

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Wildlife Conservation

Statewide Annual Report
1 July 2001-30 June 2002

TRAPPER QUESTIONNAIRE

Tim Peltier
Ryan Scott



ADF&G

August 2003

CODE OF ETHICS

A TRAPPER'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Respect other trappers' 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 landowner's 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. Properly dispose of animal carcasses.
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 was copied from the Alaska Trappers Manual. The manual was created through a joint effort between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Alaska Trappers Association. The manual is available in Alaska book stores and from the Alaska Trappers Association for approximately \$20.00.

STATE OF ALASKA

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DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Kevin C. Duffy, Commissioner

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Matthew H. Robus, Director

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**Tim Peltier, Wildlife Biologist
ADF&G, Wildlife Conservation
P.O. Box 25526
Juneau, AK 99802-5526
(907) 465-6197**

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P.O. Box 25526
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Statewide Annual Report
TRAPPER QUESTIONNAIRE

July 1, 2001–June 30, 2002

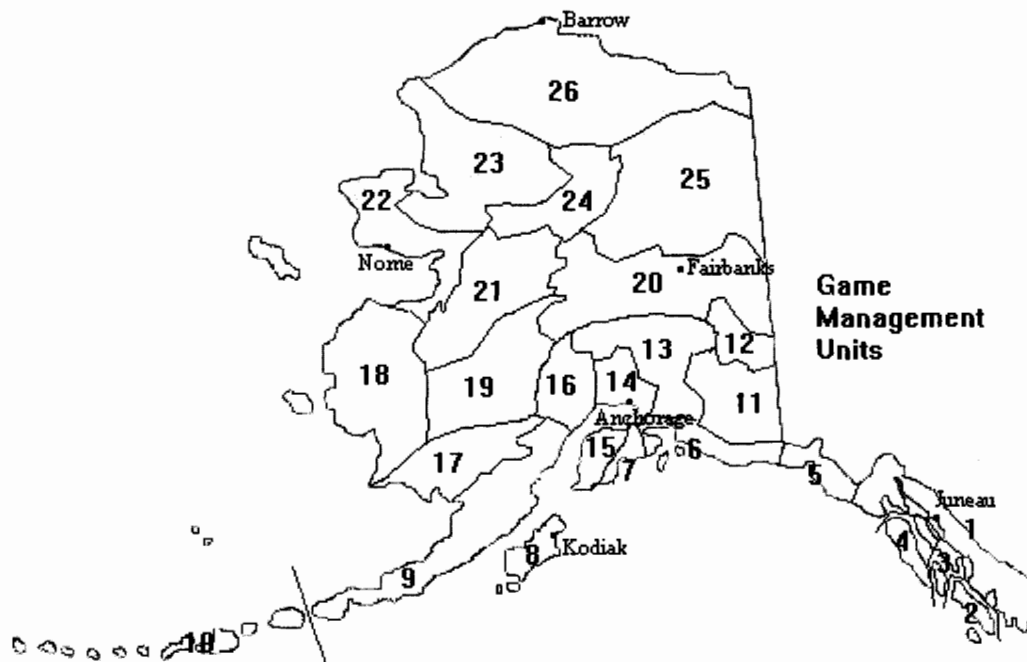
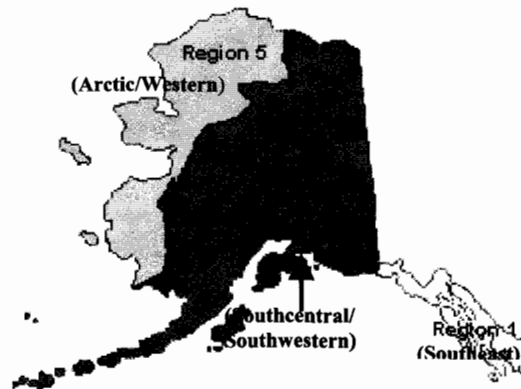
Tim Peltier
Ryan Scott



August 2003

ALASKA'S REGIONS AND GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS

REGIONS



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ALASKA TRAPPER REPORT

2001-2002

Introduction

The 2001-2002 Trapper Report includes information provided by Alaskan trappers through the annual Trapper Questionnaire. This year, 1443 questionnaires were mailed throughout the state and 357 responses were received. Seventy-four percent of the respondents actively trapped during the 2000-2001 season. Broken down by region, 57 people trapped in Southeast (Region I), 94 trapped in Southcentral and Southwestern (Region II), 79 trapped in the Interior (Region III) and 33 people trapped in the Arctic and Western regions (Region V). Additional responses were received from individuals who did not trap during the 2001-2002 season. This report contains information on demographic data about Alaskan trappers, methods of trapping, primary target species, trapping effort, numbers of furbearers trapped, fur disposition and prices.

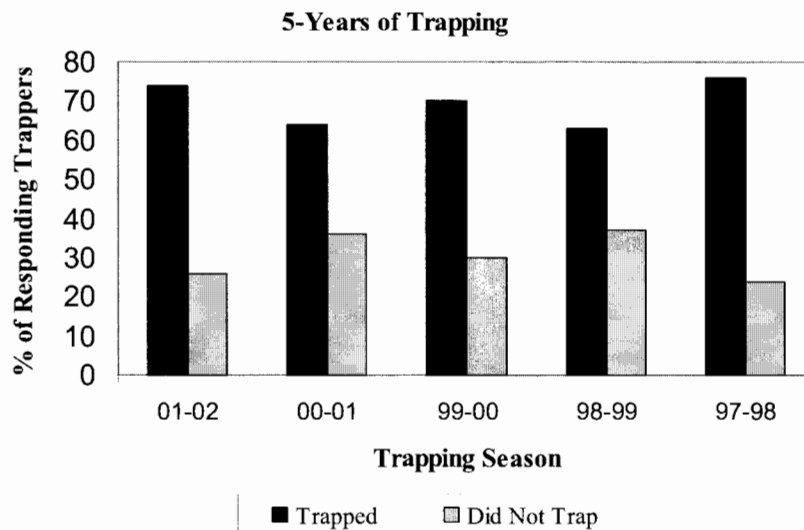
The Alaska Department of Fish and Game welcomes comments concerning the management of Alaska's wildlife resources and is pleased to publish trapper comments in this report. In the interest of confidentiality, the names of individuals and references to specific traplines are not included. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game hopes you will find this report informative and welcomes suggestions for improving this publication.



Alaska's Trappers

Did you trap in 2001-2002 Season?

Of the 357 trappers who responded to this questionnaire, 263 individuals (74%) said they trapped during the 2001–2002 season. Alaska experienced a substantial decrease in the number of trappers who trapped, 340 trappers during the 2000–2001 season compared to 263 trappers this season. This year's 357 responses to the trapper questionnaire was also low compared to the 515 responses in 2000–2001.

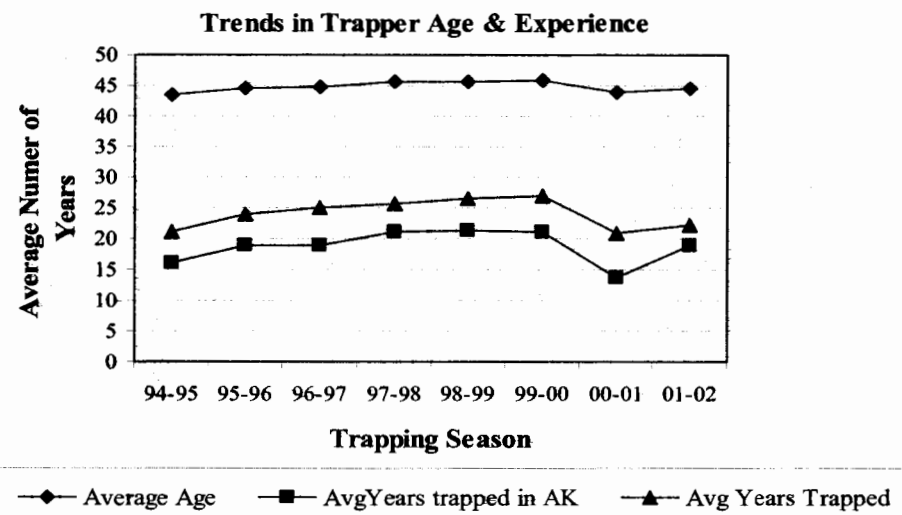
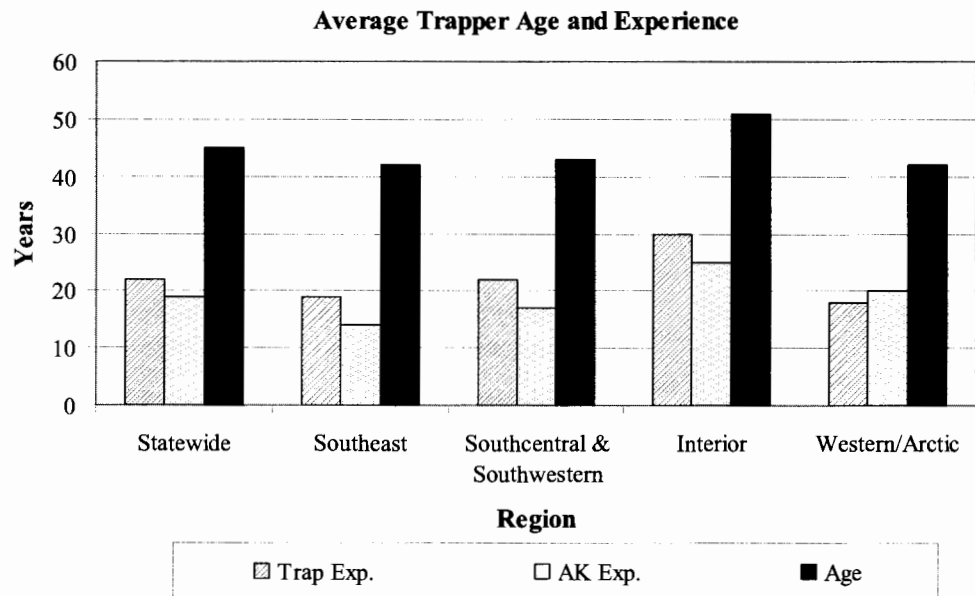


Trapper Age and Experience

The average age of Alaskan trappers responding to this questionnaire is 45 with 24 years total trapping experience and 19 years trapping in Alaska. The profile of this year's trapper indicates a shift toward a slightly younger age group with more trappers who had less experience compared to previous years. Trapping does continue to attract all ages; the youngest responding trapper this year was 6 years old and the oldest was 87. It continues to appear that new generations are participating in trapping but **if you know a young trapper who would like to get this report, please send us their name and address with your questionnaire.**

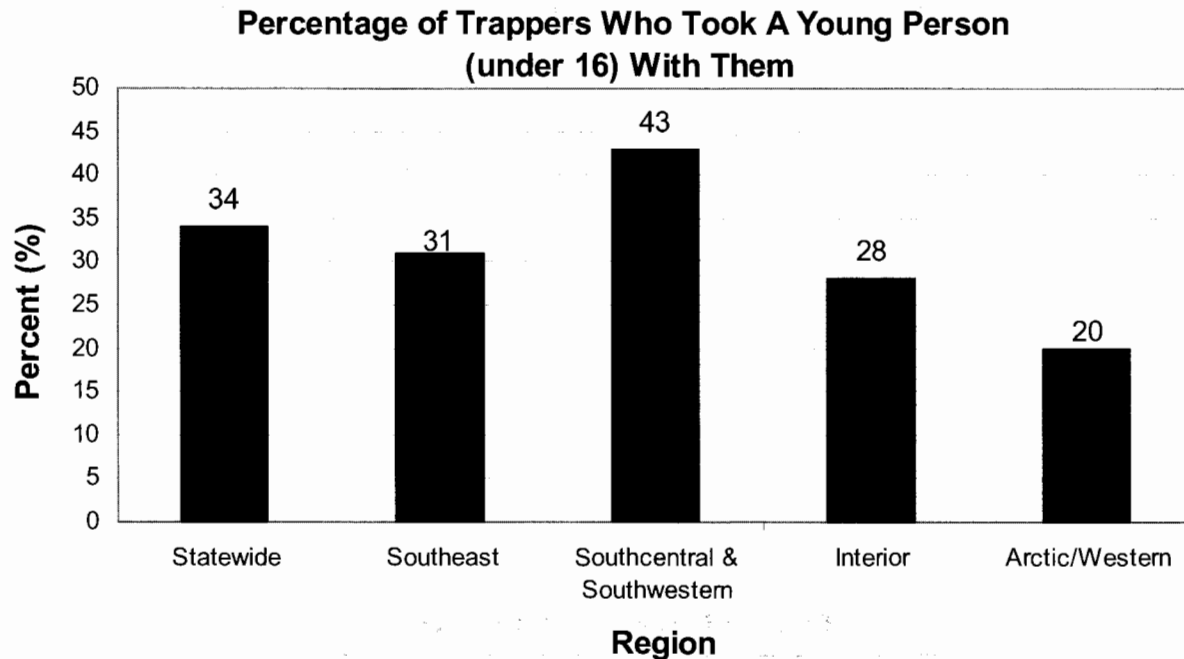


These graphs illustrate statewide and regional trapper average age, experience and trends over the last several trapping seasons.



