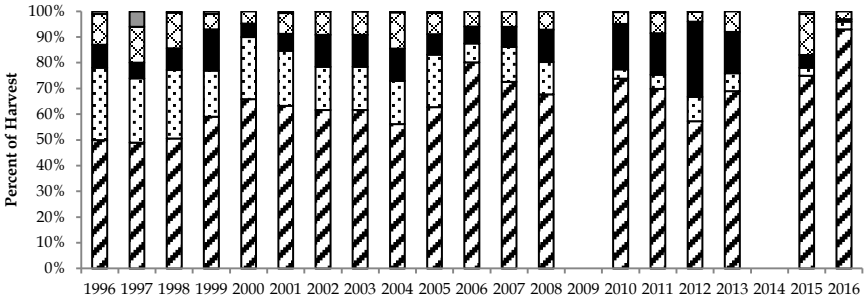




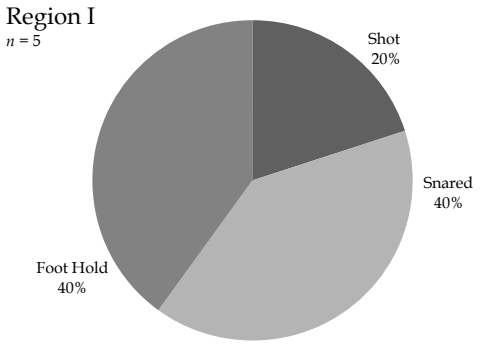


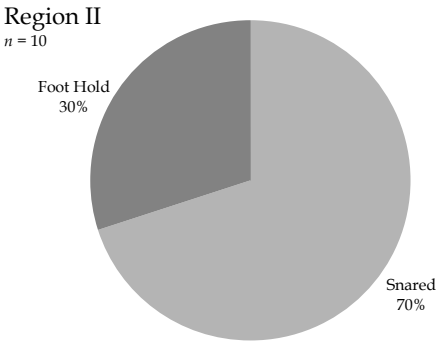


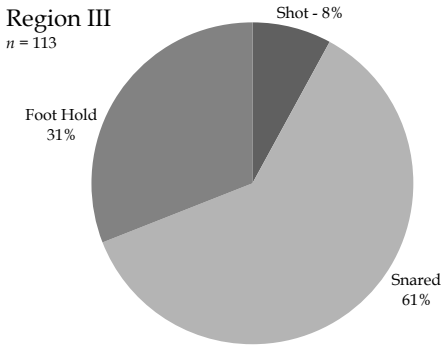
Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

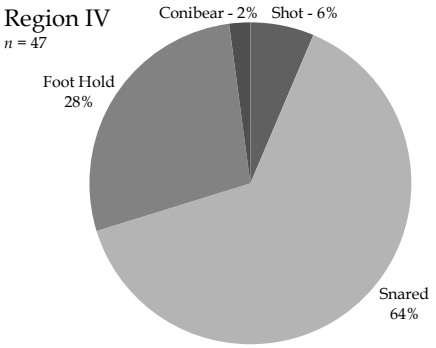


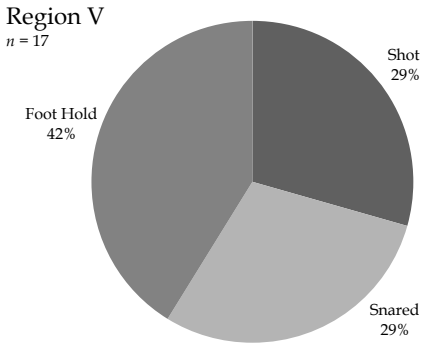
WOLF

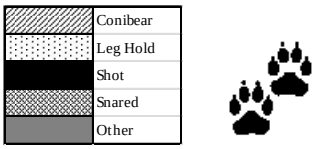




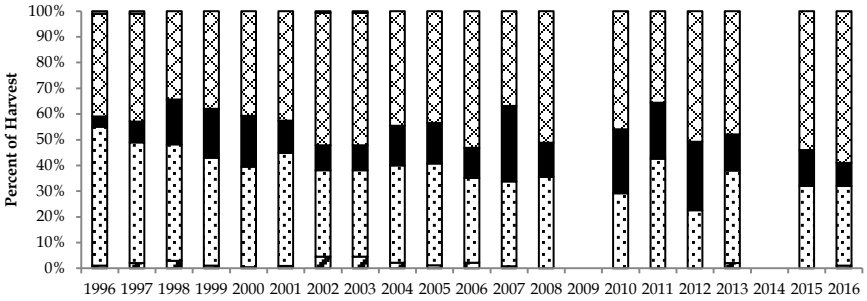




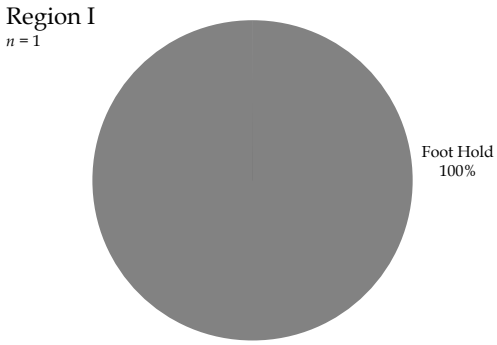


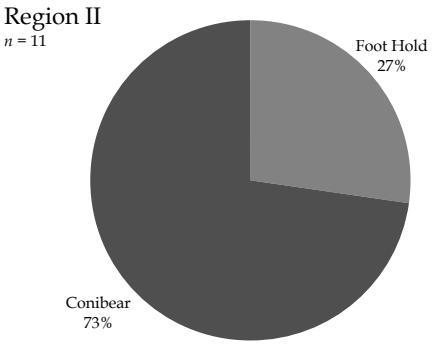


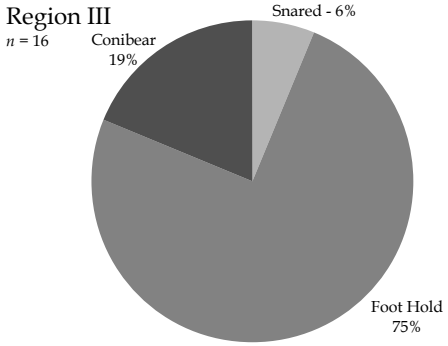
Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

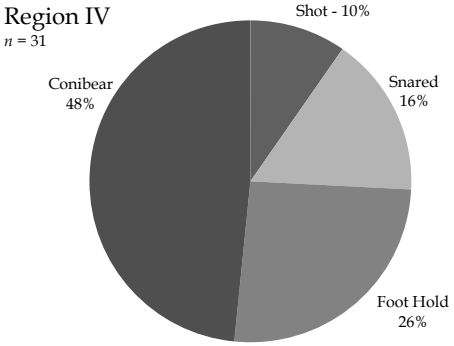


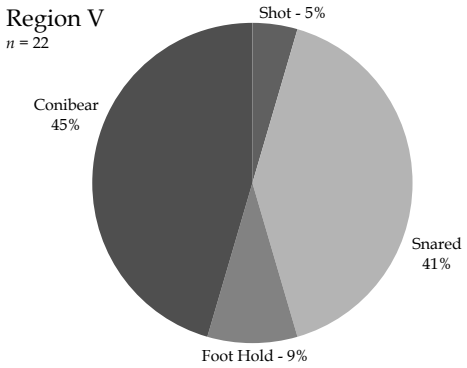
WOLVERINE

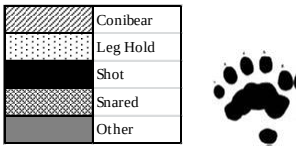




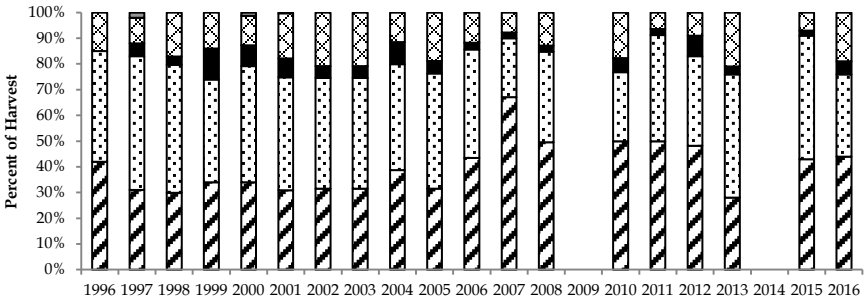








Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods



Species Relative Abundance and Population Trends

The species relative abundance index is based on work done with snowshoe hares in Alberta, Canada by Lloyd Keith and Christopher Brand. They compared the responses to a trapper questionnaire with their estimates of hare densities based on their own fieldwork and found there was a good relationship between these 2 measures. They developed an index for the responses received from trappers on the questionnaire. A numeric value was assigned to each of 3 responses: 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:

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

Where I = abundance index

R = numeric 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, we converted the index values to the appropriate category: scarce, common, or abundant.

We do not know if 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 generally compare trappers' interpretations of species abundance in a given area over time and can be very helpful when used in conjunction with other abundance indicators and sources of information.

The numeric trend index indicates if trappers felt animals were fewer, the same, or more numerous than they were 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.

Due to the relatively small sample size in 2016–2017, we presented species relative abundance and trend at a regionwide level as opposed to the game management unit (GMU) level. Sample sizes were too small to provide useful data at a smaller geographic scale.

Table 5. Regionwide relative abundance[a] and trend[b] of furbearer populations, Alaska, 2016–2017 trapping season.

	Region I		Region II		Region III		Region IV		Region V	
Species	Relative abundance *n* = 29	Trend *n* = 28	Relative abundance *n* = 43	Trend *n* = 39	Relative abundance *n* = 78	Trend *n* = 76	Relative abundance *n* = 74	Trend *n* = 70	Relative abundance *n* = 30	Trend *n* = 30
Furbearers:										
Arctic Fox	not present	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Beaver	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c
Coyote	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	+
Ermine	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c
Fisher	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Lynx	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	+
Marten	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Mink	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c
Muskrat	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Red Fox	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c
Red Squirrel	common	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c	abundant	n/c	scarce	n/c
River Otter	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c
Wolf	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	+
Wolverine	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Prey:										
Grouse	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c
Hare	scarce	n/c	common	+	common	+	common	n/c	common	n/c
Mice/Rodents	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c
Ptarmigan	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	−

[a] *n* is the total number of trappers who provided information on abundance or trend; not all trappers provided information on every species.
[b] n/c = no change; + = increase; − = decrease.