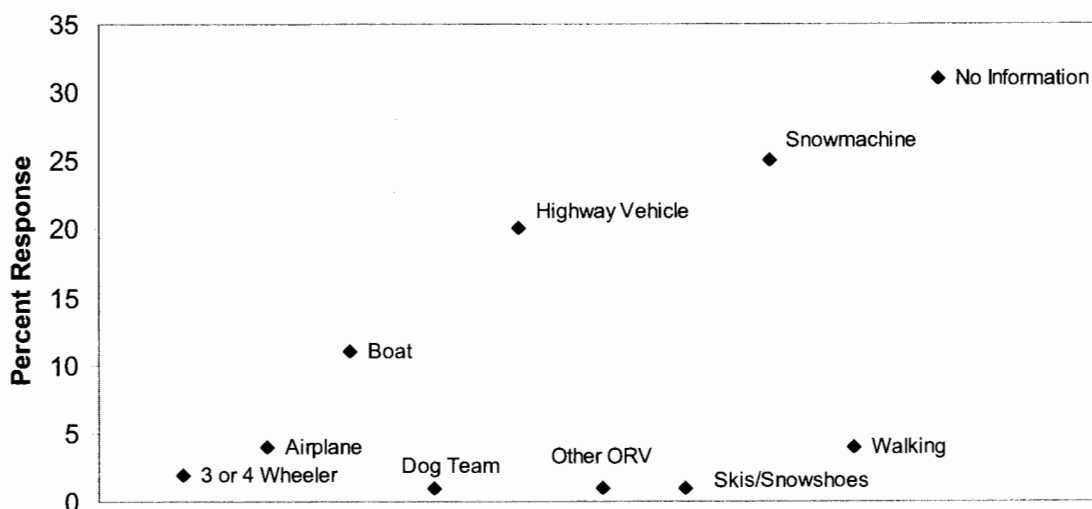
Did you have a youngster (under 16) with you on your trapline this year?

Although age and experience trends indicate a slightly lower average age among trappers, last year significantly fewer young people were introduced to trapping. During the 2001–2002 trapping season, only 34% of trappers statewide were accompanied by a young person, compared to 50% the previous season. The following graph illustrates regional differences in young persons on a trapline.

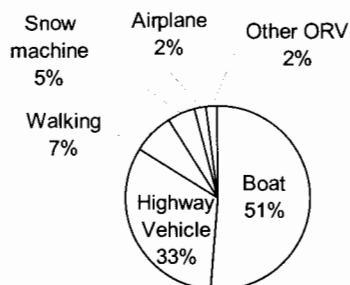


What mode of transportation did you use to get to your main trapping area?

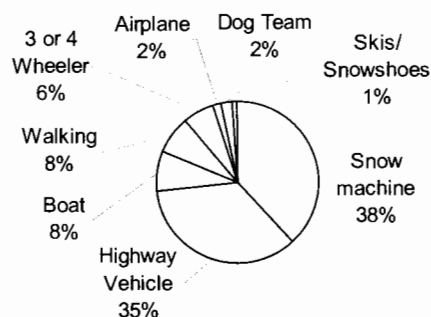
Statewide Transportation To Trapline



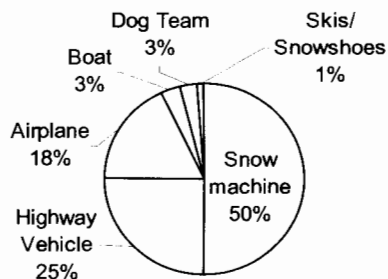
Southeast Transportation To Trapline



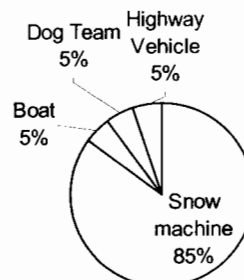
Southcentral & Southwestern Transportation To Trapline



Interior Transportation To Trapline

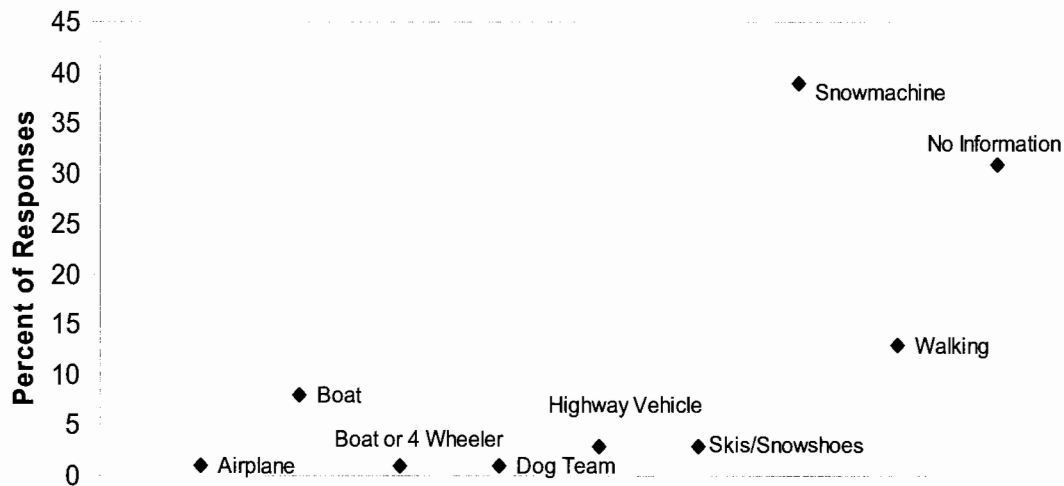


Arctic/Western Transportation To Trapline

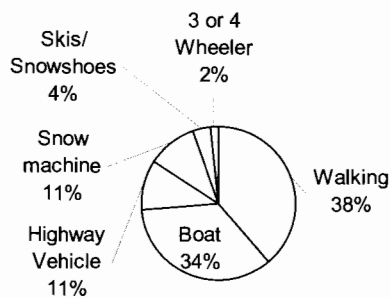


What Transportation did you use to run your main trapline?

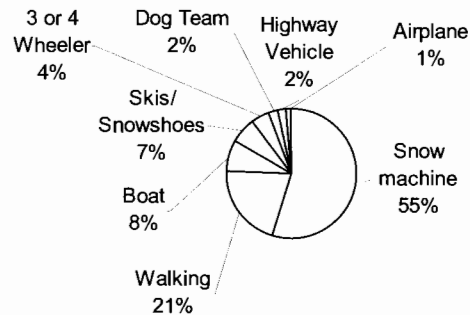
Statewide Transportation On Trapline



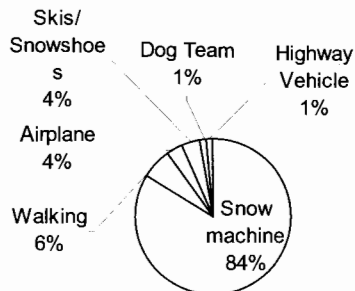
Southeast Transportation To Run Trapline



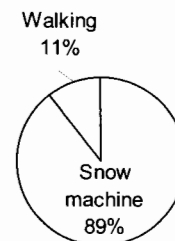
Southcentral & Southwest Transportation On Trapline



Interior Transportation To Run Trapline

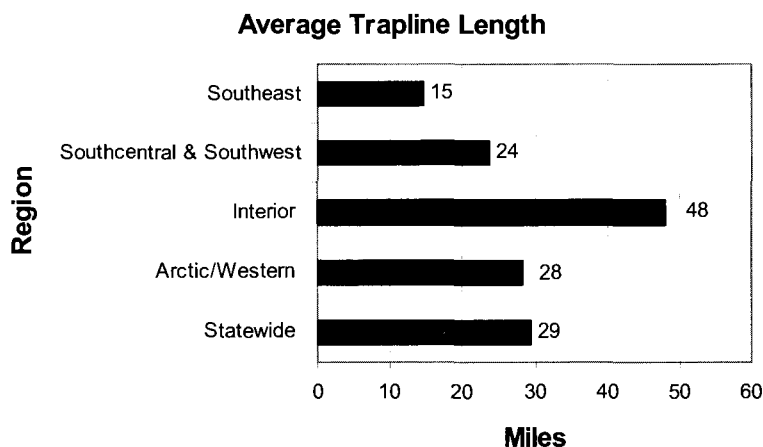


Arctic Transportation To Run Trapline

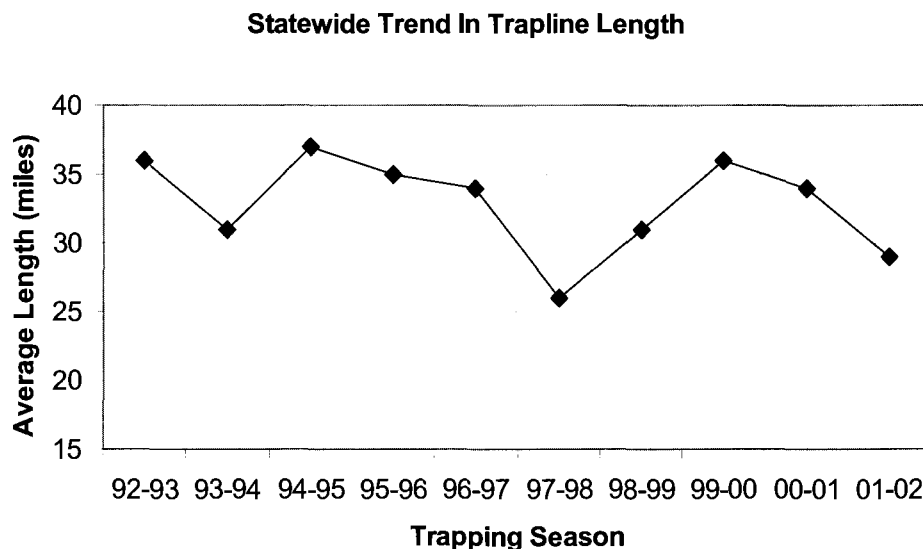


How long was your main trapline in 2001–2002?

The average trapline length in Alaska was 29 miles. Trapline lengths varied throughout the state; ranging from a 1-mile line to a 400-mile line. In Southeast, the average trapline length was 15 miles with lengths ranging between 2 and 54 miles. In the Southcentral and Southwestern regions, the average was 24 miles, with lengths between 1 and 160 miles. The average in the Interior was 48 miles, with traplines ranging from 1 to 400 miles. In the Arctic/Western region, the average trapline length was 28 miles and lengths varied from 1 and 75 miles. Average trapline lengths did not change much from last year, and trappers continue to cover variable distances on their traplines.



Since the 1992–1993 season, the statewide average trapline length has remained between 26 and 37 miles. The longest trapline in the state has fluctuated between a low of 200 miles in 1999–2000 and a high of over 400 miles in 1992–1993. Changes in trapline length can be the result of many factors including fur prices or abundance, trapping season changes, weather and the addition or subtraction of reporting trappers.



How many sets did you make on your trapline in 2001–2002?

The following table represents the number of sets reported by trappers from each region, although many respondents left this question blank. According to those who responded, the number of sets vary greatly; intensity and effort is different for each trapper and region. Most trappers (86%) put out 100 or less traps. A significant percentage (37%) of reporting trappers put out a fewer than 25 sets. There is an increase in the percentage of sets with more than 300 traps (2%, 2000–2001 vs. 3%, 2001–2002). The data do not necessarily represent a measure of trapper effort; the number of sets may be a better indication of the reason a person traps (e.g. recreation or subsistence).

Region	Number of Sets					
	Less than 25 sets	20-50 sets	51-100 sets	101-200 sets	201-300 sets	More than 300 sets
Statewide	37%	30%	19%	9%	2%	3%
Southeast	50%	29%	13%	9%	None	None
Southcentral & Southwest	33%	38%	19%	9%	1%	None
Interior	28%	24%	26%	9%	4%	9%
Arctic/Western	58%	16%	11%	5%	10%	None

Most Important Species

Marten was the species listed statewide as most important in the 2001–2002 questionnaire. Regionally, wolves were listed as the most important species in the Interior, and wolverine in the Arctic/Western region. Marten has been the most important species since the 1992–1993 trapping season except during the 1999–2000 season when wolf was listed as most important. Trappers indicated that marten, lynx, river otter, mink, coyote, Arctic fox, and ermine were more important during the 2001–2002 trapping season; beaver and red fox decreased in importance; and wolf, wolverine, muskrat and Arctic hare remained at the same level of importance since the 2000–2001 season. Targeted species change yearly and these changes are based on many factors. Regional differences can be explained by furbearer availability, abundance, and fur market status.

Species

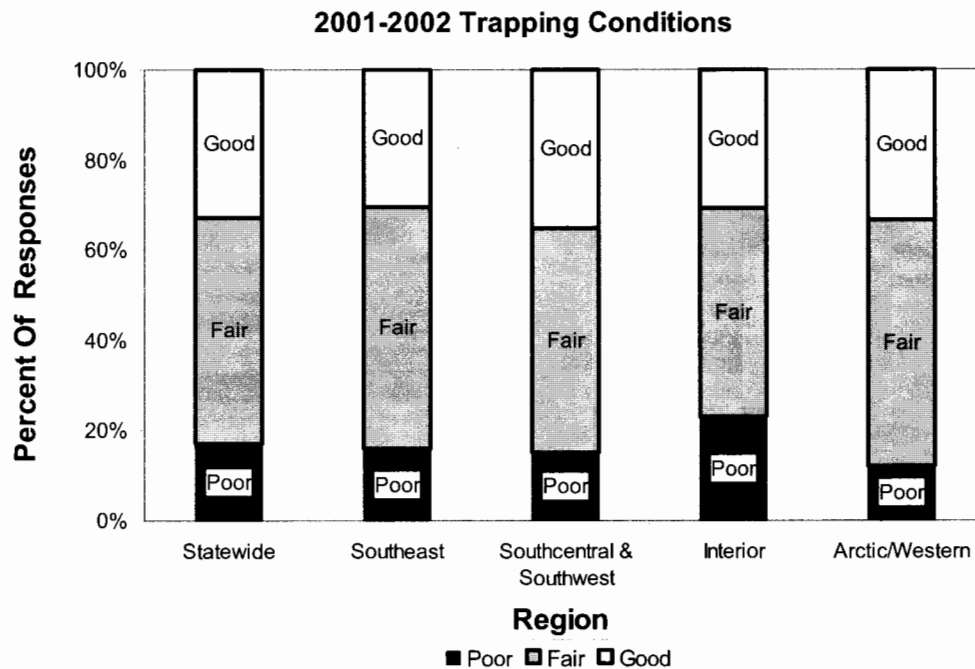
Region	Marten	Wolf	Lynx	Wolverine	River Otter	Beaver	Red Fox	Mink	Arctic Fox	Coyote	Ermine	Arctic Hare	Muskrat
Statewide ¹	20%	17%	13%	11%	9%	9%	6%	5%	3%	3%	2%	1%	N/A ²
Southeast	32%	14%	2%	5%	24%	8%	N/A ²	14%	N/A ²	N/A ²	2%	N/A ²	N/A ²
Southcentral & Southwest	17%	12%	12%	9%	9%	11%	13%	4%	N/A ²	5%	8%	N/A ²	>1%
Interior	22%	24%	21%	13%	1%	6%	5%	2%	4%	2%	N/A ²	>1%	>1%
Arctic/Western	5%	20%	16%	23%	9%	11%	N/A ²	1%	14%	1%	N/A ²	N/A ²	N/A ²

¹ Statewide percentages listed in descending order of indicated importance.

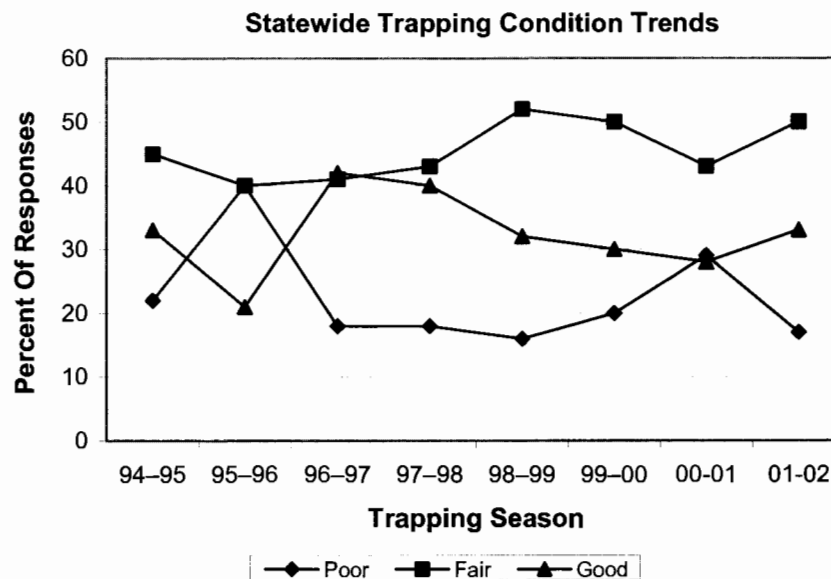
² N/A indicates no data available or no trapping effort.

What were the trapping conditions on your trapline?

Over 80% of trappers who returned the 2001–2002 questionnaire indicated the conditions were fair to good.

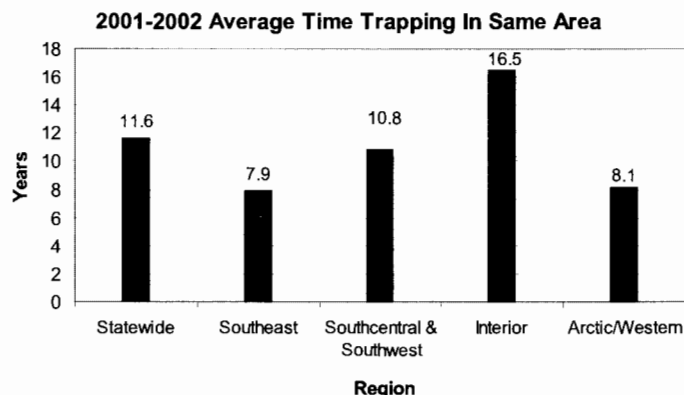
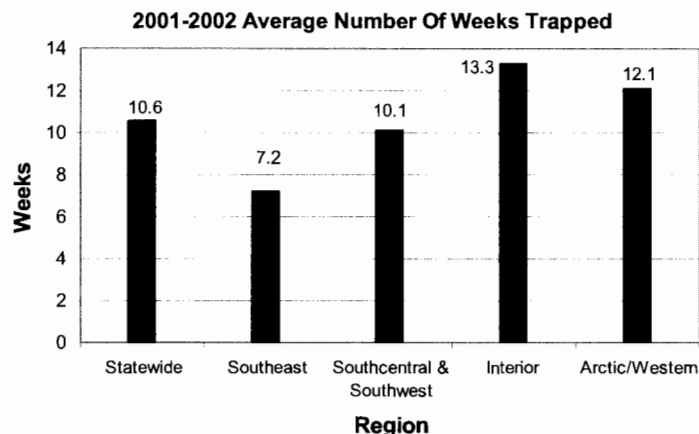


Trapping conditions have varied over the last eight years. The majority of trappers tell us that conditions have been and continue to be fair. The graph below depicts the percent of responses for each condition category (poor, fair, and good) over the last eight years. For example, during the 01–02 trapping season, approximately 50% of trappers felt conditions were fair.

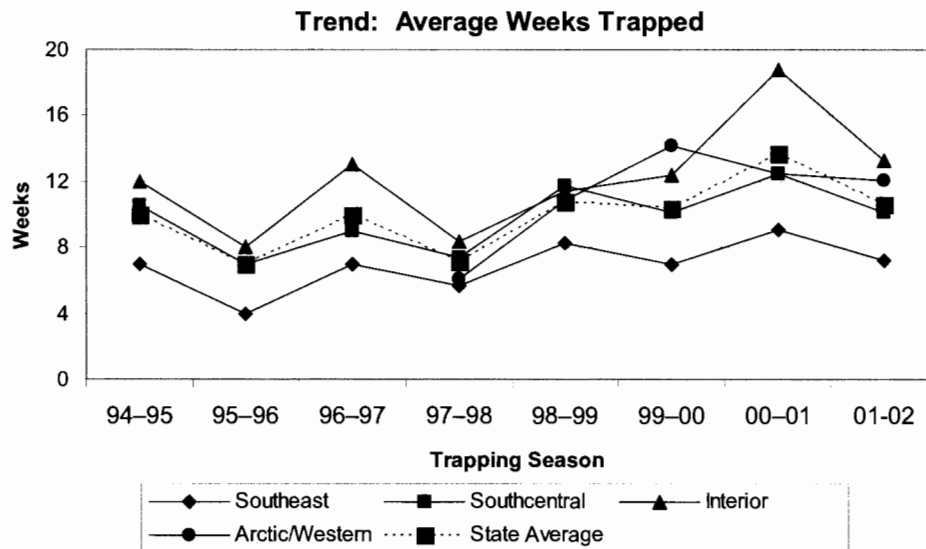


How many weeks did you trap during the 2001-2002 season? How many years have you been trapping in the same area?

The average trapper in Alaska trapped for approximately 11 weeks, no change from the 2000–2001 trapping season. Alaskan trappers have spent, on average, approximately 12 years trapping in the same area. The longest time in the same area is 60 years by a trapper in the Dillingham area. Statewide, the average time trapping in the same area decreased.

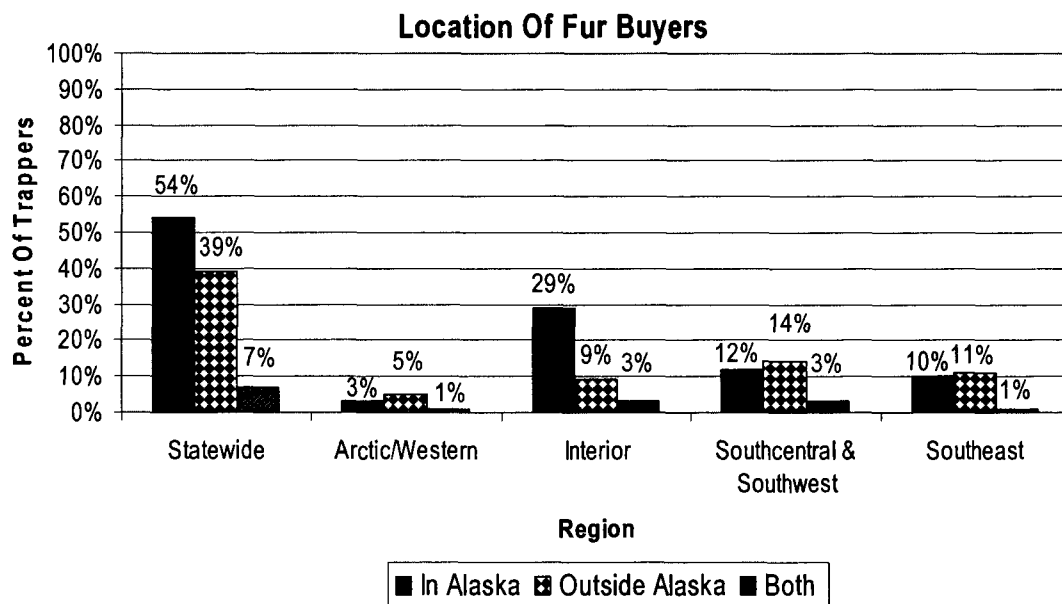
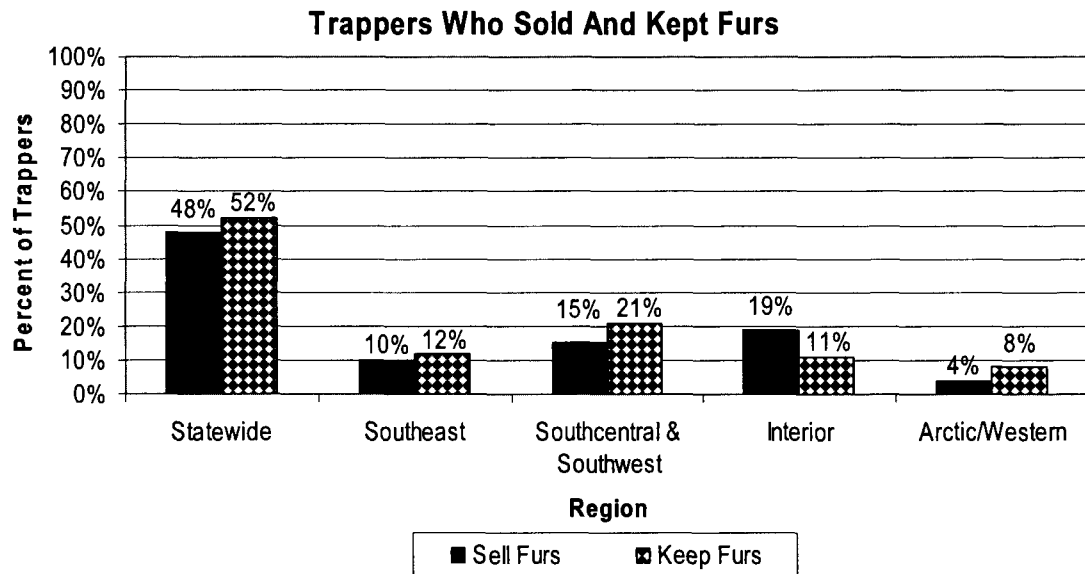


The chart below illustrates trends in the length of time trapped in each region over the last several trapping seasons. During the 2001–2002 trapping season, trappers in every region trapped fewer weeks than the previous year. Statewide, over the last 8 years, the average number of weeks trapped has remained fairly stable at about 10 weeks per season.

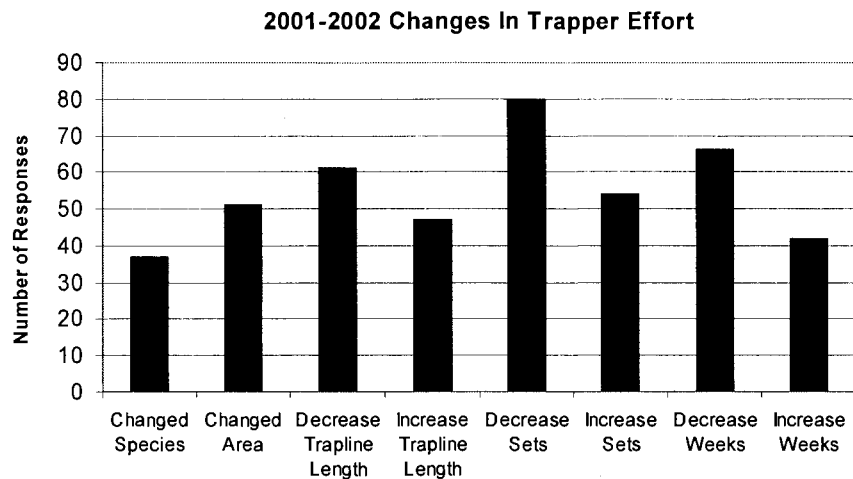


Did you keep or sell most of your furs?

Over 50% of trappers statewide kept their furs rather than selling them. The trapper questionnaire does not currently ask questions concerning the use of furs that are kept. It might be interesting to explore this in future questionnaires; or trappers could indicate the used for which furs are kept. Statewide, trappers sold most of their furs to Alaskan fur buyers. Interior trappers sold more furs to Alaskan buyers while the remaining trappers sold furs fairly equally to in-state and out-of-state furbuyers. The difference may be due to the proximity of fur buyers in Anchorage and Fairbanks making it easier for trappers in those areas to sell furs locally. In Southeast and the Arctic/Western Regions it may be more economic to sell furs outside of Alaska because of the lack of fur dealers.