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. Consequently, information on the numbers, distribution, and harvest of many furbearers is limited. Table 6 below shows the number of each species harvested in each subunit as reported in the 2016 trapper questionnaire. Letter Z means there are either no subunits or none was specified.

Table 6. Furbearer harvest as reported on the 2016 trapper questionnaire, Alaska.

Region	Subunit[a]	*n*	Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
I	1A	1	0	0	0	6	0	0	31	6	0	0	90	0	0	0
	1C	4	0	3	0	13	0	0	12	13	0	0	4	2	0	0
	1Z	3	0	1	0	1	2	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
	2Z	3	0	8	0	4	0	0	157	2	0	0	0	50	2	0
	3Z	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	18	4	0	0	0	0	6	0
	4Z	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	214	45	0	0	41	18	1	0
	5A	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
I Totals		25	0	13	0	27	2	0	444	71	0	0	135	70	11	1
II	6B	1	0	0	5	5	0	0	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	5
	6C	3	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	5	0	0
	6Z	1	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
	7Z	10	2	25	9	32	0	0	16	3	1	0	10	1	1	1
	8Z	9	0	10	1	2	0	0	46	0	0	56	0	68	0	0
	14C	2	1	2	0	1	0	0	6	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
	15A	4	0	4	7	10	0	0	3	2	19	0	3	0	6	1
	15B	2	0	8	7	0	0	0	0	2	6	0	0	1	0	0
	15C	2	0	6	9	15	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	3	4
	15Z	3	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0
II Totals		37	3	64	45	68	0	0	83	14	30	56	20	79	10	11
III	12Z	7	0	0	2	1	0	35	44	0	0	6	21	0	30	4
	19A	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	25	0	0	10	0	0	1	0
	19B	1	0	11	0	0	0	2	30	1	0	4	0	0	0	0
	19D	3	0	4	0	3	0	0	111	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	19Z	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
	20A	13	2	3	13	5	0	46	40	8	4	12	15	4	17	2
	20B	21	0	23	8	8	0	16	150	4	12	13	61	0	5	1
	20C	2	2	5	0	0	0	12	42	0	4	3	0	0	2	1
	20D	5	0	7	9	3	0	3	58	0	7	7	34	0	3	6
	20E	4	0	7	0	0	0	1	175	0	0	1	0	0	11	4
	20F	3	7	21	0	0	0	0	174	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
	20Z	6	0	1	2	1	0	1	37	5	3	7	44	3	9	0
	21D	2	0	40	0	3	0	1	5	17	13	4	0	0	0	0
	21E	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	6	0	18	11	6	0	1

Region	Subunit[a]	*n*	Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
	24A	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	24D	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	5	7	0	0	0
	24Z	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	25B	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	1	0	0	10	0	1	0
	25C	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	53	3	0	2	22	0	6	0
	25D	2	0	1	0	0	0	10	20	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
	25Z	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	20	0	0	0	0	0	10	2
	26B	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0
III Totals		83	12	125	34	27	0	141	1,061	47	43	111	226	13	95	22
	9C	3	0	14	0	0	0	4	0	14	0	18	0	4	0	2
	9E	2	0	6	0	0	0	5	0	2	0	42	0	1	12	2
	9Z	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
	11Z	3	0	0	2	29	0	19	18	3	0	0	22	3	8	4
	13A	6	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	0	5	13	0	0	8	4
	13B	6	0	3	5	3	0	3	12	0	0	2	10	0	2	0
	13C	3	0	6	4	1	0	0	6	0	0	2	0	5	19	0
	13D	5	0	0	4	20	0	16	21	0	0	3	9	0	5	3
IV	13E	2	2	4	2	0	0	0	10	0	0	2	0	0	1	0
	13Z	10	0	27	6	17	0	2	13	0	57	9	4	4	0	2
	14A	10	0	10	15	4	0	0	2	3	242	5	17	1	0	0
	14B	8	0	52	1	2	0	0	4	5	27	21	0	1	0	0
	16A	5	0	35	10	10	0	0	2	4	15	4	2	5	1	0
	16B	3	0	5	0	0	0	0	9	0	36	0	0	1	0	2
	17A	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	62	0	0	0	0
	17B	2	0	20	0	0	0	2	30	0	0	52	0	7	9	4
	17C	4	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	8	0	0
	17Z	2	0	3	0	0	0	2	9	1	0	7	0	0	3	1
IV Totals		76	4	189	49	89	0	57	141	36	382	246	64	40	68	24
	18Z	18	3	124	12	3	0	167	63	14	3	340	1	39	17	10
	22A	4	2	4	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	27	0	0	2	8
V	22C	2	0	32	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	5	0	1	0	3
	23Z	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	37	0	0	1	1
	26A	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
V Totals		28	5	160	13	6	0	167	68	16	3	409	1	40	20	22
Unknown		5	0	2	0	1	0	1	128	100	30	4	7	1	2	0
Statewide		254	24	553	141	218	2	366	1,925	284	488	826	453	243	206	80

[a] Z = Indicates no subunit(s) or none was specified.

It would be helpful to know what proportion of the total harvest the questionnaire numbers represent. For species that require sealing, the number sealed represents our best information about the statewide harvest. Table 7 gives the harvest totals reported on the questionnaire as a percentage of the total number sealed. Assuming the proportions for species that are not required to be sealed fall within the ranges observed below, the statewide average of species reported on the questionnaire is 24% of the actual harvest. (See sealing records in Table 8 below).

Table 7. Trapper questionnaire totals as a percent of total number sealed, as reported on the 2016 questionnaire and in the regulatory year[a] 2016 sealing records, Alaska.

	Species (%)							
Region	Beaver	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine	Average
I	6	100	0	20	24	7	6	18
II	43		0	54	36	22	31	40
III			10		21	18	13	13
IV	41		30	72	24	29	16	37
V			100		28	12	17	45
Statewide			22		28	18	16	24

[a] Regulatory year begins 1 July and ends 30 June, e.g., regulatory year 2016 = 1 July 2016–30 June 2017.

Photo by Casandra Partin

Furbearer Sealing Records Summary

Sealing refers to the placement of an official marker or locking tag (seal) by an authorized department 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. Marten, beaver, and fisher are required to be sealed only in certain GMUs. The harvest totals reported in Table 8 are based on fur sealing records. Numbers reported here may differ from those in previous reports because additional sealing forms have been turned in.

Photo by Keith Kaganak

Table 8. Reported harvest from sealing records, Alaska, regulatory years[a] 2012–2016.

Species	Region	Regulatory year 2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Beaver[b]	I	378	372	398	322	223
	II	220	280	307	279	149
	III	121	30	49	22	3
	IV	684	634	579	446	464
	V	46	10	2	4	2
	Total:	1,449	1,326	1,335	1,073	841
Fisher[c]	I	0	2	6	2	0
	II	0	0	0	0	0
	III	0	0	0	0	0
	IV	0	0	0	0	0
	V	0	0	0	0	0
	Total:	0	2	6	2	0
Lynx	I	1	0	1	0	3
	II	425	173	9	10	9
	III	1,302	1,113	980	1,045	1,382
	IV	631	192	128	116	188
	V	797	356	239	326	116
	Total:	3,156	1,834	1,357	1,497	1,698
Marten[d]	I	4,466	3,030	1,679	2,272	2,266
	II	232	206	106	195	153
	III	6	3	0	57	38
	IV	704	556	310	671	195
	V	0	0	0	2	0
	Total:	5,408	3,795	2,095	3,197	2,652
River otter	I	887	820	388	447	294
	II	472	625	389	324	222
	III	82	88	71	123	61
	IV	253	208	220	204	164
	V	329	398	330	397	141
	Total:	2,023	2,139	1,398	1,495	882
Wolf	I	191	211	163	148	167
	II	63	27	51	46	46
	III	644	526	563	494	538
	IV	157	205	112	159	231
	V	209	147	130	198	163
	Total:	1,264	1,116	1,019	1,045	1,145
Wolverine	I	25	31	14	17	17
	II	50	31	16	41	36
	III	261	358	270	256	175
	IV	170	158	100	159	148
	V	135	133	115	136	129
	Total:	641	711	515	609	505

[a] Regulatory year begins 1 July and ends 30 June, e.g., regulatory year 2012 = 1 July 2012–30 June 2013.
[b] Beaver are required to be sealed in Game Management Units (GMU) 1–11, 13–15, and 17.
[c] Fisher are required to be sealed in GMUs 1–5.
[d] Marten are required to be sealed in GMUs 1–7 and 14–16.

Commercial Transactions Involving Furs

AVERAGE PRICES PAID FOR RAW FURS

Prices published by 2 major fur auction houses (North American Fur Auction and Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc.) during January–July in each of the previous 5 years were averaged to produce the prices in this table. Top prices were also from fur auctions. Prices for the 2016 regulatory year in Alaska were obtained from the 2017 January–July auction house prices.

Table 9. Average fur prices (U.S.) published by the North American Fur Auction and Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc., regulatory years[a] 2012–2016.

	Regulatory year					Top price
Species	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016 (U.S.)
Arctic fox	59.97[b]	40.87	43.29	39.91	36.39	500.00
Beaver	32.56	18.71	13.30	10.04	10.71	62.00
Coyote	76.27	56.49	51.75	39.87	47.67	180.00
Ermine	3.43	3.80	4.74	1.84	2.72	12.00
Fisher		83.14	63.33	35.62	49.61	102.00
Lynx	205.11	144.49	87.37	61.88	69.46	270.00
Marten	143.81	76.94	54.12	46.51	83.32	300.00
Mink (wild)	27.90	17.51	9.83	9.10	10.44	22.00
Muskrat	12.53	10.36	3.94	2.87	3.89	12.00
Red fox	59.97[b]	40.18	23.84	16.53	17.85	110.00
Squirrel	0.74	0.94		0.38	0.70	1.25
River otter	100.75	53.95	38.65	20.00	28.79	70.00
Wolf	215.84	170.17	127.75	157.88	176.36	1,450.00
Wolverine	271.35	224.90	217.41	208.90	242.19	600.00

[a] Regulatory year begins 1 July and ends 30 June, e.g., regulatory year 2012 = 1 July 2012–30 June 2013.
[b] All foxes were combined in 2012.