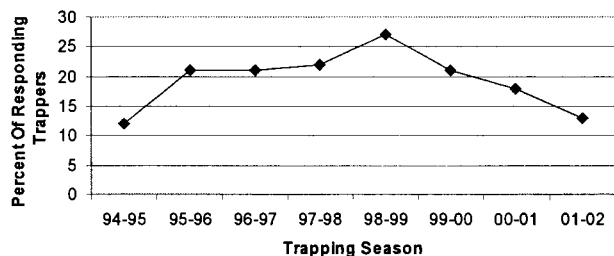


How did you change your trapping effort for the 2001-2002 trapping season?

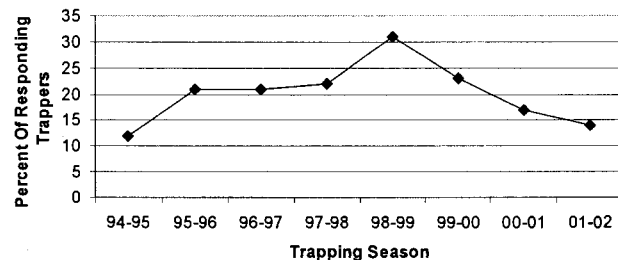


Did last year's fur prices or the pre-season advertised prices affect your trapping effort in the 2001-2002 trapping season?

Trappers Who Said Pre-Season Advertised Prices Affected Their Trapping Effort

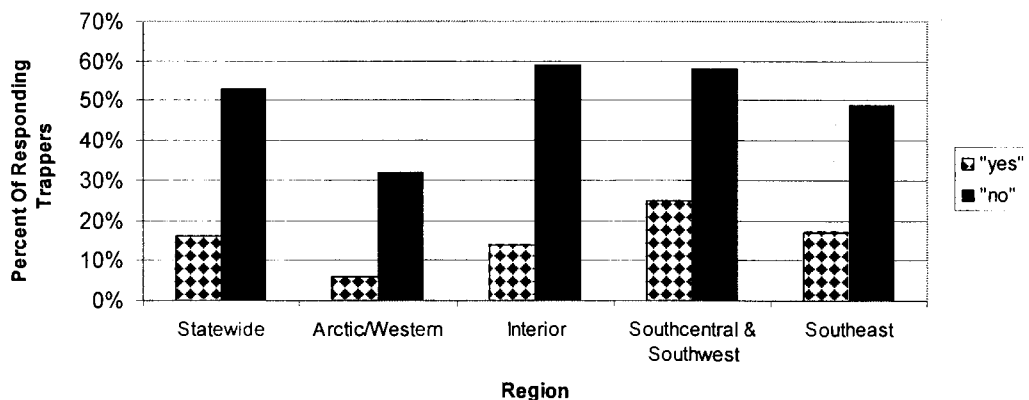


Trappers Who Said Last Year's Prices Affected Their Trapping Effort



Did the presence of other trappers in the area that you trap affect your trapping effort in 2001-2002?

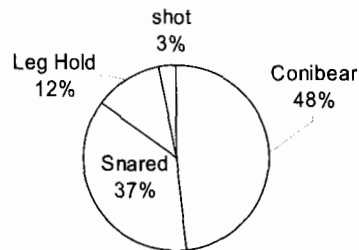
Trappers Who Said Other Trappers Affected Their Trapping Effort



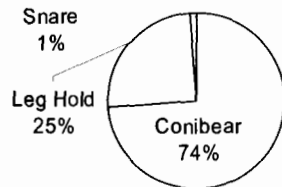
Methods of Taking Furbearers

We continue to ask trappers to document the approximate percentage of animals taken by a variety of methods allowed by a trapping license. This data provides us with information on trap type and trapping strategies for various species throughout the state. Pie charts displayed on the following pages represent the percentage of animals taken by method with a trapping license.

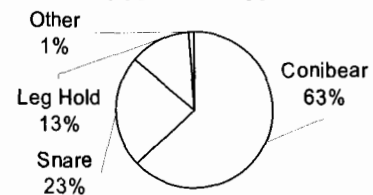
Statewide Beaver Harvest



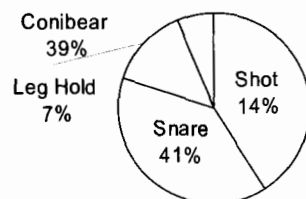
Southeast Beaver Harvest



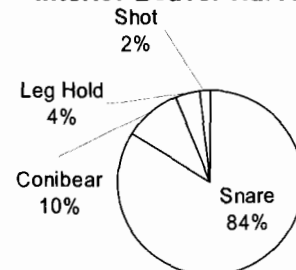
Southcentral & Southwest Beaver Harvest



Arctic/Western Beaver Harvest

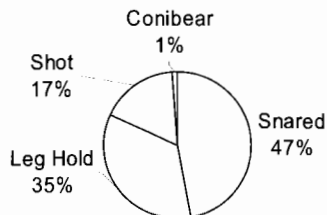


Interior Beaver Harvest

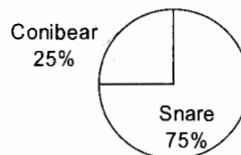


Methods of Taking Furbearers

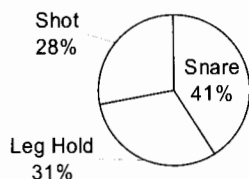
Statewide Coyote Harvest



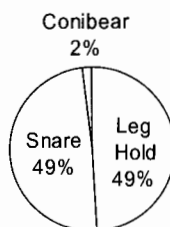
Southeast Coyote Harvest



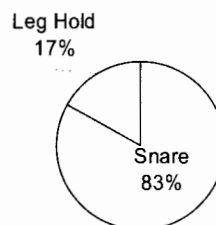
Southcentral & Southwest Coyote Harvest



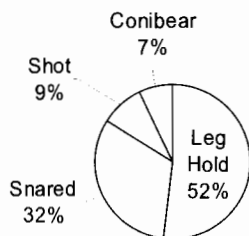
Interior Coyote Harvest



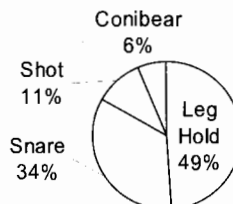
Arctic/Western Coyote Harvest



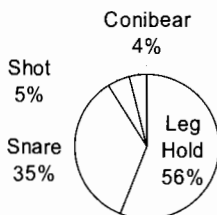
Statewide Fox Harvest



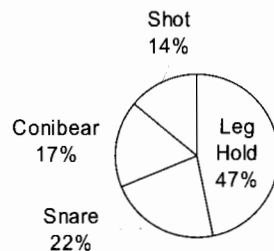
Southcentral & Southwest Fox Harvest



Interior Fox Harvest

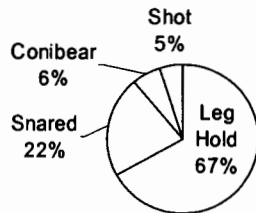


Arctic/Western Fox Harvest

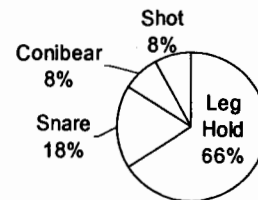


Methods of Taking Furbearers

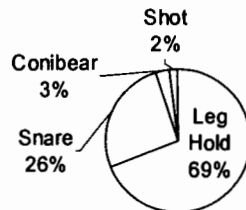
Statewide Lynx Harvest



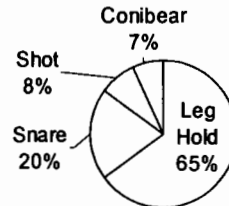
Southcentral & Southwest Lynx Harvest



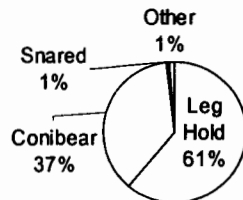
Interior Lynx Harvest



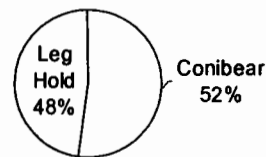
Arctic/Western Lynx Harvest



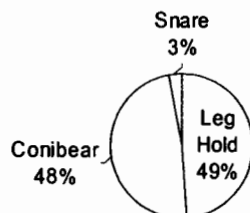
Statewide Marten Harvest



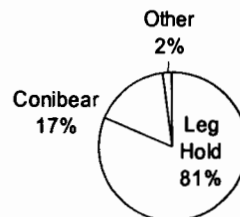
Southeast Marten Harvest



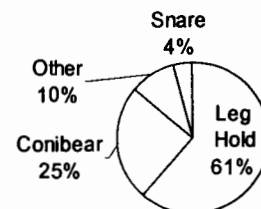
Southcentral & Southwest Marten Harvest



Interior Marten Harvest

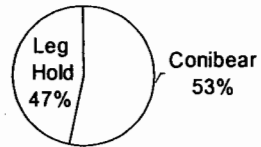


Arctic/Wester Marten Harvest

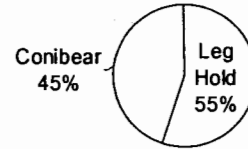


Methods of Taking Furbearers

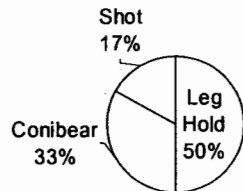
**Southcentral & Southwest
Mink Harvest**



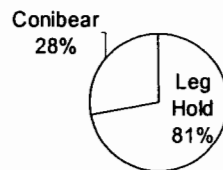
Southeast Mink Harvest



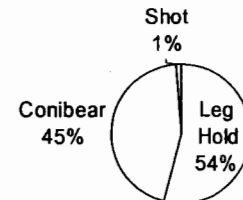
Arctic/Western Mink Harvest



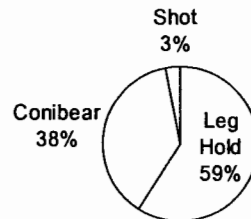
Interior Mink Harvest



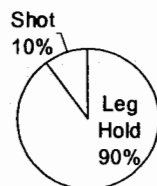
Statewide Mink Harvest



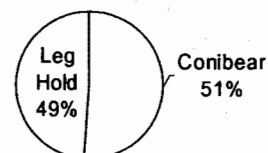
Statewide Muskrat Harvest



Interior Muskrat Harvest

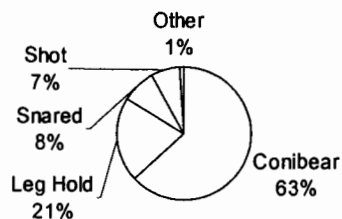


**Southcentral & Southwest
Muskrat Harvest**

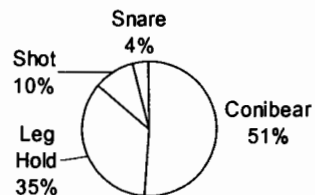


Methods of Taking Furbearers

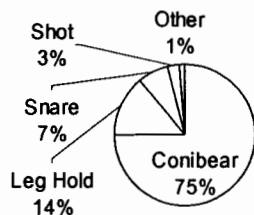
Statewide River Otter Harvest



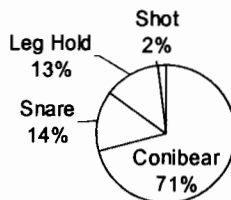
Southeast River Otter Harvest



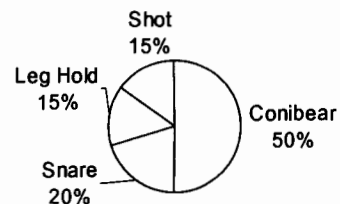
Southcentral & Southwest River Otter Harvest



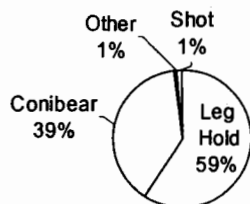
Interior River Otter Harvest



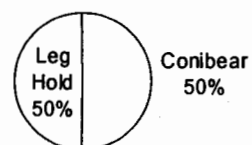
Arctic/Western River Otter Harvest



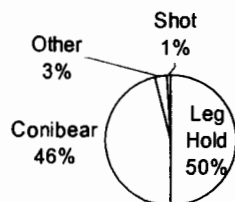
Statewide Ermine Harvest



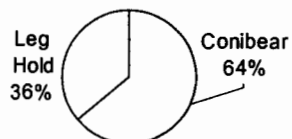
Southeast Ermine Harvest



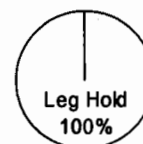
Southcentral & Southwest Ermine Harvest



Arctic/Western Ermine Harvest

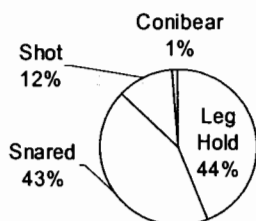


Interior Ermine Harvest

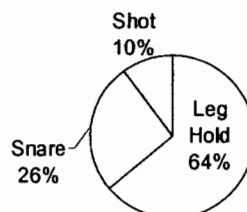


Methods of Taking Furbearers

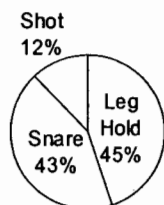
Statewide Wolf Harvest



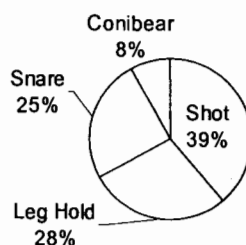
Southeast Wolf Harvest



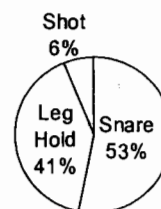
Southcentral & Southwest Wolf Harvest



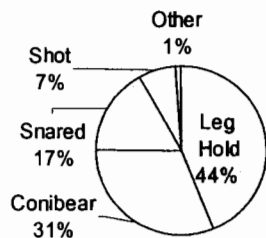
Arctic/Western Wolf Harvest



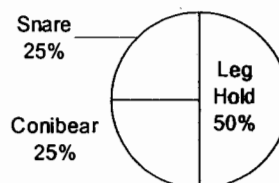
Interior Wolf Harvest



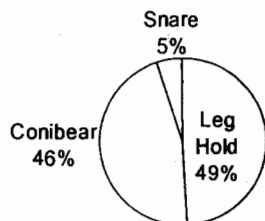
Statewide Wolverine Harvest



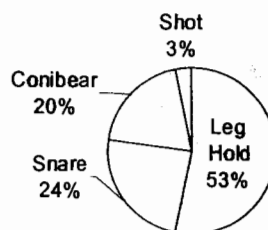
Southeast Wolverine Harvest



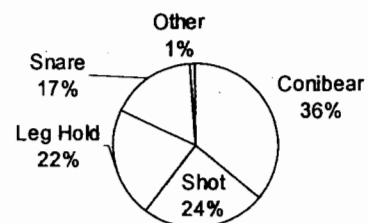
Southcentral & Southwest Wolverine Harvest



Interior Wolverine Harvest



Arctic/Western Wolverine Harvest



ALASKA'S FURBEARER POPULATIONS - TELL US WHAT'S HAPPENING

Only 5 of the 15 species defined as furbearers are required to be sealed throughout Alaska: beaver, lynx, otter, wolf, and wolverine. Marten are required to be sealed in some units but not statewide. Consequently, information on the numbers, distribution, and utilization of many furbearers is limited. On this year's trapper questionnaire we are asking trappers for harvest information on all Alaska furbearers. Thanks for your help!

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 two measures. They developed an index for the responses received from trappers on the questionnaire. A numerical value was assigned to each of three responses: 1 = scarce, 2 = common, and 3 = abundant. The value of the abundance index was derived from a mathematical equation that expresses the cumulative response value of trappers in a given region as a percentage of the range of possible values:

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

Where I = abundance index

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

n = number of trappers reporting

The abundance index (I) ranges 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 these values back to the appropriate category: scarce, common, or abundant.

We do not know if the same ranges of percentages are appropriate for animals in Alaska, because 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.

Relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations statewide and the Arctic & West Coast Region, 2001-2002.

Furbearer:	Statewide Average		Arctic & West Coast Region GMUs 18,22,23,26A	
	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend
Arctic Fox	scarce	same	common	same
Beaver	abundant	same	abundant	more
Coyote	common	fewer	scarce	more
Ermine	common	same	common	same
Lynx	common	same	abundant	more
Marten	common	fewer	common	same
Mink	common	same	common	same
Muskrat	common	same	common	same
Red Fox	common	same	abundant	more
Red Squirrel	abundant	same	common	same
River Otter	common	same	common	more
Wolf	abundant	same	abundant	more
Wolverine	common	fewer	common	more
Prey				
Grouse	scarce	fewer	scarce	same
Hare	common	fewer	common	same
Ptarmigan	common	same	abundant	same
Mice/Rodents	abundant	same	abundant	same



Relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations in Interior Alaska, 2001-2002.

Interior Region

Furbearers:	Lower Tanana Basin GMUs 20 ABCDF, 25C		Upper Tanana Basin GMUs 12, 20E		Upper Kuskokwim, Innoko & Nowitna GMUs 19,21A		Middle Yukon & Koyukuk GMUs 21BCDE, 24		Upper Yukon Basin GMUs 25ABD, 26BC	
	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend
Arctic Fox	x	x	x	x	x	x	scarce	more	abundant	more
Beaver	abundant	same	common	more	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	more
Coyote	common	more	common	more	scarce	more	scarce	more	scarce	more
Ermine	common	same	common	more	common	same	common	same	abundant	more
Lynx	abundant	same	common	same	common	more	abundant	same	abundant	more
Marten	common	same	scarce	fewer	abundant	same	abundant	same	common	same
Mink	common	fewer	scarce	same	common	same	scarce	more	scarce	more
Muskrat	scarce	more	common	more	scarce	more	scarce	more	abundant	more
Red Fox	common	fewer	common	same	common	same	abundant	same	scarce	same
Red Squirrel	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	same	common	same
River Otter	common	same	scarce	same	abundant	more	common	more	scarce	more
Wolf	common	more	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more
Wolverine	scarce	same	common	same	common	same	common	same	scarce	more
Prey	scarce	fewer	scarce	same	common	fewer	scarce	fewer	scarce	same
Grouse	common	fewer	scarce	fewer	common	more	common	fewer	scarce	same
Hare	scarce	same	scarce	same	common	same	common	same	common	same
Ptarmigan	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	more
Mice/Rodents										

X indicates no data available or species does not occur in the area.

Relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations in Southcentral Alaska, 2001-2002.

Southcentral Region

Furbearers:	Copper River & Upper Susitna River Basins GMUs 11, 13		Lower Susitna Basin GMUs 14 & 16		Prince William Sound & North Gulf Coast GMU 6		Kenai Peninsula GMUs 7& 15		Kodiak Archipeligo GMU 8	
	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend
Arctic Fox	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Beaver	common	same	abundant	more	abundant	more	same	more	common	more
Coyote	common	more	common	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	x	x
Ermine	common	more	abundant	same	common	more	common	more	common	more
Lynx	common	same	common	more	scarce	more	scarce	more	x	x
Marten	common	more	abundant	more	common	more	abundant	more	x	x
Mink	common	same	common	more	common	more	common	same	x	x
Muskrat	common	more	common	same	abundant	more	common	more	scarce	more
Red Fox	common	same	common	same	scarce	more			abundant	same
Red Squirrel	abundant	more	abundant	same	common	same	abundant	more	abundant	more
River Otter	common	same	abundant	more	common	same	common	same	abundant	same
Wolf	common	more	abundant	more	scarce	more	common	more	x	x
Wolverine	scarce	same	scarce	more	scarce	more	scarce	more	x	x
Prey										
Grouse	scarce	same	common	same	scarce	same	scarce	fewer	x	x
Hare	scarce	fewer	common	more	abundant	same	scarce	fewer	abundant	more
Ptarmigan	common	same	abundant	more	scarce	same	scarce	more	common	more
Mice/Rodents	abundant	more	abundant	more	common	same	abundant	more	abundant	more

X indicates no data available or species does not occur in the area.

Relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations for Southwestern and Southeastern Alaska, 2001-2002.

Furbearer	Southwest Region				Southeast Region							
	Bristol Bay Area GMU 17		Alaska Peninsula GMUs 9, 10		Ketchikan, Prince of Wales & Vicinity GMUs 1B, 3		Petersburg, Wrangell, Kupreanof & Vicinity GMUs 1B, 3		Juneau, Douglas, Haines, Yakutat GMUs 1CD, 5		Admiralty, Baranof, Chichagof Islands GMU 4	
	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend
Arctic Fox	scarce	x	scarce	more	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Beaver	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	common	more	common	more
Coyote	common	more	abundant	more	x	x	x	x	common	more	x	x
Ermine	common	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	common	more	common	same	common	same
Lynx		same	scarce	same	x	x	scarce	fewer	scarce	more	x	x
Marten	common	more	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	more
Mink	common	more	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	more
Muskrat	scarce	more	common	same	x	x	scarce	fewer	scarce	same	x	x
Red Fox	abundant	more	abundant	more	x	x	x	x	scarce	same	x	x
Red Squirrel	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more
River Otter	common	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	common	more	abundant	more
Wolf	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	fewer	common	more	x	x
Wolverine	common	same	common	same	scarce	fewer	scarce	more	common	more	x	x
Prey												
Grouse	common	more	abundant	more	common	more	scarce	same	common	more	scarce	x
Hare	common	same	abundant	more	x	x	x	x	scarce	same	x	x
Ptarmigan	abundant	more	abundant	more	scarce	more	scarce	fewer	common	more	scarce	more
Rodents	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	more

X indicates no data available or species does not occur in the area.

Wolf Harvest Methods

The following table is compiled from mandatory wolf-sealing certificates from 1997 through 2001.

1997–1998 Trapping Season

Region	Shot	Trapped	Snared	Unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	33	98	38	3	172
Southcentral	193	144	81	4	422
Interior	114	172	225	12	523
Arctic	42	39	4	20	105
Total	382	453	348	39	1222

1998–1999 Trapping Season

Region	Shot	Trapped	Snared	Unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	55	70	49	1	175
Southcentral	208	163	65	6	442
Interior	173	212	288	6	679
Arctic	90	34	2	20	146
Total	526	479	404	33	1442

1999–2000 Trapping Season

Region	Shot	Trapped	Snared	Unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	59	107	55	3	224
Southcentral	324	143	100	12	579
Interior	193	225	241	17	676
Arctic	146	37	24	29	236
Total	722	512	420	61	1715

2000–2001 Trapping Season

Region	Shot	Trapped	Snared	Unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	93	69	51	2	215
Southcentral	203	112	246	21	582
Interior	333	232	228	32	825
Arctic	65	32	79	6	182
Total	694	445	604	61	1804

2001–2002 Trapping Season

Region	Shot	Trapped	Snared	Unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	42	72	17	3	134
Southcentral	256	156	174	4	590
Interior	166	245	328	28	767
Arctic	109	15	43	14	181
Total	573	488	562	49	1672

Alaska's Furbearer Harvest

Beaver, Lynx, river otter, wolf and wolverine are required to be sealed statewide. Marten are required to be sealed in Game Management Units 1–7, 13E, 14–16. Harvest estimates are based on fur sealing records.

Species	Region	Reported Harvest 1997-98	Reported Harvest 1998-99	Reported Harvest 1999-2000	Reported Harvest 2000-2001	Reported Harvest 2001-2002 [†]
Beaver*	Southeast	443	189	477	514	310
	Southcentral/Southwestern	1350	1232	1145	1601	1037
	Interior	2147	1334	1057	1348	1335
	Arctic/Western	1359	461	397	151	23
	Total Beaver	5299	3216	3076	3614	2705
Lynx	Southeast	0	0	0	13	0
	Southcentral/Southwestern	702	553	755	876	425
	Interior	2145	2180	2191	2934	1742
	Arctic/Western	63	49	66	159	182
	Total Lynx	2910	2782	3012	3993	2349
Otter	Southeast	645	544	506	428	495
	Southcentral/Southwestern	553	409	358	470	511
	Interior	113	58	81	113	111
	Arctic/Western	481	153	75	165	99
	Total Otter	1792	1164	1020	1176	1216
Wolf	Southeast	172	176	225	215	132
	Southcentral/Southwestern	426	506	579	582	590
	Interior	526	679	676	825	765
	Arctic/Western	105	134	236	182	181
	Total Wolf	1229	1495	1716	1804	1668
Wolverine	Southeast	25	18	26	13	4
	Southcentral/Southwestern	233	170	162	168	204
	Interior	232	227	288	310	237
	Arctic/Western	99	81	76	133	99
	Total Wolverine	589	496	552	625	544
Marten**	Southeast	3148	2385	2891	3025	1758
	Southcentral/Southwestern	571	806	933	1395	1367
	Interior	16	9	0	0	13
	Arctic/Western	0	0	0	0	1
	Total Marten	3735	3200	3824	4420	3139

* Beaver are required to be sealed in Game Management Units 1–17, 19–21, 24–25, 26B and 26C.

** Marten are required to be sealed in Game Management Units 1–7, 13E, 14–16.

† Preliminary Data. Totals may change due to data entry.

COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING FURS

Average prices paid for raw furs by buyers in Alaska

(Several fur buyers in Alaska were asked for the average and top prices they paid for furs. The values they gave were averaged to produce this table.)

Species	1998-99 Average \$	1999-00 Average \$	2000-01 Average \$	2001-02 Average \$	2002-03 Average \$	2002-03 Top \$
Beaver	\$25.75	\$21.77	\$20.65	\$45.00	\$19.55	\$25.00
Coyote	\$21.67	\$22.17	\$24.34	\$23.97	\$27.57	\$30.00
Fox	\$16.13	\$21.97	\$17.35	\$25.75	\$36.03	\$42.55
Lynx	\$42.50	\$54.75	\$60.25	\$91.00	\$90.69	\$106.38
Marten	\$24.00	\$26.89	\$35.36	\$45.50	\$37.60	\$40.00
Mink (wild)	\$10.25	\$13.14	\$7.36	\$15.84	\$8.46	\$9.27
Muskrat	\$1.31	\$1.47	\$1.33	\$1.73	\$2.23	\$2.46
River Otter	\$38.75	\$41.13	\$72.82	\$59.83	\$94.25	\$108.50
Squirrel	\$0.50	\$0.92	\$1.33	\$0.98	\$.50	\$.50
Weasel	\$2.75	\$4.00	\$4.35	\$3.47	\$2.17	\$3.33
Wolf	\$231.25	\$213.75	\$159.00	\$165.00	\$141.88	\$175.00
Wolverine	\$281.25	\$233.75	\$257.50	\$222.50	\$224.43	\$250.00



FUR VALUE

The following table summarizes the total estimated value of furs trapped during the 2000-2001 trapping season. This table is intended to provide an estimate of fur values in Alaska and does not represent fur revenue. The estimated average price paid by Alaska fur dealers was used in this calculation.

2000-2001 Fur Value in Alaska

Species	Total Number	Average Price Paid in Alaska	Total Estimated Value
Beaver*	3614	\$20.65	\$74,629.10
Coyote**	51	\$24.34	\$1,241.34
Fox**	231	\$17.35	\$4,007.85
Lynx*	3993	\$60.25	\$240,578.25
Marten**	197	\$35.36	\$6,965.92
Mink**	86	\$7.36	\$632.96
Muskrat**	36	\$1.33	\$47.88
Otter*	1176	\$72.82	\$85,636.32
Squirrel, red**	9	\$1.33	\$11.97
Weasel (ermine)**	43	\$4.35	\$187.05
Wolf*	1804	\$159.00	\$286,836.00
Wolverine*	625	\$257.50	\$160,937.50
Total:	11,865		\$861,712.14

* Compiled from mandatory fur sealing records

** Compiled from fur export records

2001-2002 data not yet available



FUR ACQUISITION AND EXPORT

The following table summarizes data from the Report of Acquisition of Furs and Hides filled out by fur buyers (dealers) and the Raw Fur Skin Export Permit (the blue card everyone must fill out when sending raw furs out of state.) These reports are a general indicator of harvest trends but are not actual records of the number of furbearers harvested in a trapping season. Both reports may include furs harvested in previous years, and many trappers keep their furs for tanning and use at home. In addition, some people may not fill out the required forms. If you want more information about fur harvest trends, contact your regional or statewide furbearer biologist.