Photo by Tia Shoemaker

MINIMUM ESTIMATED FUR VALUE

Table 10 below summarizes the minimum total estimated value of furs trapped during the 2016–2017 season. 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 only includes animals harvested from the areas in the state where sealing is required. For the unsealed species, we used the number of furs reported by trappers on the questionnaire.

Table 10. Fur value in Alaska, 2016–2017 trapping season.

Species	Total number sealed or reported	Average price (U.S.)	Minimum value (U.S.)
Arctic fox	24	36.39	873.36
Beaver	841	10.71	9,007.11
Coyote	141	47.67	6,721.47
Ermine	218	2.72	592.96
Fisher	2	49.61	99.22
Lynx	1,698	69.46	117,973.08
Marten	2,652	83.32	220,964.64
Mink	284	10.44	2,964.96
Muskrat	488	3.89	1,898.32
Red fox	826	17.85	14,744.10
Red squirrel	453	0.70	317.10
River otter	882	28.79	25,392.78
Wolf	1,145	176.36	201,932.20
Wolverine	505	242.19	122,305.95
Total			725,787.25

Photo by Keith Kaganak

Fur Sealing Requirements

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 must be sealed by an authorized department representative. If you ship furs of these animals to a buyer or auction house out of state, they must be sealed before you ship them.

If there is no authorized sealer near you, contact the nearest office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. A list of area biologists is provided below. We can help you make arrangements to seal your furs. If you or someone you know wants to become a fur sealer, contact one of the Regional Fur Sealing Officers listed below.

- 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 to another country such as Canada. If you intend to ship a 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 CITES permit), a federal import-export license, and arrange for inspection of all furs by a federal agent.

Photo by Travis Smith

Regional ADF&G Fur Sealing Officers

Region I (GMUs 1–5)	Paul Converse Alaska Department of Fish and Game PO Box 110024 Juneau, AK 99811-0024 (907) 465-4265
Region II (GMUs 6, 7, 8, 14 and 15)	Erik Bollerud Alaska Department of Fish and Game 333 Raspberry Road Anchorage, AK 99518-1599 (907) 267-2344
Region III (GMUs 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, and 26B,C)	Laurie Boeck Alaska Department of Fish and Game 1300 College Road Fairbanks, AK 99701-1551 (907) 459-7205
Region IV (GMUs 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, and 7)	Joel Holyoak Alaska Department of Fish and Game 1800 Glenn Hwy #4 Palmer, AK 99645-6736 (907) 746-6398
Region V (GMUs 18, 22, 23, and 26A)	Carmen Daggett Alaska Department of Fish and Game PO Box 689 Kotzebue, AK 99752-0689 (907) 442-1710

Photo by Nathan Peterson

Area Biologists and Game Management Units

GMUs 1(A) and 2 Boyd Porter (AAB: none) 2030 Sea Level Drive, Suite 205 KETCHIKAN, AK 99901 Phone: (907) 225-2475 Fax: (907) 225-2771	GMUs 1(B) and 3 Rich Lowell (AAB: none) PO Box 667 PETERSBURG, AK 99833-0667 Phone: (907) 772-5235 Fax: (907) 772-9336	GMU 4 Steve Bethune (AAB: none) 304 Lake Street, Room 103 SITKA, AK 99835-7563 Phone: (907) 747-5449 Fax: (907) 747-6239
GMUs 1(C)(D) and 5 Stephanie Sell (AAB: Carl Koch) PO Box 110024 JUNEAU, AK 99811-0024 Phone: (907) 465-4266 Fax: (907) 465-4272	GMU 6 Charlotte Westing (AAB: none) PO Box 669 CORDOVA, AK 99574-0669 Phone: (907) 424-3215 Fax: (907) 424-3235	GMUs 7 and 15 Jeff Selinger (AAB: Larry Lewis and Jason Herreman) 34828 Kalifornsky Beach Rd, Ste B SOLDOTNA, AK 99669-8367 Phone: (907) 260-2905 Fax: (907) 262-4709
GMU 8 Nate Svoboda (AAB: John Crye) 211 Mission Road KODIAK, AK 99615-6399 Phone: (907) 486-1880 Fax: (907) 486-1869	GMUs 9 and 10 Dave Crowley (AAB: Chris Peterson) PO Box 37 KING SALMON, AK 99613-0037 Phone: (907) 246-3340 Fax: (907) 246-3309	GMUs 11 and 13 Frank Robbins (AAB: Heidi Hatcher) PO Box 47 GLENNALLEN, AK 99588-0047 Phone: (907) 822-3461 Fax: (907) 822-3811
GMUs 12 and 20(E) Jeff Gross (AAB: Jeff Wells) PO Box 355 TOK, AK 99780-0355 Phone: (907) 883-2971 Fax: (907) 883-2970	GMUs 14(A)(B) and 16(A)(B) Tim Peltier (AAB: Chris Brockman) 1800 Glenn Hwy, Suite 4 PALMER, AK 99645-6736 Phone: (907) 746-6327 Fax: (907) 746-6305	GMU 14(C) Dave Battle (AAB: Cory Stantorf) 333 Raspberry Road ANCHORAGE, AK 99518-1565 Phone: (907) 267-2185 Fax: (907) 267-2433
GMU 17 Neil Barten (AAB: none) PO Box 1030 DILLINGHAM, AK 99576-1030 Phone: (907) 842-2334 Fax: (907) 842-5514	GMU 18 Patrick Jones (AAB: vacant) PO Box 1467 BETHEL, AK 99559-0090 Phone: (907) 543-2979 Fax: (907) 543-2021	GMUs 19 and 21(A)(E) Josh Peirce (AAB: Jon Barton) PO Box 230 MCGRATH, AK 99627-0230 Phone: (907) 524-3323 Fax: (907) 524-3324
GMUs 20(A)(B)(C)(F) and 25(C) Tony Hollis (AAB: Mark Nelson) 1300 College Road FAIRBANKS, AK 99701-1551 Phone: (907) 459-7256 Fax: (907) 459-7332	GMU 20(D) Bob Schmidt (AAB: Clint Cooper) PO Box 605 DELTA JUNCTION, AK 99737-0605 Phone: (907) 895-4484 Fax: (907) 895-4833	GMUs 21(B)(C)(D) and 24 Glenn Stout (AAB: Sara Longson) 1300 College Road FAIRBANKS, AK 99701-1551 Phone: (907) 459-7218 Fax: (907) 459-7332
GMU 22 Bill Dunker (AAB: Letty Hughes) PO Box 1148 NOME, AK 99762-1148 Phone: (907) 443-2271 Fax: (907) 443-5893	GMU 23 Brandon Saito (AAB: none) PO Box 689 KOTZEBUE, AK 99752-0689 Phone: (907) 442-1712 Fax: (907) 442-2420	GMUs 25(A)(B)(D) and 26(B)(C) Beth Lenart (AAB: Jason Caikoski) 1300 College Road FAIRBANKS, AK 99701-1551 Phone: (907) 459-7242 Fax: (907) 459-7332
GMU 26(A) Vacant (AAB: none) PO Box 1284 BARROW, AK 99723-1284 Phone: (907) 852-3464 Fax: (907) 852-3465	RI Reg Supvr – Ryan Scott (907) 465-4359 RI Mgmt Coord – Tom Schumacher (907) 465-4267	RII Reg Supvr – Howard Golden (907) 267-2177 RII Mgmt Coord – Cyndi Wardlow (907) 267-2529
RIII Reg Supvr – Darren Bruning (907) 459-7222 RIII Mgmt Coord – Doreen Parker McNeill (907) 459-7381	RIV Reg Supvr – Gino Del Frate (907) 861-2123 RIV Mgmt Coord – Todd Rinaldi (907) 861-2105	RV Reg Supvr – Tony Gorn (907) 267-2421 RV Mgmt Coord –Phillip Perry (907) 443-8189

Trapper Comments

We are looking for ways to improve the trapper questionnaire. This year, we asked the following: Do you have any other comments or suggestions for ADF&G or the Board of Game on how trapping can be improved in Alaska?

REGION I

- Allow more wolves to be taken, and no wolverine!
- I am a hunter for deer, not a trapper.
- Conflicts with other trappers might be avoided if a person could register a line. This could resolve overlap, stealing of fur and traps, and trappers would then be responsible to manage the resource better.
- Don't allow our governor to give up access to state lands for trappers (rs2477). And continue to educate dog walkers on trail systems that the land does not exclusively belong to them.
- Don't remember getting a trapping license last year.
- Give trappers equal opportunity to "wildlife viewers." For instance, it still makes no sense to have areas like Skilak loop on the Kenai closed to fur harvest, there is no research-based evidence that any more wildlife is viewed since this area was closed than before, and why should the "viewers" have priority over trappers? (I know of no trapping-only areas where wildlife viewing is forbidden.) Consider the same for Swanson River road wildlife viewing corridor. We all pay the same taxes.
- I believe all traps need to be labeled with a code number that can be checked against each individual trapper.
- I buy the combined license because it is the best deal. I will trap in the future if I have time and the means to do so.
- I don't go trapping, I'm disabled.
- I grew up trapping with my dad in Washington but haven't trapped yet since moving to Alaska.
- I lack the necessary information or experience to consider myself qualified to make judgements or suggestions.
- I may trap in the future, as I have friends that trap. No other comments at this time.

- I noticed on many of my hikes this winter the trails had some marten and weasel sets. They were well marked and off the trail with signs posted. I was very impressed on the way the trapper had their sets and the way they were marked.

- I only had the trapping license as it is a part of the low income license.

- I think the wolf trapping restrictions on POW are too much. I continue to see an increase in wolf sign and a decrease in deer populations.

- I trap otter on the local islands and trap marten on the main land. I alternate years. This year I only trapped marten. While I ran a shorter trap line this year, I only had 2 marten and 1 mink to show for my efforts. It was pretty much a slow year. I saw no one else in my area. The only notable thing I consider different this year than in the past is the abundance of coyote sign. Frequently I saw their tracks, digging, and in one case managed to take bait from a marten set (pole set). I don't recall seeing much coyote sign during my previous marten trapping years.

- Just need more time. Lol.