2000-2001 Fur Acquisition and Export (2001-2002 data not yet available)

Species	Acquisition of Furs By Alaskan Fur Buyers (Number of Furs)	Furs Exported out of Alaska (Number of Furs)
Beaver	67	156
Coyote	21	51
Fox, Blue (Arctic)	No Data	4
Fox, White (Arctic)	No Data	18
Fox, Red (Cross color)	25	64
Fox, Red (Red color)	85	127
Fox, Red (Silver color)	1	18
Lynx	155	184
Marten	303	197
Mink	62	86
Muskrat	20	36
Otter, land (river)	64	121
Squirrel, red	8	9
Weasel (ermine)	33	43
Wolf	61	171
Wolverine	38	82
Other	No Data	21
Total Furs	943	1388



FUR SEALING REQUIREMENTS

Lynx, river otter, wolf, or wolverine taken anywhere in the state and marten in Game Management Units 1-7, 13E, 14-16, and beaver taken in Units 1-11 and 13-17 must be sealed by an authorized department representative. If you ship furs to a buyer or auction house out of the state, they must be sealed **before** you ship them.

All raw skins of wild furbearers shipped from Alaska just have a Fur Export Permit (blue shipping tag) attached to the shipment. Also a Fur Export Report (a postage-paid postcard attached to the permit) must also be completed and mailed to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The U.S. Post Office Domestic Mail Manual Regulation 124.65 also requires compliance with this regulation. This 2-part form is free from any Alaska Department of Fish and Game office or authorized fur sealer.

If there is no authorized fur sealer near you, contact the nearest office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. A list of area biologists is on the next page. 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 following Regional Fur Sealing Officers.

Interior Region

Jackie Kephart
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-1599
(907) 459-7211

Southcentral/Southwestern Region

Bruce Bartley
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
333 Raspberry Rd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99518-1599
(907) 267-2216

Arctic/Western Region

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

Southeast Region

Denise Wolvin
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 240020
Douglas, Alaska 99824-0020
(907) 465-4265

***DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
AREA BIOLOGISTS AND GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS***

GMU 1 (A), 2 Boyd Porter Alaska Department of Fish and Game 2030 Sealevel Drive, Suite 205 KETCHIKAN, AK 99901 Phone: (907) 225-2475 Fax: (907) 225-2771	GMU 9, 10 Vacant Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 37 KING SALMON, AK 99613 Phone: (907) 246-3340 Fax: (907) 246-3309	GMU 19, 21(A),(E) Toby Boudreau Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 230 MCGRATH, AK 99627 Phone: (907) 524-3323 Fax: (907) 524-3323
GMU 1(B), 3 Rich Lowell Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 667 PETERSBURG, AK 99833 Phone: (907) 772-3801 Fax: (907) 772-9336	GMU 11, 13 Bob Tobey Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 47 GLENNALLEN, AK 99588 Phone: (907) 822-3461 Fax: (907) 822-3811	GMU 20(A),(B),(C),(F), 25(C) Don Young Alaska Department of Fish & Game 1300 College Road FAIRBANKS, AK 99701 Phone: (907) 459-7233 Fax: (907) 452-6410
GMU 4 Phil Mooney Alaska Department of Fish & Game 304 Lake Street Room 103 SITKA, AK 99835-7563 Phone: (907) 747-5449 Fax: (907) 747-6239	GMU 12, 20(E) Jeff Gross Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 355 TOK, AK 99780-0355 Phone: (907) 883-2971 Fax: (907) 883-2970	GMU 20(D) Steve DuBois Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 605 DELTA JUNCTION, AK 99737 Phone: (907) 895-4484 Fax: (907) 895-4833
GMU 1(C), 1(D), 5 Neil Barten Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 20 DOUGLAS, Alaska 99824 Phone: (907) 465-4359 Fax: (907) 465-4272	GMU 14(A) & (B), 16(A) & (B) Gino Del Frate Alaska Department of Fish & Game 1800 Glenn Hwy Suite 4 PALMER, Alaska 99645-6736 Phone: (907) 746-6327 Fax: (907) 746-6305	GMU 21(B),(C),(D), 24 Glenn Stout Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 209 GALENA, Alaska 99741 Phone: (907) 656-1345 Fax: (907) 656-1345
GMU 6 Dave Crowley Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 669 CORDOVA, Alaska 99574 Phone: (907) 424-3215 Fax: (907) 424-3235	GMU 14(C) Rick Sinnott Alaska Department of Fish & Game 333 Raspberry Road ANCHORAGE, Alaska 99518 Phone: (907) 267-2185 Fax: (907) 267-2433	GMU 22 Kate Persons Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 1148 NOME, Alaska 99762 Phone: (907) 443-2271 Fax: (907) 443-5893
GMU 7, 15 Jeff Selinger Alaska Department of Fish & Game 34828 Kalifornsky Beach Rd Ste B SOLDOTNA, Alaska 99669-8367 Phone: (907) 260-2905 Fax: (907) 262-4709	GMU 17 Jim Woolington Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 1030 DILLINGHAM, Alaska 99576 Phone: (907) 842-2334 Fax: (907) 842-5514	GMU 23 Jim Dau Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 689 KOTZEBUE, Alaska 99752 Phone: (907) 442-3420 Fax: (907) 442-2420
GMU 7, 15 Thomas McDonough Alaska Department of Fish & Game 3298 Douglas Place HOMER, Alaska 99603-8027 Phone: (907) 235-8191 Fax: (907) 235-2448	GMU 18 Roger Seavoy Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 1467 BETHEL, Alaska 99559 Phone: (907) 543-2979 Fax: (907) 543-2021	GMU 25(A),(B),(D), 26(B),(C) Bob Stephenson Alaska Department of Fish & Game 1300 College Road FAIRBANKS, Alaska 99701 Phone: (907) 459-7236 Fax: (907) 459-6410
GMU 8 Larry Van Daele Alaska Department of Fish & Game 211 Mission Road KODIAK, Alaska 99615 Phone: (907) 486-1876 Fax: (907) 486-1869	Management Coordinator Dale Rabe Management Coordinator Steve Machida Management Coordinator Roy Nowlin Management Coordinator Peter Bente	GMU 26(A) Geoff Carroll Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 1284 BARROW, Alaska 99723-1284 Phone: (907) 852-3464 Fax: (907) 852-3465

(Revised 4/2003)

REGIONAL BIOLOGISTS' REPORTS

SOUTHEAST REGION

Tom Schumacher, Wildlife Biologist

Harvest during 2001–02 was lower than last year for 5 of the 6 furbearer species sealed in GMUs 1–5, but generally close to long-term averages or within the historical range of harvest. Only otter harvest was higher than last year with an increase of 16%. The increase in otter harvest may have resulted from higher prices paid for pelts compared to recent years and increased effort by trappers targeting otters. The increase in otter harvest came primarily from GMUs 1A and 2. Compared to last year, otter harvest increased by 44% in GMU 1A and 32% in GMU 2.

Harvest of beavers in Region 1 dropped by nearly 40% compared to 2000–01. This was primarily due to lower harvest in GMU 2 where harvest dropped by 40% and was well below the 10-year average of 216. Whether this decline in harvest was the result of lower numbers of beavers or reduced effort by trappers is unknown. Although harvest in GMU 3 also dropped compared to last year, it remained well above the 10-year average for that area.

The wolf harvest of 151 animals was lower than the long-term average of 204, and the distribution of the harvest was different than it has been in recent years. GMU 2 usually accounts for a majority of the harvest, but this year it was third, accounting for less harvest than the islands of GMU 3 and GMU 1A. Whether the decline in harvest in GMU 2 is related to lower numbers of wolves or less trapping effort is unknown. Wolf abundance does not appear to have appreciably changed over the last several years. In contrast to GMU 2, harvest of wolves in GMU 3 remained high for the third straight year. Wolf numbers appear to be increasing in this area, perhaps due to the recovery of deer populations from hard winters in the early 1970s, increasing numbers of moose throughout the GMU, and expansion of introduced populations of elk.

Martens remain the most commonly trapped furbearer in the region with 1819 harvested during the 2001–02 trapping season. This total is down 40% compared to last year and is well below the previous high years of 1996–97 and 1997–98 when over 3700 were taken. There was a decline in harvest of martens in each GMU and Subunit in Region 1. Marten populations fluctuate in response to food availability, and this year's harvest was well within the range recorded over the last 10 years. Martens principally prey on small mammals like voles, and a survey of small mammals related to a field study of martens revealed that small mammal populations were low in several areas of the Region. Therefore, we anticipate that the harvest of martens in the region may further decline and remain relatively low for the few years until small mammal populations rebound.

The wolverine harvest of 6 was about 25% that of previous years. Little is known about the status of wolverine populations in the region. Because accessing their habitat can be difficult and because only a few trappers target wolverines, relatively few are taken in Southeast Alaska. Lynx are another uncommon furbearer in Southeast Alaska. This year only 3 were trapped, all on the northern mainland. Lynx generally do not reside in Region 1. The occurrence of lynx in the harvest is usually related to a decline in snowshoe hare populations in adjacent interior Alaska and Canada. At such times lynx travel widely in search of food.

Numbers of Furbearers Sealed by Game Management Unit for 2001-02

GMU	Beaver	Lynx	Marten	Otter	Wolf	Wolverine
1A	13	0	253	98	42	2
1B	4	0	115	17	19	2
1C	0	1	31	1	2	2
1D	0	1	23	7	1	0
2	169	0	453	189	31	0
3	110	0	178	41	53	0
4	14	0	755	147	0	0
5	0	0	11	15	3	0
Total	310	2	1819	501	151	6

Tom Schumacher, ADF&G Wildlife Conservation P.O. Box 240020 Douglas, AK 99824-0020, (907) 465-4265; Tom_Schumacher@fishgame.state.ak.us

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

Howard Golden, Southcentral Furbearer Biologist

During the 2001–2002 trapping season in southcentral Alaska, harvests were higher than last season for river otters, wolves and wolverines, and lower for beavers, lynx and marten. Fur sealing records showed beaver harvest was below average, falling from 1601 in 2000–2001 to 1037 in 2001–2002. Beaver take was highest in the Mat-Su Valley/Upper Cook Inlet area. Marten harvest was above average but dropped slightly from 2000–2001 with 78% of the sealed pelts coming from the Mat-Su/Upper Cook Inlet area. We saw small increases in river otter and wolf harvests from the previous season, and harvests for both species were above average. Most of the otter take was from the Alaska Peninsula/Kodiak/Aleutians area and most of the wolves were taken from the

Nelchina/Copper River Basin area. Wolverine harvest was also above average, rising from 168 in 2000–2001 to 204 in 2001–2002.

Overall in Southcentral, lynx harvest dropped by 51% from 2000–2001. More lynx by far were taken in the Nelchina/Copper River Basin area compared with other areas in the region, but harvest there fell 67% between 2000–2001 and 2001–2002. Harvest also dropped on the Kenai Peninsula from 98 to 74 lynx taken. The only areas showing increased harvests in 2001–2002 were Mat-Su/Upper Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound.

Snowshoe hare numbers continued to drop in the Nelchina/Copper River Basin area. This was the second year of the decline in the population's 9- to 10-year cycle following the peak in 1999–2000. The lynx population also appeared to have reached its peak in 2000–2001 and is in its decline phase, which occurs within about the first 4 years after the peak. Kitten production and survival during the decline phase is generally very low. This situation is also happening on the Kenai Peninsula, although snowshoe hare and lynx populations appear to have reached their peaks about 3 years ago. Lynx often leave areas where snowshoe hare numbers have crashed and travel to new areas in search of food. The increased take of lynx in the Mat-Su/Upper Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound areas during the last 2 years was probably due to this movement of lynx away from the Nelchina/Copper River Basin area and Kenai Peninsula.

Trappers should expect to see shorter lynx trapping seasons and some closures for the next few years as lynx and hare populations across the region continue declining to the low points in their cycles.

For an explanation about how our lynx tracking-harvest strategy works, please visit our web site at: <http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/FISH.GAME/wildlife/fur/trapping.htm>.

Harvest of furbearers sealed in southcentral Alaska, 2001–2002.

Area	Beaver	Lynx	River Otter	Wolf	Wolverin	Marten
Prince William Sound	75	19	64	2	10	114
Kenai Peninsula	119	74	39	37	11	155
Alaska	125	33	252	106	22	0
Nelchina/Copper River Basin	208	227	35	245	57	25
Mat-Su Valley/ Upper Cook	291	70	92	109	57	1073
Dillingham/Nushagak Basin	219	2	29	91	47	0
Region Total for 2001–2001	1037	425	511	590	204	1367
Total for 2000–2001	1601	876	470	582	168	1395
Average over last 5 years	1273	662	458	535	187	1015

Howard Golden, 333 Raspberry Rd., Anchorage, AK 99518; (907) 267-2177;
howard_golden@fishgame.state.ak.us.

INTERIOR REGION

Mark McNay, Interior Furbearer Biologist

I want to thank the trappers of Interior Alaska for their cooperative efforts in management of our furbearer resource, especially their contributions to lynx management. Each year biologists examine carcasses from lynx provided by trappers. The information we collect during examination of those specimens helps us set annual trapping seasons. From 1997 to 2001 we examined between 315 and 600 lynx carcasses per year. That large sample size was possible because the lynx population was near the peak of the cycle. During the winter of 2002–2003, when lynx populations reached their cyclic low, we purchased only 59 carcasses from trappers.