- Keep up the good work, at this time see no need for changes for Southeast panhandle trapping regulations.

- Low prices on otter, didn't target them and the wolves moved out of area at the beginning of the season.

- Make trapping guidelines better understood off public trails. Encourage body grip traps and ethical trapping practices.

- More negative news regarding trapping this year because of poor choices by some trappers and conflicts with non-trappers who own animals. Whereas much of Alaska is not accessible, an increasing amount is and as populations become more urbanized, this type of conflict has the potential to create substantial problems. Proactive action in setting regulatory areas in which trapping is not conducted makes sense from the political perspective – but, only a fool remains on the train tracks when they hear a locomotive whistle – even if it isn't directly in sight.

- More outreach to prevent unethical trappers from setting near urban areas. Push to re-institute a trap tag regulation.

- Nothing constructive.

- Now living on Chichagof Island in GMU 4. All traps must have trapper's contact information on it. This is a pain. Thanks.

- Pleasant Island used to be a stable easy area to hunt for deer, now with an overabundance of wolf, the deer numbers are almost nonexistent. I personally saw a pack of 14 animals. If the large wolf population is not controlled, we could very easily have wolf swim to Chichagof Island, causing a huge factor in the deer numbers. Deer are the number one subsistence food for many people in Unit 4 and other areas.

- Responsible trappers who put their traps on trees should not be restricted from setting near trails. I understand why this can be a problem with inexperienced/irresponsible trappers, but should not affect those of us that make our marten sets in a responsible manner. Furthermore, dog leash laws should be enforced equal to the trapping laws/regulations that are already being enforced.

- Some conflicts with other trail users may be avoided if more trappers would mark the beginning of their trap line. Not the actual sets, but just the line. Maybe ADF&G could provide trappers a generic, official, politely worded sign warning they are entering a trapline, active between dates…and please be respectful and keep pets leashed. If the public sees an official ADF&G sign, they would likely be more respectful than if they see an unofficial looking sign. Overall, ADF&G is doing a great job managing the furbearer resource in the immediate Juneau area. Thanks!

- Stress ethical and humane trapping to help improve the trapping image as it is a very sustainable, low impact and lucrative resource when properly managed.

- Thank you for allowing shooting of beavers in Units 1–5. It allows for an additional method, especially for occasional and selective harvest.

- Thank you for removing the trap tag requirement in Southeast Alaska. Regulations limiting trappers are currently adequate when considered in a broad sense. Opening a marten season in Southeast on November 15 would allow trappers to better target dispersing young of the year marten based on my observations. Greater education of the non-trapping user groups helps to minimize conflicts.

- Trappers are our own worst enemy. Folks are so territorial and there are stories of trappers pulling firearms on each other because someone was in “their” area. It would be helpful if some sort of system could be put together where specific drainages and traplines are claimed and that way other trappers know to avoid that area. Currently, a trapper just claims a whole inlet or bay that might have 100 miles of coastline. If we want to encourage our youth to trap, then we have to be inviting instead of possessive or exclusive.

- Well, it’s been a while since we have done any trapping. Mostly this was something to do with my 5-year-old son. A reason to walk up the hill ☺ Anyway, things seem to be managed fine. You are all doing a lovely job. Thank you.

- I would like to see the mink and marten season in Unit 1C open November 10.

- I only buy a trapping license because I wish to give your department some revenue, and support your gallant efforts.

REGION II

- Address conflict between user groups… Nowhere available for recreational use with dogs (hikers, bird hunters) without losing the dog in a conibear or snare. Require name/address on traps, promotes more responsible trappers.

- Allow trapping of mink only under bridges after 9 mile with 110 single spring only. This would not kill any dogs and let trappers catch more mink.

- Bring classes/seminars on trapping to Seward and other communities. Kids do not know anything about it unless someone gets them going. Thank you!

- Careful with public perceptions. Buffer zones are simply expansion or overreach. Overall satisfied.

- Change regulation for Units 7 and 15 to allow for the use of foothold traps beginning October 15 for coyote and wolf.

- Clearly define rights of way. Alaska Native Corporations have “land locked” most POV, ORV areas, effectively creating a very difficult means to gain access to state and federal lands which would otherwise be easily accessible by road. Go ahead and pull up a map and see who owns the lands off our major roadways.

- Create buffers between the wildland and urban areas. This will only help if you have adequate definitions of “wildland” and “urban.”

- Didn’t get a chance. Want to go with family if I ever get a chance.

- Didn’t trap this year, only fished.

- Discontinue sealing requirements on marten if data is no longer used or required.

- Do not know how to trap. Thank you.

- Don’t know where you got the information I trapped. I have never trapped and would not in the future.

- Education on how to avoid citizen complaints about trapping practices.

- Fight for the state’s right to manage wildlife, even on federal land.

- I may trap at some point and time in the future. However, I have no idea when.

- I got a trapping license to start trapping, but changed my mind.

- Hi Brynn. Does trapping raptors count?

- I always buy a trapping license so in case I get the chance, I can go for a week or two. But the last several years it just has not happened.

- I am a bird dog owner too. I am ok with some trapping restrictions in areas of high winter recreational use to ensure pets are not snared or trapped. I would also suggest placing signage in appropriate trailheads/spots that indicate possible trapping exists nearby to those recreationers that use said areas warning them of the potential.

- I am an active hunter in the state of Alaska, and trapping has always been of interest to me, although I have yet to attempt it and probably never will. I purchase the full package every year (Sport Fishing/Hunting/Trapping License) for 2 reasons: 1. Help with conservation efforts through license fees; and 2. Bag limit increase/means of take for fur bearing animals. Again, I have never taken a furbearing animal, but like having the option should it occur.

- I am an occasional angler and less frequent hunter, but grew up doing a lot of both. I have never trapped. I purchase the hunt/trap/sport fish license almost every year to support the state's conservation and game management efforts.

- I am not a trapper, but go ahead and get a trapping license each year in case the opportunity arises to go with a friend.

- I applied for a trapping permit to predator call on the refuge.

- I believe a better public information system explaining the benefits of wildlife management may improve the outreach process for opportunities in Alaska. A better PIO may improve community relationships with non-trappers as well. ADN has had several articles prepared on a one-sided view of trapping – mostly involving dogs off leash encountering traps. Reading these ADN articles presents one method of wildlife management in Alaska in a negative light and doesn't tell the full story of ethical trappers. Trappers could do better with distances from areas that could receive higher non-trapping use, but then again, better signage at parking locations indicative that trapping could be occurring within identified areas could mitigate potential pet/trap encounters ultimately helping everyone – especially the pets. I have been thoroughly impressed with the outreach provided by the Alaska Trappers Association and feel their message about safe trapping practices and techniques would benefit from having a larger voice augmented by ADF&G. Safe practices coupled with the ethical and humane trapping assists novice and experienced trappers, game managers, and the public. We (trapping and non-trapping) society would benefit from respectful dialogue to foster tolerance of opposing views.

- I buy the combination license out of habit. I'm unable to trap on my own anymore, but I do teach people how to get their dogs out of conibear traps.
- I buy the license just to support ADF&G.
- I did not participate as much as I anticipated I would.
- I did not trap due to work schedule.
- I did not trap. I purchased some trapping equipment with the intent to trap but never found the time. If time allows, I will purchase a new trapping license and see how it goes. Cheers.
- I didn't trap this year. The last year I trapped was probably 10 years ago in New York.
- I do not actively trap. But I buy a trapping license every year to support trapping.
- I don't trap, but I buy the license to increase coyote intake and to help support ADF&G.
- I don't trap. Just buy the license to support furbearer management. I do support trail setback requirements, more regulation of road system trapping, and mandatory trap ID.
- I don't trap; however, I support the important opportunity and always get the hunt/fish/trap license.
- I get the trap permit to ensure I have a license in case I decide to.
- I have never trapped before. I intended on learning this last winter but I was too busy working or collecting firewood, my main heat source.
- I have not had the opportunity to trap, but hope to trap in the future.
- I just buy the combo license.
- I just buy the license to support our resources.
- I just hobby trapped this last season. No real suggestions on improvements.
- I like it as is, but individuals who rely on trapping as their main source of income may think differently.
- I like to help out ADF&G. Glad to share that I didn't trap this year.
- I may never set another trap as long as I live but I intend to continue to purchase an Alaska trapping permit, just in case.

- I only bought the trapping license so I could shoot more than two foxes a year.

- I only bought the trapping license to allow for shooting furbearers.

- I only hold a trapping license so that if the opportunity presents itself, I can harvest additional wolves than what a regular hunting license will allow. I would ask for a more generous harvest limit on wolves so that I no longer have to pay the additional trapping fee since I do not trap. I have seen as many as 13 wolves at one time, and with my hunting license, I was limited to only 5 wolves. I would like to be able to harvest as many as I can find. Change the bag limit to "no bag limit" and I will stop buying the trapping license. Thanks for considering this change.

- I think it is important for the Board to exclude heavily used trails and areas from trapping. However, this should be done on a case by case basis and not done over broad geographic areas.

- I think that in GMU 13 and all surrounding Units except for 14A, B, and C, there should be allowed aerial wolf hunting on selected packs with numbers that are too high to maintain an acceptable moose and caribou calf survival rate and balance. The predator vs prey is too high and it needs to be managed better.

- I trapped muskrats as a kid when I lived in Illinois. I have been a resident of Alaska for the past 30 years. I always purchase a trapping license but did not expect to set a trap line. I bought a trapping license to show support for trapping and to keep the number of trappers high for political support of trapping.

- I typically purchase the Alaska trapping license to support ADF&G, and also to give me the opportunity to take animals that I can only take with a trapping license. My reason for purchasing a trapping license is mostly to provide me the opportunity in the event that I should need it.

- I would like to be able to shoot beavers where they are a problem, if you have been a trapper in the past. As I age and my time and mobility are limited, and I am just unable to stand all of the elements to trap during the winter months.

- I would like to get back into trapping, but for now I buy the license to extend the small game season.

- I'm not an avid trapper and have not yet trapped in Alaska. I have been doing lots of reading and researching for a potentially successful season if and when I get the time to engage in the sport. I buy a trapper's license every year to support the management and also to provide myself with the opportunity to trap if I choose to. Thank you for your management of Alaska's resources and thank you for reaching out regarding my trapping practices.

- I've done a 180 on my philosophy. Trapping is not a respectable wildlife management option. It only represents a minority of people and just because we/they can sell the skins doesn't mean it's a part of the natural way of the world. Most of the other trappers I've known choose to trap while they have other jobs, and live in larger populated areas, not remote villages.

- I've never trapped, but I might in the future.

- I've never trapped, I just buy a combo license for the value and to support ADF&G.

- I've never trapped, I'm disabled.

- It is too complicated on the Kenai federal refuge and it's supposed to be fun. Kids lose interest.

- Just buy it with my regular license to help out.

- Keep preserving the right of Alaskans to continue to have access to trapping for generations and take a stand against the anti-trapping propaganda machines trying to take aim at a tradition we hold and cherish.

- Local laws have now made trapping in my area illegal, making other areas in 6C over trapped due to this fact. Where I used to have 4–6 trap lines of 15–20 traps, I now have 1 trapline of 4–5 traps. Many other trappers I have spoken with feel the same way, but has nothing to do with state laws or efforts.

- Make trappers accountable for their actions!! By continually allowing trappers to "police themselves" the future of trapping in the state will be questionable. There were far too many articles in the paper that had words to the effect "dog caught in trap next to popular hiking trail…" Eventually, and it's already happening, the laws will be changed by non-trappers and trappers will have no say whatsoever in the laws that are passed. At the minimum, all traps should be tagged, there should be a set back from public roads and trails, and traps should be checked on a weekly basis. If Ted Spraker and his cronies on the BOG don't soon change the way business is done by trappers, only those living in remote areas will be trapping!

- More land access within areas needing predator management. Also more opportunities to get involved with habitat enhancement projects.

- More regulations on wolverine. A low density, easy to catch animal should have limits and shorter seasons.

- More youth trapping education.

- Move traps further away from roads and trails, especially kill traps like conibears. There is not as much room in Alaska for trapping as there used to be and it is time for regulations to adjust.

- No, I mostly get a trapping license so I can ground shoot fur animals.

- No comment. Haven't trapped in years. I have a license just in case I change my mind and decide to trap. With low prices of fur, hardly worth the effort.

- No comments except that I buy a trapping license for predator calling.

- No substantial comments. I have a trapping license to hunt predators. Would trap if I lived in a more rural area. I have run across several trapping sites while grouse and moose hunting, and have found them to be tidy sites, and have no objections to trapping.

- No suggestions but keep up the great work you do for our state!

- No suggestions, but I do appreciate ADF&G's approach to managing trapping and your effort.

- No, but thank you for asking.

- No, thank you for all your supporting efforts!

- No, I intend to teach trapping to grandkids.

- No. Not trapping as lynx population and critters around the creek on my property are down.

- Nope, all good in Kodiak.

- Not at this time. I buy a license hoping to have time to trap but never have had the time since I moved to Alaska in 2003. I am secretary of the Whittier AC and a charter boat captain. I am always looking for a reason to be outdoors.

- I do not know how to trap, thank you.

- Not much comment since I have not participated in trapping for so long. I continue to buy a trapping license just to support trapping.

- Open Chugach Park to beaver trapping. Ship Creek valley is overrun and the trails are now all submerged in ponds. Only a few hardy recreational trappers would be interested in hiking in/out of the nonmotorized area keeping pressure low while trapping would prevent a population crash. Why is this renewable resource off limits?

- Open more of the refuge and get the feds out.

- Pressure Alaska DOT and the Forest Service to plow more pull outs to help ease conflict. Lack of safe parking in winter forces consumptive and nonconsumptive users into the same areas leading to negative interactions.

- Refuge law enforcement harassed me last season which caused me to have to move my trapline. Make the refuge follow state law and keep them off my sets.

- Regulations/requirements in all game management areas requiring a trapper to label/mark/post his/her traps, trap line, and trap areas to reduce the risk of conflict with the public and unintended capture of domestic animals. Maybe requiring application to trapping areas, similar to guide use areas, could make the trapper more comfortable claiming responsibility for his/her traps and eliminating conflict between trappers and their trapping areas.

- Reverse Mat-Su borough trapping regulation restrictions in parks and instead focus on enforcing leash laws and create moderate setbacks from public trails.

- Send these surveys to the right person. My wife did not have a trapping license and is not a trapper and was out of the country for most of the year.

- Set a small line to get my boys out trapping. Early ice up on the lake prevented us from getting to the known beaver location.

- Suggest a trapping considerations webinar (web-based review) that reminds trappers of common sense issues that often result in non-trapping individuals becoming overly incensed. Remind non-trappers (especially those that contribute to ADF&G funding through licenses or permits) that trapping is a legal and sustainable game and furbearer management system. Institute a domestic cat and dog management program to protect our wild animal resources (waterfowl, small game, songbirds).

- Tell the feds to open the refuge for argos with tracks in the same months open to snowmachines.

- Thank you.

- Thanks for making it possible for us to trap. My trapline is the way I get out with my kids (ages 7 and 10) in the woods twice a week.

- The issue of people interfering with other's traps/trap lines should be addressed. I have had my traps tampered with often, and to the point where it is a major consideration of if I will set traps or not.

- The lynx closure on the Kenai Peninsula has made me pull traps from areas with high coyote and wolf densities, for fear of catching lynx. Every coyote/wolf bait I put out this year had lynx feed on it at some point. This makes achieving the ADF&G's predator control program's goals difficult – trappers are purposely staying out of areas with abundant canines to avoid catching lynx.

- The main reason I maintain a trapping license is it allows some extra use for game. For instance, it is my understanding if I shoot a wolf with just a hunting license that I cannot sell it, with a trapping license I can.

- There are more moose in Unit 15 than I've seen in many years. I think the efforts of wolf trappers and bear hunters has helped. With rabbits back on the upswing, I'm sure the wolves and coyotes will return.

- Took 2 foxes by firearm under a hunting license.

- Trapping is an important part of Alaskan life, it needs to stay that way.

- We got a lot of snow in the couple weeks I set and didn't have time to keep things operating and moving with conditions. So I pulled the short line I ran.

- We need a statewide trap tag program to preserve the integrity of honest trappers and eliminate those who are not. Also keep limits for furbearers same for trapping and hunting. Example would be if lynx is closed to trapping in Unit 15, it should be closed to hunting also, or vice versa.

- We should be able to get some sea otters.

- When considering areas to trap, take into consideration other user groups for that area and set boundaries accordingly. I have friends whose dogs have lost legs because of traps set closer to trails than they should be allowed.

- Why is fishing, hunting, trapping grouped together now instead of separated like before? Never trapped or hunted, never plan to. Waste of time and resources for everyone who is "low income/disabled" to have to fill out this questionnaire every year.

- You could improve this questionnaire by making Not Applicable (N/A) an option on many of the questions. The vast majority of this did not apply to me.

- My kids are learning trapping, we have not tried this before. We are still interested. We haven't bought a trapping device yet. If you have any ideas about this, please send me any information about books that we can read and maybe can take a quiz or get certified? Thank you.

- Yes, please add a third category of “I want to trap in the future, just not sure when” to question 5.

- None. Doing a great job. Just don’t let them close down, exciting hobby for me.

- This survey should apply for active trappers only; was applying for a low income fishing license, was asked if I wanted a trapping permit as well, thinking of a just in case situation arouse, when I asked to go with for trapping, at least I’d be able to accept.

- Do not bait bears to kill them. Do not trap wolves. Stop killing Alaska wolves to please a few stone age trappers. It is ok to trap some smaller animals though. Do not allow decimation/over killing of any wildlife. Stop trapping of wolverines.

- Not really. I’ve never trapped. I have wanted to, just never spent the time to do it. Also would like to try predator calling. Maybe one day, hopefully. Thanks for all your hard work, best of luck to you on your trapping surveys.

- I couldn’t catch anything, but I tried for 2 years with no luck. 74–75 that was last effort.

REGION III

- ADF&G and the Board of Game are doing a great job providing trappers the opportunity to harvest furbearers for sustained yield.

- ADF&G cannot “improve” trapping. They can stay out of regulating trapping as much as possible and let each trapper do his own regulating.

- Allowing some limited trapping on a hunting license to introduce new participants to trapping. Limit to 5 sets or similar or limit to 1 season.

- Are you asking me how the government can help improve trapping? LOL.

- I shot the 8 wolves I got last season via “Same-day Airborne Permit” under a trapping license using shotgun and buckshot, although I do also carry snares to set moose and caribou kills, so this is the reason I filled out this survey. Sorry if the information I provided was not what you were seeking. I do plan on trapping via snow machine and also lake-hopping via aircraft next year in 20C mainly for marten, lynx, and wolf out west of the Kantishna River, so will have more information about that area after next year’s season. Suggestions: Develop more programs to get more young people involved in trapping, as they of course are the future of maintaining trapping longevity in Alaska.

- Continue to offer pamphlets and training opportunities to residents.

- Deed the trapping areas to stop conflict with mushers.

- Do not allow trapping on trails. Please make a responsible buffer between trails and traps. Set a law to cut down on trail user conflicts and bycatch.

- Establishment of an official Trapper Ed program to assist trappers with solutions to modern challenges to trapping with a changing climate and growing human population.

- Get rid of the 300 ft distance rule from aircraft to harvest a coyote. I see numerous coyotes on lakes that I would try to harvest if this rule was not in effect. Poor snow conditions and less sign caused me not to target marten which I normally would.

- Get young people involved.

- Getting back into trapping. Good to know this questionnaire and what to expect when I make roots somewhere to go full into trapping. I will keep track of snares and amount of pelts. Was not able to trap anything but got a couple of good squirrels. Hunting this year until I find roots of a trap line. The three target animal would not let me pick all three in the questions.

- Got too busy with work, unable to get out. Had to buy my furs.

- Haven't trapped in a while and hardly anyone is trapping now, but notice some young folks starting to and it's a good thing to see, especially with the beaver population. There are so many now. Don't have any suggestions at the moment.

- I bought my trapping permit so I would be able to capitalize on "targets of opportunity." And while I don't currently trap (mostly a time-related thing), I may at some time in the future when I get a little more free time.

- I bought the license to support ADF&G.

- I buy a license in case I come across a wolf.

- I buy the license to support ADF&G.