Reproductive performance of lynx is one of the most important pieces of information guiding the decision making process. As the population approached its peak, up to 32% of the lynx harvested in the Tanana Valley were less than 1 year of age. That age structure indicates high reproductive success, and our examination of carcasses confirmed high reproductive rates. We estimated Interior lynx produced an average of 1.7 kittens per adult female during the 1994–2000 period when the population was increasing or at the peak, and only 0.78 kittens per female during 2001–2002 when the population was declining. Based on our finding of no kittens in the sample collected in 2002–2003, it appears that survival of those few kittens born during the declining phase is very low.

When reproductive success is low, over trapping can reduce the lynx numbers to abnormally low levels. Reducing the lynx population to very low numbers at the low part of the cycle slows population recovery and results in lower peaks at the cyclic high. To prevent over trapping, the Department of Fish and Game reduces the lynx season during the low point of the cycle. We feel it is especially important to maintain low lynx harvests during the first few years of population recovery. At that time reproductive success is high, but because the population is low there are relatively few adult females producing kittens. By allowing high survival of kittens during the initial years of population recovery, the recovery builds momentum quickly. Within 2 years, females born as kittens at the cycle low will be producing kittens themselves.

In both 2002–03 and 2003–04 the lynx season was reduced to 60 days in the road-accessible portions of the Tanana Valley. This was considerably shorter than the 120-day season we enjoyed in winters 2000–01 and 2001–02. Trappers can expect an even shorter season in 2004–2005 as the lynx population starts its recovery. Although the actual season dates are dependent upon the data we collect from trappers each year, trappers can expect expanding seasons beginning in 2006–07 and the peak of the cycle with the longest seasons and highest harvests occurring between 2010 and 2012.

Many trappers have reported marten numbers are down in recent years, and trappers in the lower Tanana Basin (GMUs 20 A-F and 25C) rated the marten's abundance as "scarce" in 2000–2001. Early this year a rumor circulated that a crash in marten was related to a distemper outbreak in marten populations in the Yukon Territory. I checked

with our wildlife veterinarian Dr. Kimberlee Beckman about that possibility and she said there was no basis for the rumor. In fact she contacted veterinarians in the Yukon and could find no evidence that marten there had been affected by disease. Looking at historic marten harvests, it is readily apparent that marten numbers fluctuate periodically. Many of the highest harvests of marten over the last century have occurred in the years just after the lynx crash. If that pattern holds true for this lynx cycle, we should see increasing numbers of marten in the next few years. With the recent increase in marten prices that is good news indeed!

Mark McNay, ADF&G Wildlife Conservation, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701; (907) 459-7213; mark_mcnay@fishgame.state.ak.us

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA (UNIT 18)

Roger Seavoy, Area Wildlife Biologist

As has been the case in Unit 18 for some time, furbearers are abundant throughout their habitats. Beaver populations are higher than ideal and we documented dramatic increases over the last 2 decades (See Table 1). There is evidence that beaver are trying to occupy marginal habitat and some areas have been logged excessively. Local residents regularly complain of too many beavers causing problems with boat travel and fish movements.

Table 1 Beaver cache counts from 1984 and 2002 along Reindeer River in Unit 18.

Year	Active lodges	Inactive lodges	Total
1984	29	8	37
2002	104	32	149*

*included 13 undetermined lodges

Fox populations remain high, but some trappers reported seeing fewer of them than they expected this season. Recent rabies reports may have influenced fox populations, but they remain abundant nevertheless. Some trappers who worked to market their fox pelts report better prices than the current market would suggest.

Mink populations are high but trapping pressure is low. In the 1940s an average of 16,000 mink were taken and in one year during that decade, over 60,000 were taken. Now, fewer than 1,000 are reported. The mink along the Kuskokwim are famous for their size and fur quality. At these low harvest levels, it is clear that this is a significantly underutilized resource.

Otter populations are high and underutilized as well. This year there was keen interest in otter trapping, with averages of over \$100 per pelt commonly reported. However, snow conditions were poor and probably fewer otters were caught than trappers would have desired.

Suitable habitat for arctic fox, marten, and arctic ground squirrels is less extensive in the Unit, but numbers of these furbearers are high where they occur.

Lynx numbers were entering the downward trend in their cycle. Few lynx were sealed in the Bethel office and all of them were adults.

Wolf populations have increased and expanded due to the successes we've had promoting moose population growth and to the continued winter use of Unit 18 by a portion of the Mulchatna caribou herd. However, few wolves were taken this year due to the poor snow conditions and fewer caribou wintering in Unit 18 this year, making opportunistic wolf harvest by caribou hunters difficult.

Wolverine numbers have also increased compared to a decade ago. This is most evident in the eastern part of the Unit where caribou have taken up seasonal residence.

One furbearer species that isn't abundant in the Unit is muskrat but we still have adequate numbers. Coyotes are also found in Unit 18, but the harvest is small.

The number of active trappers is low. Trappers have cited inadequate fur prices as a reason for low trapping effort, but this year we may see low snow as a more important reason for less trapping effort, especially as it relates to otter. Again, this makes it clear that the fur resource in Unit 18 is severely underutilized.

Furbearers are still important for local uses. All furbearers, as well as marine mammals, are utilized for crafts and garments sewn locally. In addition, many furbearers are used for food. Beaver, otter, mink, and muskrats are common table fare in many villages with varying preferences. Lynx and arctic ground squirrels are also eaten. As such, furbearers are still an important part of the economy of Unit 18.

Roger Seavoy, ADF&G Wildlife Conservation, 460 Ridgecrest Drive, Rm. 215 P.O. Box 1467 Bethel, AK 99559; (907) 543-2979; roger_seavoy@fishgame.state.ak.us

SEWARD PENINSULA (UNIT 22)

Tony Gorn, Assistant Area Biologist

Most of the furbearer harvest in Unit 22 is by subsistence or recreational hunters or is done opportunistically by local residents while engaged in other activities. The reported harvest of furbearers in Unit 22 during the 2001–2002 trapping season was 69 lynx, 7 river otter, 39 wolverine, and 41 wolves. These are minimum harvest estimates because many of the furs taken are used locally and not presented for sealing, which makes harvest data incomplete.

Wolf densities are highest in Units 22A and eastern Unit 22B, but harvest data and observations by staff, hunter/trappers and local residents indicate wolves are becoming more numerous in all parts of the unit. The increase is likely a result of the large number of caribou from the Western Arctic Herd which have wintered on the central Seward Peninsula since 1996. The 2000–2001 reported harvest of 69 wolves was the highest ever reported in the unit. The reported wolf harvest in Unit 22 during 2001–2002 was 41 wolves.

Staff observations and reports from hunter/trappers around the unit indicate that beaver in Units 22A, 22B, 22C and 22D were common or abundant with numbers stable or increasing. We had no reports from Unit 22E but beaver numbers are believed to be increasing in the Serpentine River drainage. Complaints about beaver continue throughout Unit 22. Boaters complain about blockage of waterways and concern that beaver dams are preventing salmon from returning to their spawning grounds. In October 1999 the Board of Game eliminated the sealing requirement for beaver in Unit 22 and identified beaver as a fur animal so beaver can be taken with a hunting license. Although the Board of Game established a hunting season for beaver in Unit 22 few hunters appear to be taking advantage of the season.

Hunter/trappers who responded to our trapper surveys indicated otters in Units 22A, 22B, 22C and 22D were scarce or common and their numbers stable. We have little information about otters in Unit 22E. Both wolverines and red fox were generally thought to be common or abundant throughout the unit. Ptarmigan numbers were abundant and stable throughout the unit.

During the 2001–2002 trapping season lynx harvest in Unit 22 reached a 10-year high when 69 lynx were caught. Lynx are increasing in some areas along with hares, their primary food source. In Unit 22A lynx were reported to be common and increasing. In Unit 22B and Unit 22D lynx were generally reported to be scarce but increasing. Survey respondents from the remainder of the unit said lynx were scarce or not present in their hunting/trapping areas.

Our staff is grateful to the hunter/trappers who take the time to fill out the annual trapper questionnaires. The information provided gives us a much better and timelier picture of changes in furbearer abundance in different parts of the unit than we get on our own. The surveys also help document the importance of furbearer harvest to the subsistence way of life in Unit 22. We thank you for your help!

Tony Gorn, ADF&G Wildlife Conservation 320 E. Front St. Pouch 1148, Nome, AK 99762; 1-800-560-2271; tony_gorn@fishgame.state.ak.us

KOTZEBUE SOUND AND WESTERN BROOKS RANGE

(GOODHOPE RIVER TO CAPE LISBURNE – UNIT 23)

Jim Dau, Area Wildlife Biologist

Area Biologist Jim Dau reports the population objective for furbearers in Unit 23 is to maintain furbearers at population levels capable of sustaining harvests similar to the period 1985–1995, recognizing that populations will fluctuate in response to environmental factors. Trapping efforts and results in Unit 23 are similar to previous years, with species reports as follows:

Beaver – Beaver continued to expand their range throughout Unit 23. New lodges have been observed in the western portion of the Unit. Although relatively few of the new lodges have been built in habitat that appeared suitable for overwinter survival, the lodges have thrived with new dams appearing each year. The last several winters have been fairly mild with shallower ice on lakes and rivers. This may have allowed beavers to establish in areas where they could not have lived in normal winters. Now that they have increased water levels with their series of dams their chances of survival are probably good. The Selawik beaver population has completely utilized all suitable habitat. Residents of Selawik village continue to be concerned about beavers damming streams important for seining whitefish and also contaminating the village water supply with *Giardia*.

Lynx – Snowshoe hares were extremely abundant in the Selawik drainage during the late 1990s through spring of 2001 but crashed soon after. As a result most lynx emigrated from that area. Hunters and trappers in other portions of Unit 23, such as in the Kobuk drainage on the northern Seward Peninsula and near Kotzebue, reported seeing and harvesting more lynx than in previous years. Numbers of willow ptarmigan were very low throughout Unit 23 during the winter of 2002–2003 except on the Seward Peninsula where they were abundant. This probably made lynx travel widely in search of food. Lynx are still more abundant in Unit 23 than during the late 1980s through mid-to-late 1990s. There is no intent to restrict lynx hunting or trapping regulations in Unit 23.

Mink and Marten – After several years of expanding their range westward to near the Chukchi Sea coast during the late 1990s, marten appear to have decreased their range as numbers have declined. As in past, most marten trapping in Unit 23 occurred in the upper Kobuk drainage.

Red Fox – Foxes were common throughout Unit 23 but overall numbers continued to be lower than in previous years. Only 1 case of a rabid red fox (found near Red Dog Mine) was confirmed during the winter and spring of 2002–2003. This was the second consecutive year of low rabies levels in Unit 23.

River Otter – River otters were still fairly abundant throughout Unit 23 but, as in 2000–2001, their numbers appeared to have declined from levels reached during the late 1990s.

Wolf – Wolf numbers have increased on the Seward Peninsula during the last several years. This is probably a result of large numbers of caribou wintering in the area since 1996–1997. Wolf numbers also seem to be relatively high in the upper Kobuk drainage. In contrast, wolves appear to have declined somewhat in the upper Noatak drainage. This may be because moose have almost disappeared from that area, although sheep provide a reliable food source and caribou are there at least seasonally in most years. Wolf hunting and trapping levels in the upper Noatak are low compared to the rest of the Unit.

Wolverine – Wolverines typically occur at such low densities that it is difficult to visually estimate population levels. Comments from hunters and trappers suggest wolverines remained relatively high on the Seward Peninsula, and in the upper Kobuk and Noatak drainages but numbers were lower near Kotzebue than in previous years. Some trappers speculate that high harvests near Kotzebue have reduced wolverine abundance in the lower Noatak and Kobuk drainages.

Jim Dau, ADF&G Wildlife Conservation Nordlum Office Building, 240 5th Ave. PO Box 689, Kotzebue, AK 99752; 1-800-478-3420, jim_dau@fishgame.state.ak.us

WESTERN NORTH SLOPE (UNIT 26A)

Geoff Carroll, Area Wildlife Biologist

In Unit 26A the reported wolf harvest for 2001–2002 was 16 wolves (12 males and 4 females) and only 5 for 2002–2003 (2 males and 3 females). Most were ground shot using snow machines for transportation. The most recent wolf census, in 1998 in the foothills of Unit 26A, indicated that the wolf density had dropped to 1.6 wolves/1000 km² from a high of 4.2 wolves/1000 km² in 1992. From observations during moose counts, it appears that wolves have increased since 1998. The number of wolves harvested and reported is highly dependent on whether a few key individuals are trapping and sealing their furs that year.

Twenty-six wolverines were sealed (16 males and 10 females) in 2001–2002 and 11 in 2002–2003. Snow machines, airplanes and skis were used for transportation. All of the wolverines were ground shot. During the years 1999–2002 trappers sealed the largest numbers of wolverines we have sealed during a year (21, 19, 21, 26). The reason for the higher numbers is probably a combination of high wolverine population and more trapping pressure.

It is not entirely clear why the harvest for both wolves and wolverines dropped off in 2002–2003. There was extensive seismic oil exploration in Unit 26A last year and several trappers reported that wolves were scarce in areas where seismic oil exploration was occurring and had occurred.

It is difficult to maintain fur sealers in most North Slope villages and many people hunt their furs, so the department sealing program is not an effective measure of harvest. A North Slope Borough harvest documentation study indicated that about 25% of wolves and wolverines were sealed during the year of the study.