- I didn't get to run my whole line this year but will next year. Lynx are still down in my area but other trappers were starting to see them coming back. You guys seem to do a great job. The rats have been down for many years, will they ever come back? Why don't lynx and marten get along? It seems beaver are decreasing in some drainages, how come? The hares have dropped off more than in the last cycle in my area. The fox seem to be getting more scarce every year.

- I do not use steel traps on my trapline except for beaver. Instead, I am experimenting with traditional dead falls and lifting pole snares. The regulations currently restrict beaver trapping to submerged steel traps only. The regulation should be changed to allow dead falls on land in the fall and spring when there is open water. This would allow for the

taking of beaver for food and the preservation of traditional knowledge. I feel that the knowledge and experience of how to interact with the land without gasoline, gunpowder, and manufactured traps is priceless and should be perpetuated.

- I get a trapper's license annually for the opportunity. I have yet to use it, but plan to snare hare for food occasionally. I would like to see more requirements of the trapper to keep their lines and specific traps identified, as I believe there should be more responsibility. Also, discourage or disallow trapping directly on high-use trails where dogs (whether leashed or not) are regularly present.

- I haven't found the time to trap yet but will try to if I get the time to in the future.

- I haven't trapped in years, but I buy the license to support ADF&G.

- I intend to trap in the future. I get the trapper license to permit the taking of small furbearing game sometimes not available under the hunting license. Trapping could be improved through an educational campaign showing that fur is a renewable resource, and that trapping is a great way to be out in, and part of nature. Trapping can also be improved by encouraging hikers and skiers to keep dogs on leash and under control, especially in some of the more rural, less used trails that may be access points/used for trapping.

- I maintain a trapping license in the event I am driving to Prudhoe and come across a wolverine/wolf or an animal I may be able to harvest in the pipeline corridor. I also support the poor trappers where I mostly work.

- I only buy the license in case I come across a wolf.

- I only get the trapping license on the off chance I get the opportunity to shoot a fox or coyote while out caribou hunting in the winter.

- I plan on trapping in the future, I'll continue to buy all the hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses to keep supporting the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

- I think ADF&G is doing a pretty fine job.

- I think and strongly wish that you would put a bounty on wolves rather than spending so much money on aerial gunning methods for control. I'd like to see this program come to an immediate end in the Tok/Unit 20 area. Rumor has it that black wolves especially are being killed off (easier to see from the helicopter). This makes me wonder if an unintended side effect of this program will be changes in genetics. That aside, I'd like to see wolves incentivized so that more trappers get out and target them rather than having our state waste precious monies in the name of having more caribou and moose for humans to kill each fall. My guess is that those furs coming on the market actually hurts trappers as well due to the fact that with more wolf pelts on the market, the price declines. That's just a guess…I have not done any research into that theory.

- I think trapping regulations are good, and there are plenty of furbearers. Thank you.
- I trapped when I was younger but the area I grew up in has no more raw land around it (urban now). I would like to see less stringent rules of Native gifting. Like my mom got a wolverine as a gift but it didn't come with a tag, she almost got fined when she was getting it tanned.
- I would like to be able to snare rabbits under a trapping license.
- I would love to trap again if I ever find the time to do it right.
- I'm glad to see a survey out for trappers to supply numbers. I didn't answer some of the questions as I didn't trap for some of the animals…it might be good to have it set up so that you can select the animals trapped, whether intentional or as bycatch, earlier to help in the ease of doing the survey!!
- If I start seeing any more wolves in my neighborhood, I'm breaking out my traps.
- In Unit 20, wolverine trapping should end at the same time as lynx. Wolverine are caught incidentally when trapping for lynx.
- It is hard to find areas that are not being trapped by others. Some trappers claim a lot of area. While it is legal to trap beside them, it isn't ethical in my opinion.
- It would be great if there were more opportunities to educate the younger generations as well as the general public on how important responsible trapping is for the preservation of furbearing animals, or any game for that matter.
- It's time for trappers to be accountable and label their traps. I only trap with rifle. I support trap and snare tags.
- Just knowing where to trap and not intrude on other trappers.
- Just learning and starting trapping with my 12-year-old son.
- Keep as is or make seasons and catch limits more liberal. Don't let animal right activists, media, and political pressures reduce or eliminate trapping in any way in this great state.
- Kinda think lynx season should go to the end of March in my unit.
- Make it so you can shoot beaver in more game units.
- My husband traps every year and has for approximately 16 years in Alaska and many more with his dad in his youth. I get a trapping license in case I go along with him and in support of this opportunity. I don't think I fit the normal category of trappers.

- I live in Galena, Alaska. I have grown up around trapping and have seen no real problems with the way things are going. The snowshoe hares and moose in my area are on a climb as well as the lynx, fox, mink, and beaver. This year I did notice that on a part of my trapline that usually has five or six marten in it, didn't have any this season, but I will have to see what happens next year. I look forward to trapping this next season and doing the questionnaire again. Thank you.

- Need a real winter.

- No thanks.

- None. I appreciate the resubmission of the questionnaire with the code this time.

- Nope. You guys do a good job as far as trapping goes.

- Not at this time.

- Not really. I get the license in case I might trap, just hasn't happened.

- Online videos on how to set traps, snares, how to skin and care for pelts.

- Promote ethics and respect. People just don't seem to care anymore.

- Protect our rights to use the techniques used today.

- Provide more access to the vast country that is available.

- Simple education on how to find out where active trap lines are and how to begin a new line.

- Stop shooting the wolves. ADF&G flies into this part of the state and shoots wolves. The state is spending a lot of money shooting wolves I'd like to try trapping. I would like to advocate offering trappers a bounty on wolves rather than spend roughly $5,000 per wolf to shoot them from planes and helicopters. My understanding is that this is done in an effort to bolster the caribou and moose populations, but I disagree with the use of resources, and with the meddling.

- Thanks for all you do!

- The Brooks Range hare population is building to the super peak. Super peaks occur every 18–19 years, the last occurring in 2000–01. This hare peak will occur in the next year or two. NPS and UAF are studying this with hare and lynx collaring projects. Lynx have produced kits this past summer, the first time since the last hare peak. We will see immigration of lynx to this area when hares crash in the upper Yukon and Flats. Wolf numbers here are lower than average. Sheep numbers are very low and no caribou came

into this area this winter. I tried to catch wolves but had very few come onto where I trapped this winter. A neighbor caught a couple. I only saw single tracks and a pair or two of wolves this winter. This area can have disease vectored from fox on the North slope. There was rabies to the NE of here 3–4 winters ago in the Chandalar. There are other distempers and canid disease that will affect wolves here at times. The primary influence is the shallower snow depths that have occurred since the last deep snow year of 2008–09 when there was 56" on the ground. This winter again we had only 22" settled snow maximum. Low wolf numbers have allowed moose to retain more calves this winter. I have seen several cows that had calves following. Moose are typically .1–.2 moose per square mile in this part of the Brooks Range, maybe we will build to .3–.4. Red fox have not recovered from the disease influx in the early 2000s. It is pretty rare to see a fox track…I only saw two tracks this winter. Prey is abundant for fox so that is not a limiting factor. Thanks for the online questionnaire.

- The image of trapping is hurt every time someone's pet is caught in a trap. Communities and the legislature are seeking evermore restrictions on trapping on or near public trails. This issue will only get worse if we can't control unethical trappers who place traps near homes, on heavily used public trails, etc.

- The survey asked about harvest of squirrels but not hares? In trying to capture fox, caught hares. They go together as much as squirrels in marten sets.

- Took part in a marten fertility study out of the Fairbanks office. Gained some interesting and valuable information to help manage my harvest, unfortunately this study is being cancelled. Would like to see more marten studies on fertility, juvenile mortality, range, effects of wild fires, etc. Marten can be easily over harvested and with fur prices rebounding, trapping pressure will increase.

- Trappers need to be more considerate of other users of public land, the righteousness is really rather rude. I buy a trapping license because I can afford it and I value the work ADF&G does. I grew up helping with a trap line, I have no problem with trapping, when it is done by those who follow the rules and recognize that multiple users are in an area. The BOG needs to realize that all of our resources have multiple uses beyond harvesting and processing, and that representation from groups, other guides, trappers, and hunters have value too.

- You guys should sit and talk to trappers about the wolf predator control that you guys are doing. You should look at saving the state a lot of money and pay us trappers a bounty on wolves taken or an early moose hunt or something along those lines for every wolf we take. You guys spend $100,000 +/- on predator control for years on end and why not help us trappers out in lieu of the flying services, they're not in the trapping business, they are in the flying service business. And not only that, when we trappers send our fur to the market, the state sends theirs to the same market and our prices drop due to you guys filling the market with furs that we pay to kill. Come on guys, sit and talk to us trappers out there trying to make a living the way it's been done for years.

- Need a limit on wolverine statewide per GMU. Also put a bounty on coyotes statewide, even on the north slope. You see the red fox on the north slope killing all the arctic fox.

- We are experiencing high rabbit and willow grouse populations. Expecting high populations of red fox and lynx. Marten populations seem to be down. Waiting to hear the last fur auction results. Thank you.

- We did not have enough snow for trapping until mid-December. We used to get out by or before mid-November. The extreme November weather starting in 2010 has been costing us the most productive month of trapping due to late freeze, rain, no snow, and/or too much snow. We are also seeing more erosion from severe floods and permafrost melting.

REGION IV

- A question I would have, as I spend a lot of time in the Unit 13A region would be I see beaver everywhere. Is there a plan to let trapping start again there?

- Align fur sealing requirements area to area. Specifically for beaver, beaver population across southcentral appears to be in good shape and has been for years, so why require sealing in Unit 14 but not in Unit 16? Same goes for marten between Units 13 and 14. A recommendation would be to require harvest reporting of all species taken at the end of the season. With nearly everyone having internet access these days, it is not inconvenient for trappers to log on and report their seasons catch for harvest tracking purposes, much the same as big game harvest reports.

- Align wolverine season in Unit 13 with marten, and in Unit 20A.

- All good.

- All traps in the state need to be kept off of designated trails as to keep peoples with pets out for a walk from getting caught in the traps and hurt or possibly killed.

- Appreciate your questions, apology for not trapping this year and not helping out with these questions.

- As the price of furs rise and fall, I know that the limit of people trapping really cannot be set so I did not trap this year because I believe the area I trap was over harvested.

- Better partnerships with private landowners to allow more access.

- Board of Game and ADF&G are doing a good job.

- Continue to advocate for trappers, even push for a trapping school put on by some of the local trappers associations. That way trappers can decrease bad publicity and at the same

time decrease incidental catches by providing an educational class on trapping ethics and practices.

- Create more access and put some resources towards trapper education, develop a manual and have a class similar to bow, muzzleloader, and such.

- Do not permit snowmachine trappers to pursue fleeing wolves, wolverines, or other furbearers.

- Don't let the natives take the Jim Creek Public Use area.

- Each year I purchase the hunting/trapping/fishing license. While I am supportive of all three, I have not had the time available to adequately spend trapping. That said, I would love to do it, and plan to in the future.

- Easier to follow trapping regulation by unit instead of groups. Similar to the hunting regulation.

- Extended wolverine trapping season in Unit 13, February 28 would make better sense. Think about it.

- Find a balance that makes the public happy and the trappers happy regarding the trail systems.

- First season trapping in Alaska. We did not trap any animals, but I am learning as I go. As far as I can tell, the regs are fine as they are currently. Although not much history for me to compare to.

- Health permitting, I would like to start trapping.

- Hi Brynn!

- Hunters and trappers are a really good source of information on what is going on in their area. I think ADF&G could make a better effort in communicating with the local resource if they want to improve things in that area. From my experience, in communicating with other hunters, they know when the seasons open and close, but do not understand most of the technical parts of hunting regulations. So if the Board of Game makes any changes in different areas, please put it at the beginning of the ADF&G website as the hunters watch the ADF&G website.

- I always buy the license with the intent to trap, I just haven't had the time to yet.

- I am a father who would love to pass on this heritage to my children. More and more I have quit going to areas in the Mat-Su valley (not even areas where I have trapped) because people do not keep their pets on leashes. I believe that the leash laws should be enforced on local trails to minimize the dog waste and dog confrontations with mine and

all children. Also, I would love to see more information spread to pet owners about trapping and what to watch for to minimize confrontation between trappers and pet owners on hiking trails. And I would love to see more trapping opportunities in Chugach state park.

- I am a village leader for my community. Once I have more free time, I can trap for a lifestyle.

- I am concerned about these new trappers trapping in inappropriate areas and causing issues. I have seen several unethical sets over the last 5 years. Bait sets made near groomed trails where people ski with dogs with snares set two feet off the ground trail. Also it seems that somehow dry land setting of kill traps such as the 330 has become common, 330's set so close to common pull offs for recreation areas in Hatchers Pass that I am concerned about my small child getting into one. Whatever happened to the trappers code of conduct that was beat into me as a young 3rd generation Alaskan trapper by my grandfather? I have given up the trap lines passed down to me by my uncles due to being constantly set over. Why are traps no longer name tagged? I realize this was never a law but was common practice and pushed by the association in the past. Why can traps be set in rural areas that do not allow the use of a rifle due to population density? It would make sense that any area you cannot use a rifle should also be closed to trapping. I see snare sets on known moose paths with no poke stick to keep moose out. I assume this is just incompetence. Suggestions: require all traps to be identified with a trappers assigned ID number. Require additional training and certifications for trappers much like the bear baiting and primitive weapons. Close all rural weapons restricted areas to public trapping. Outlaw the dry land setting of kill traps.

- I am disabled. Gave a friend a proxy for me to get fish and moose and stuff. He gave me some fish last summer and that was all. No moose or other meat.

- I appreciate having the ability to trap in Alaska.

- I believe trapping is an important part of our Alaskan heritage, so I purchase a trapping license in support of the Alaskan trapping industry.

- I bought the license as a first time trapper but was not able to give it a go last year.

- I buy a trappers license mainly to support ADF&G.

- I buy the full combination hunting, fishing, and trapping license to support the programs. Perhaps one day I may actually get the opportunity to learn the art of trapping and properly preparing the hides.

- I buy a trapping license to support programs. I'd like to learn and begin trapping however.

- I did not set any traps.

- I did not trap during the 2016 season.
- I don’t live in Alaska anymore, so this won’t need to be sent to me again.
- I don’t trap much. I call and shoot predators. My snogo was down this winter so I did not do much this past winter.
- I get my trapping license because I want to be able to go if invited. Or if the opportunity to learn arises.
- I have not trapped for a number of years so I don’t have a comment for improvement.
- I haven’t had a chance to start trapping but I would like to start.
- I just buy the license in case I try my hand at trapping sometime. I guess so far I’m giving you guys money for no reason but it’s fine with me. You guys are doing a great job. Keep up the good work.
- I looked into it a little this year. Might try in the future.
- I love trapping just the way it is. Pretty sure all the other trappers agree no need for change. Only thing I wish I could have would be a few extra weeks at marten. I won’t see a marten all season until I have to pull my gear. Same with mink and otter.
- I meant to go trapping this spring, I just didn’t get to it.
- I only purchased a trapping license to allow me to hunt for beavers. I do NOT intend to trap in the future.
- I plan to continue to purchase a trapping license in hopes to start trapping some year.
- I simply purchase a trapping license in case I may have the chance to trap but I am not a trapper. I have nothing of value to add here. Thanks.
- I think ADF&G and the Board of Game have done a good job of keeping trapping relatively simple and straightforward. My problem is that I work full time and the type of trapping I want to do requires serious time commitment to drive to territories significantly away from the population centers of the state. I like the remote experience. Don’t get me wrong, I don’t want trapping closed or restricted in any way in close proximity to towns and trails. I just normally choose a more remote line if I can make the time.
- I think it would be hard to do. But, I would like to see registered trap lines. I have new inexperienced trappers crossing my line every year. They think they can do or go anywhere they want. When I started trapping up the Yentna, I asked around if anyone

was in the area that I trapped. I built my own line 20 years ago. I also don't like weekend trappers. They don't care for their catch. A lot of damaged fur. But "they got one."

- I think the regulations are set to what they should be. Minimal effort into trapping as this is my first year. Limited snow and work schedule was a big factor in my efforts.

- I think we need to restrict lethal trapping methods (conibear or snare) near public use areas, publicly used trails, roads, and areas of habitation. We must reduce the incidental take of people's beloved pets or trapping as we know it is going to be legislated into obscurity.

- I trapped as a kid. I did not trap last year, but I have nothing against trapping when it's done legally.

- I tried trapping nuisance beaver with no luck.

- I would like some information on trapping courses ADF&G might be providing. Thanks.

- I would like to see more young kids out trapping. Trapping needs to be promoted as a viable, renewable resource.

- I would like to see wolverine season extended to match lynx season in Unit 11. Wolverine and lynx are caught in the same type of sets so it's hard to target for one and not the other.

- I've never trapped.

- If the fur price increases, I may trap again next year.

- It was nice to have a "normal" winter and be able to travel by snowmachine.

- Just got the trap endorsement just in case I wanted to try it.

- Longer seasons for mink. Also, would be nice to be able to have an idea where and what the population averages are for certain areas. For instance, I have wanted to trap marten for a while now, but have no idea where one would do that. I talked to someone at your Palmer office and he just kind of gave me a blank stare and did not really give my any usable information. Are there populations in the Palmer/Wasilla area at all? The only reason I did not trap this year was due to the horrible fur prices for muskrat. While there are plenty of them in the Palmer/Wasilla area, the prices are just not worth taking an animal.

- Might not be something that's possible, but maybe more fish and game looking out because we went fishing in Kasilof last year and my friend's boyfriend was up here from Florida and does not have a fishing license and was fishing anyways. And as a lifelong Alaskan that really really bothered me. And there was no one around anywhere checking

people's licenses or anything and I remember as a kid, fish and game always being around checking licenses.

- More education for trappers and nontrappers.

- Need to educate those that do not trap fur for money or recreation on how to handle traps and release nontarget species. Also, we need to keep getting youth involved in trapping because they will be the future of trapping. I think the department did a good job on the questionnaire this year as it was easy to complete. Thanks.

- No, except to say I know of someone who lost his license and SHOULD have lost it longer in my honest opinion. Wanton waste and disregard for the animals taken is a blight on the reputation of all ethical trappers. I have always held an interest in trapping and taxidermy, but have never trapped myself, but the potential to start is there. Hence, I get a license, just to be prepared. I have had the pleasure of occasionally accompanying and have been in the presence of an ethical trapper.

- No, I am just a weekend trapper when not working.

- No, we have a good system here.

- No. I have only trapped arctic ground squirrels. None of the selection had this available as a choice.

- Not a trapper. I go out predator hunting is why I get a trapping license. No luck yet.

- Not at this time. All has been good so far.

- Not really. My area is pretty remote so I am good but I hear there is a lot of "overlap" by guys in more congested areas, don't know the solution to that but it has or will become an issue eventually.

- Provide more frequent quality training for beginners and veterans.

- Registered traplines may help when lynx and other fur populations are at their peaks to cut down on overcrowding and trapping, especially along the road system. I personally would like a longer wolverine and marten season in Unit 13 by extending each 3–4 weeks longer. I personally think the lynx cycle is at a low but starting slowly to rebound in Unit 13 but feel it should be closed until they rebound. Coyotes are exploding not only in Unit 13 but statewide and I feel there should be a bounty on them to encourage more take. Lastly, stop aerial wolf hunting!

- Something needs to be done to avoid the 'bad trappers' giving all other trappers a bad name, most likely through regulations. Catching someone's dog is a lose/lose for all of us and sometimes we are our own worst enemy in these situations. Doing something minor right now, like passing enforceable regulations to curtail those activities, will be deemed

proactive and self-regulating. Better to be in the driver's seat and have some influence in where things go.

- Source for information on registered trap lines whose trapper has died or retired.

- Still trying to get involved in this, but other winter activities take priority.

- Stop making us seal beaver in Unit 13E. There is an abundance of them and it is a hassle to take them in to get sealed. Open Unit 13E to shooting of beaver. The beaver numbers need reduced in this unit and the locals will shoot them given the chance. Beavers are destroying huge areas of this unit. Longer wolverine season. Again, there is a large number of wolverine in Unit 13E and increasing the season will give trappers a better chance of catching a wolverine.

- Teach non-trappers the importance of fur harvesting and predator control for sustainability.

- Thank you for protecting and continuing trapping opportunities in Alaska!

- The biggest issue in trapping is occurring in residential areas. Too many amateur trappers setting traps in recreational areas are catching dogs. This reflects poorly on the entire practice of trappings. More regulation or some sort of limited entry for more professional level trappers is needed in areas where there is a higher level of people recreating with their pets. Unless these conflicts can be minimalized, I fear that public sentiment will grow against trapping in general. Thank you.

- The snow conditions were poor in Unit 13A and it made it hard to get around. More trapping theft is happening farther back now. Day riders are getting on our trails and steeling snare-caught fox.

- This particular area has to be one of the most shot-up and trapped-out areas around the state. Moose sign and sightings are as common as caribou. Furbearers are dismally scarce. This year, I saw virtually no wolf sign which was disappointing as I wanted the opportunity to trap/snare them. I assume the predator control methods are being pretty effective. It is very difficult to find any patterns at all with the commonly pursued species. If coyotes do come through, it was just a one-time event. I had several pretty large bait piles that never even got hit. If they did get hit and you set snares through the area, the coyotes/foxes never came back. Hare signed looked pretty abundant. I saw two sets of lynx tracks all season. One set on another individual's trapline and one set that walked right up to a snare pen of mine, stopped, and then kept going. If I got whacked in the face with a frozen marten in this unit I wouldn't have believed it. Other areas of Alaska I have trapped and averaged 50 per season. They are in none of the places I have trapped in 13D. I have tried moving the line around with tens of miles of difference and had no results. The pressure from other trappers is pretty strong with individuals claiming whole "creeks." Even if you are miles from other individuals and cut your own line in you will get a sign saying this is "my" creek. I guess that means the creek proper and all

of the uplands, miles and acres associated with an entire drainage. I hear about guys that run “100 mile lines” and wonder how exactly they do it without crossing into someone “else’s” territory? Seems like every trapper out there is claiming a few sections as “theirs.” Are we supposed to drive 25, 50, or 100 miles to another location? Won’t we meet other trappers who have claimed other public land for their own? I get it that established lines should be respected. However, if you stay miles away from others and chop your own line in you get a note implying that you are “on their area.” So, that being said, it is tough to find an area to even place a snare or trap. For those of us who just want to be left alone and avoid the conflict, I can’t help but imagine that the practice of claiming areas of public land by individuals isn’t in some way dissuading others from pursuing trapping and thus reducing the number of trappers statewide overall. In other words, weakening the collective position of trapping in Alaska.

- This year, I ended up taking a job just as I was trying to get my line going, so I cut my trapping short, didn’t put out any sets – especially I didn’t make any beaver, otter, or fox sets and only a few marten sets. Also, I love lynx and saw one on my line but only set out game cameras instead of traps. Finally got a couple photos. I have the strong impression that lynx were much more abundant in the Dillingham area this year, but I can’t figure out what they are eating as it did not seem like there were any more rabbits than normal. I met one guy who had caught 6, another 4, and another caught at least 1 – most I have ever heard. Ptarmigan numbers seem way below average. I have been concerned for several years about the apparent decline (to me) of red squirrels in the Dillingham area. But this fall and winter, it seems like I am seeing an increase. We have had an incredible spruce cone crop this year and LOTS of cross bill birds – way more than usual. This was the first “normal” – albeit mild – winter in 4 years.

- Trail systems that post their own leash rules not in accordance with the borough law lets people think the trails posted rule is the borough’s law. The trail should abide by the borough law. There should be a 20’ distance that a trapper should have to be off of a state road or a state named and maintained trail to set a trap unless in water. Ethical trappers have to defend ourselves to the public because of unethical trappers putting sets on roads and maintained trails and catching pets.

- Trapper competence education/testing for trappers who practice in the Wasilla/Palmer area, or other populated areas.

- Trapping should not be allowed in the Keppler-Bradley, Matanuska Lake trails and Reflections Lake recreation areas.

- I buy the hunting, trapping, and fishing license just in case I have the opportunity to trap. I do fish and hunt annually. I figure the money it costs to buy the trapping tags helps support the general programs.

- Well, I am not much of a trapper but I would like to try it sometime soon! So there is not much I can say about any improvements if any are needed. I think that ADF&G do a

great job at regulating the animals! I do have some complaints/concerns but will state them at a later date. Thank you.

- Yes, require a minimum setback distance off of roadways and public trails in the Mat-Su borough. For example, 100 ft minus separation distance. This solves two common problems. It will reduce the amount of "lazy" trappers. And most importantly, it will solve the pets running around off leashes and getting caught issue. It leaves them with no argument to present. If the pets are caught in a trap that is 100ft away from a road or public trail, then they are clearly not in control of the pet. It covers the state by putting a law in place, it makes the trapper responsible for his sets, and makes the pet owners take some responsibility for pets running loose. This is all common sense. Stop playing politics and apply some common sense to the issue. HELLO.

- Yes, we need to do something about dogs getting caught in traps.

- I just had that trapping/hunting license for that year. Thought of trapping, but never got around to it. My wife and son got the same hunting license, but we never went out.

- Beaver season and wolverine season should be shortened for GMU 17B.

REGION V

- Better weather with more snow.

- Don't have enough experience to make any suggestions other than to remind people on the importance of good processing technique in order to have a quality product.

- Don't require a license to trap.

- Extend trapping season from March 15 to March 31 in Unit 18.

- First year trying. I like it, seems good.

- I "trap" by rifle every year. I answered "no" as to trapping since I don't use conventional traps. Annually, I always purchase a trapper's license as some of the seasons are extended by a couple of weeks and some bag limits are greater. I like to shoot and harvest parka squirrels which to my understanding one must possess a trapping license to be legal. I put on several thousand miles each season on my snow machine riding around searching for wolves, wolverines, lynx, and river otters. I shot one river otter this season. Saw a wolf and a wolverine but was not successful in taking them. I also saw many red fox but am tired of skinning them. So I leave them alone. I like checking on the moose and muskox numbers as I'm out and about. I did see more moose calves than in recent years but the overall number of moose is greatly depressed compared to the late 1980s and 90s. Muskox numbers appear to be down too, except right around Nome itself.

- I don't go trapping but I definitely hunt for game such as moose.

- I have no comment.
- I like how its been so far!
- I may try trapping in the future.
- I would like to try trapping in the future.
- I'm stocking up on traps and would like to start next year.
- It is my opinion that the Alaska Board of Game, by increasing season dates into April for hunting and trapping of higher dollar furbearers like wolf and wolverine, has caused a decrease in overall quality going into the market, and thus decreasing in-season sale prices and perhaps offers. I think newcomers to Alaska should have to wait 20 years before they can trap in Alaska, the best trappers are long time trappers, newcomers don't have respect for the land and all these newcomers into Alaska are causing long standing user conflicts. I see recreational trappers coming into my areas which has displaced me. Being born and raised here, the displacement of long time trappers such as myself is a shameful result of the State of Alaska and sports hunting groups advocating for trapping as a sport or glorifying it as many pro hunting organizations do. Trapping and hunting knowledge should never come from books or magazines without first the notion of respect that is taught by Alaska Native traditions directly. Only long time trappers have the respect that comes with trapping, being humble, showing respect, passing on traditions from long long ago. There is a belief among all these newcomers to Alaska that the land should be public even when much of it is not. Newcomers disrespect the land by taking firewood, taking animals that they have no right to access unless given permission by the landowner. It takes more than traps to be a trapper as they say, and what is missing from all these newcomer's behaviors is the respect that comes from taking animals. High quality fur is our goal, not the act itself, but all these newcomers want to experience Alaska perhaps like the old timers. Well to that I say it is not their right to experience old time Alaska or the outdoors, these newcomers and non-shareholders have no right to access ANCSA lands. The State of Alaska should never allow its laws to extend to the general public on ANCSA lands. ANCSA lands should be off-limits to all non-shareholders. The Alaska Constitution mentions in section 12.12 that it will not infringe upon lands owned by Alaskan Natives. No non-shareholder should ever be allowed to hunt or trap on ANCSA lands. I have been trapping since a little boy and I have seen the degredation of our lands by miners, newcomers, and the glorification of hunting. Mining should be disallowed in Alaska. Mining is destroying the land, and miners are polluting our society with drugs and lack of respect. Trapping is suffering from serious price declines, and I as a long time trapper am losing interest because of all the disrespect that now exists in our society and from these newcomers to Alaska. Deport all of the newcomers and leave us long time Alaskans alone. A trapper nowadays has to do their utmost best in order to ensure their best prices.
- Let nature take its course.

- Not at this time.
- Somehow magically get fur prices to go up.
- Start season 1st of December. Fur is not prime in November.
- Starting on October should be good for beavers and otters.
- Thanks for the hard work. As you know, trapping is very important in many ways. It is healthy for man, and the animals that are kept in proper balance. Predators are becoming a problem to the caribou on the North Slope, etc., etc. I sincerely hope the BOG continues in a trapping friendly mindset and will not be swayed by political pressure to limit trapping for non-management reasons. The enemies of objective, rational animal management are already coming to ADF&G and BOG from within and without. Thanks.
- Wolves are at a 30 year low here, and the moose numbers are increasing. My 65 mile line saw 1 pack 1 time. I saw more moose than I have in 30 years.

Photo by Travis Smith

Author's Note

I cannot thank ADF&G Information Services and our DWC Lead Webmaster enough for their efforts and assistance in perfecting the online version of the questionnaire, scanning and compiling data, and running some of the analyses for this 2016 report. This report would take much longer to write if I did not have their assistance.

I would also like to extend my thanks to everyone responding to the questionnaire, either via online or paper responses. While our response rate was down this year due to the large number of invitations sent out, we had more overall responses. I hope we can continue to improve the questionnaire in a way that will lead to an increased response rate and more valuable information to those utilizing this report. For many of the species involved in this report, you are our primary source of knowledge. We use your responses 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 wanting to receive future questionnaires, please have them contact me by phone or email (below).

Lastly, I want to extend a special thanks to all the trappers who provided pictures. There is nothing quite like being out in nature and observing wildlife, and I greatly appreciate your willingness to share your experiences with myself and other trappers.

Thank you and best of luck this coming season!

Brynn L. Parr
ADF&G Trapper Questionnaire Coordinator
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
(907) 465-4148
dfg.dwc.permits@alaska.gov

Photo by Steve Veal