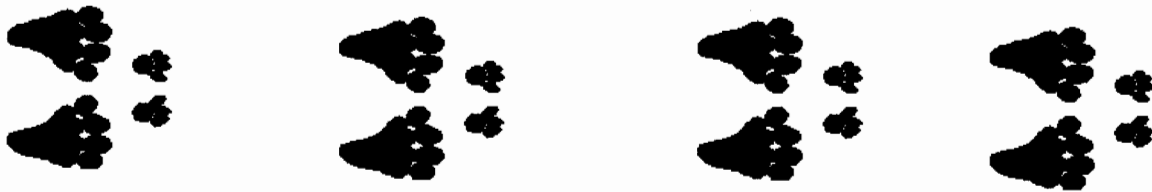
For the first time in recent history, several lynx were harvested in Unit 26A. Seven lynx were harvested during 2001–2002 (6 males and 1 female) and 1 was harvested in 2002–2003 along the Colville River.

Arctic foxes were fairly abundant in Unit 26A. Because hunters and trappers are not required to seal foxes, harvest data are not available for arctic foxes. Low fur prices resulted in relatively few foxes being trapped.

Coyotes, red fox, river otter, and lynx are very rare in Unit 26A. No population or harvest data are available.

Rabid furbearers, particularly arctic foxes, continue to be a problem around human settlements. We assisted the North Slope Borough Public Health Department in a program to educate people about rabid animals and having their pets immunized. Rabid arctic foxes are destroyed when they are reported near villages.

Geoff Carroll ADF&G Wildlife Conservation 1265 Agvik St. PO Box 1284 Barrow, AK 99723; (907) 852-3463; geoff_carroll@fishgame.state.ak.us



TRAPPER COMMENTS

How Did Trapping Conditions Affect Your Trapping Effort?

Southeast

- Flood sets out – rain on snow can be a problem.
- Cut a lot of ice.
- Traps frozen and snowed in.
- Freezing rain and wet snow froze a few sets in place.
- Didn't affect it.
- Cold helped in crossing rivers. Kept them frozen. Lack of snow was hard on martins.
- Too snowy around Hoonah, could only trap about one-third of the previous years line.
- Did not affect it.
- Well, I was only able to get to areas I can't normally reach due to hard snow conditions along with good amounts of snow.
- I run a very small recreational trapline purely for enjoyment for the outdoors. Weather doesn't affect my approach, though one windstorm delayed the checking of a small canoe line I ran.
- Snow at beginning of season really put sets out of commission.
- Weather was nasty some time but it was a lot of fun for the kids.
- A lot of snow slows catch rate.
- They never affect it.
- No effect.
- Nothing affected my trapping effort.
- I mainly trapped on private docks to control the otter problem.
- Made me work harder to find sign of target animals.
- Lakes and streams stayed frozen longer.
- Cold and windy weather made for tough boating.
- Deep snow and freeze-up slowed trapping efforts.
- Nothing out of ordinary.
- Otter traps kept snowing under.
- Many frozen-in sets for wolves.
- No effect.
- Bay not frozen over this year.
- I think the lack of snow reduced the number of martin coming down the to the beach level.
- Deep snow slowed me down.
- Deep snow caused problems. Then rain and no snow caused problems.
- There were practically no young marten on my line so I only left a few sets out over Christmas because I take my grandson out for a week every Christmas.

- It was a mild winter and that helped my wolf trapping.
- Not much for some reason there weren't as many wolves around as last year.
- Affected effort a lot.
- Cold – so freeze conditions for foot holds.
- Trapping conditions were good – just wanted a few furs for my own use.
- Did not expect high prices, low effort on my part.
- December – turned cold, snowed, rained-heavy wet snow made access more difficult. January – went south 2–3 weeks. Mid-January and February – weather and snow conditions improved, area more accessible.
- Most of my sets were frozen part of the time, no deep snow, wolves stayed up in timber, deer weren't on beach.
- Temperature changes affected creek levels – rising and lowering, freezing, thawing.
- Snow and freezing weather kept me from trapping southern Mitkoff Island.
- It didn't affect effort.
- Too much snow. Not able to trap on road system.
- Conditions did not affect effort.
- Helped.
- No effect.
- Lots of snow made it hard to move around in the woods. Had to keep digging out sets.
- Weather conditions – lack of snow made it impossible to trap about ten miles of road.
- Lack of snow made it impossible to trap about ten miles of road.

Southcentral/Southwest

- Lack of snow early, brought lots of dog-mushers on the trail. Later February, March, freeze-thaw conditions cost me six wolves the last two weeks.
- We had very little snow and the marten were able to eat the voles they feed on abundantly. We also had difficulty in getting around due to the lack of snow.
- Very good this year.
- Long periods without snow made it hard to tell fresh marten sign and the freeze and thaw we had during lynx season made for tough conditions to keep traps working.
- My effort is always consistent despite changing conditions.
- I trapped early season and pulled gear.
- Too much ice in Valdez.
- No effect, conditions were good.
- Trapping conditions did not adversely affect my effort but the unbelievable number of snowmachines did.
- Not enough snow.
- Less snow made wolf trapping more difficult. Warm weather for early beaver made ice crossing difficult.
- Heavy snow hurt – 20-plus feet.

- No effect. Had great weather (cold) and excellent ice conditions that made snowmachine travel fairly easy.
- First part of season weather was good for running creeks but not much snow. December was warm and over flow. January weather was good for trapping.
- Little snow early cause me to travel more on frozen, smoother sections of river.
- I ran more line into different areas to increase my catch and take advantage of the good conditions.
- Good condition made it more pleasurable.
- A couple of deep snow falls made me get pretty stuck landing but that was it.
- Very poor conditions early on, exceptionally warm after Christmas.
- The weather was fairly good, but wind for about four weeks kept animals from moving too much, lowering my catch.
- Greatly affected, river travel (overflow) reduced trapping productivity.
- Got more checks.
- Conditions were mostly favorable.
- Still learning, scents, sets. Animals were around I'm still learning correct sets without leaving my scent.
- I went with an experienced trapper and I made two beaver sets, three days later I had two beavers, I was trapping for the experience so that was sufficient for the season and area.
- Too little snow made travel rough and slow.
- Cold weather through December 15–20. Hard to take young people when it's very cold.
- No effect at all.
- A mild and rainy January kept marten and wolverine high which reduced my potential catch.
- Little snow made it easier to walk my trapline.
- Freezing snow.
- Open water for boat trapping, clear weather.
- River ice and overflow conditions affected access.
- Didn't affect.
- Great weather – if I knew it would be that great I would have trapped more beaver.
- Didn't get as cold as in the past.
- Deep snow in late season unable even to dig down to find traps.
- More snow and colder year made some trapping better, but made beaver trapping harder.
- Excellent travel conditions for snow machines after early January. Some freeze/thaw conditions during February and March made it difficult to keep footholds operational.
- No snow beginning of trapping, after snow came, too much snow to get around.
- Our catch depends on ability to land plane with skis. No snow means fewer areas to trap (we usually catch around 100 marten).
- A lot of effect.
- Ice got too thick.

- Conditions were good except for two weeks in February we got too much snow to get around.
- Snow was too soft and deep to trap about one half of one line.
- Early season was good Nov. 10–25 then lots of snow and cold temperatures. Too much fluffy snow in December and January lots of wind storms – mad super hard drifts everywhere!!! Really low on flats – snow was like concrete! Rest of winter torture so had to take it easy, run shorter line.
- Bad weather made you wait to check your traps. I didn't start trapping until late January.
- Got a late start because of ice and then 13E marten closes way to soon. Pulled traps early for personal reasons.
- Warm weather resulted in a few iced-over traps and dropped snow caused a few snapped traps but nothing else.
- Weather conditions changing constantly. Snows, melt/thaw and freeze.
- No rabbits. But animals were hungry and came to bait sets easier. Did more game culling this year than before.
- No effect.
- None.
- Didn't affect.
- Not enough snow at beginning of season.
- None.
- Not much snow at beginning of season – had to make wolf sets.
- More snow made it tougher going.
- Really not that much game out there, no rabbit or moose.
- Little snow early made it hard to break trail and not me and machine.
- Didn't.
- Need more for easier access to certain areas.
- Conditions didn't affect my effort to any great extent. We had a hard freeze early and that eliminated some open water beaver trapping.
- Didn't really affect me.
- Beaver came out of river and above ice to retrieve trees, so was able to set conibears above ice in entrance/exit holes.
- Snow travel was not a problem last winter on the line.
- Ice came early in autumn Larsen Bay.
- Didn't affect.
- Conditions changed almost every day, cold, warm, wind, rain, snow, calm, no consistency. I had to change my sets almost every day.
- The bay froze for three-plus weeks; couldn't leave the house, pretty hard to run a skiff through four inches of ice!
- Not enough sign to get excited.
- Normal conditions.
- The snow melted and froze then it snowed again and it melted. Tough chipping out traps.
- Bad weather limited beaver catch, rain, thaw, bad ice.
- We had deep snow with some wind that you had to make a new trail every time you went out, you also had to remake all the sets which took a lot of time.

- Lack of snow reduced effort.
- Greatly affected!
- Good snow conditions made it easier to gauge species populations.
- Affected in 98–99 because of poor price on furs.
- Overflow on river.
- Lots of critters around, warm dry weather, not much snow.
- Lower catch?

Interior

- Insufficient snow – used more dirt than ever.
- Warm weather and marginal snow conditions made it a little tougher to make good sets.
- Low martin population – less sets put in bad snow conditions (too little) slow going.
- Not as many animals shortly after season opened so I quit early this year.
- Not enough snow in some areas.
- Not enough snow in the beginning of the year – got better towards the end – had a great time!
- I just deal with the conditions as best as I can. You can't fight nature.
- Trapping in general in the Manley area would be excellent if the following had not occurred: 1) State land disposals in our "backyard." 2) Road from FAI to Manely being open year-round.
- No effect.
- Lack of snow limited entrance.
- Rough trails – little snow – lots of injured dogs so were slow to get out to end of line.
- Lack of snow – low populations.
- Reduced length of trapline; reduced effort in trapping wolves.
- Did not affect me.
- No snow. I ran on 2–4 inches of snow for two months with no marten out there to pay for pars/then some one went and put a war in the middle of this trapping season and sent me away half way and no you can not trap Taliban.
- Limited by lack of snow.
- Trapped fewer moles.
- Didn't affect.
- Warm weather – easier to get around. Low snow pack – harder to set trail!
- Open water from the power plant made for easy beaver trapping.
- Low snow fall restricted travel and made it difficult to make some sets.
- Lack of early snow prevented me from getting my marten lines out.
- Did not affect.
- Great year.
- There was no snow to speak of in my area until January so I couldn't get out most of my line.
- I really enjoyed the conditions this past season. If every season was like this last it would be perfect.

- Moderate temperatures for this area allowed more regular trap checks and set rebuilding.
- Poor.
- Good snow depth 8" allowed me to set all of the area I trap marten in. Little cold weather allowed for good trapline maintenance.
- Price droop in fur market.
- Another warm winter = overflow and not much snow cover. Made for rough going. I'm getting used to it!
- Trapping conditions were very good and the snow was less than before. I trap my line every four years only and do another line next year.
- Sick too often.
- First I waited for snow so I got a later start. Second then I got a five-week period where it snowed every couple days. Which was good for tracks and covering my sign. Third, zero snow from February through March 15.
- Conditions were good, easy going.
- Global warming certainly has a huge effect of the unprimed fur. This coming season will warm up again like three years, according to the scientists.
- Weather played a major part in the conditions of trapping. November saw cold weather. Fur wasn't moving and trail conditions made it difficult.
- Somebody else got most of the marten before I started.
- Late start due to no snow until first of year.
- Deep powder snow first six weeks, slowed up pulling out traps, snares etc.
- Snow fall came all at once.
- No affect.
- Not at all.
- No snow. Severe cold until Christmas.
- Cold snaps, not much movement.
- Few martin tracks, so I didn't see much line. The worst I have ever seen. There was a fair amount of wolf sign early but disappeared. Lynx were ok.
- Lots of deep overflow starting early and all the way through.
- Not at all.
- Did not arrive in area till first week of February. A few days after I arrived it started to snow. In a week or so had at least three feet of powder. Had a hard time moving.
- Unable to access due to snow conditions.
- None.
- We had very little snow throughout the year. So I spent more effort fixing broken down machines. And there wasn't enough snow to go anywhere until the end of December.
- Less hare population so fewer lynx. Didn't use as much effort on them.
- Shallow snow and lots of caribou resulted in wolves not following my trails or river beds. They followed the caribou trails – also followed by more caribou.
- Actually conditions were favorable except for an awful lot of overflow on the side creeks. Fur sign was very poor!
- Not much effect from conditions but it did pull early and conditions got a lot more difficult then.

- Trapping mink prairies North Dakota using the No. 1 long spring trap, is all together different here, snares are the best in woods. I think snaring is the use of pullys. Not leaving the animal on the ground when caught.
- Low marten count? Cats are on the down cycle and were few in number. Caribou did not come through so wolf numbers were low also.
- I probably put in less effort.
- Didn't affect.
- Conditions didn't affect my trapping except for the lack of furbearers. There were plenty left at the end of the 2000–2001 season but almost nothing this season.

Arctic/Western

- Shorter season due to poor snow conditions.
- Price too low.
- Warm temperatures kept icing my traps. Warm day temperatures and cold nights kept traps from working.
- Late snowfall kept large portion of my line unusable for much of the season.
- The condition of my sno-go is the main reason I decreased my trapping.
- We didn't have any snow up until Christmas so I played with wolves close to the village and to make it worse the lack of snow gave most of the fur bad rubs before they were fully prime.
- Deep snow.
- A lot of snow and thick ice made it harder.
- Extreme cold temperature made it difficult to retrieve.
- Initially very little snow. Slow rough going. But trapping was easier because of steady, cold, snowless weather.
- Fair.
- Heavy snow load each week, hard to keep traps operational.
- Lack of snow made it hard to get in and out of area.
- Snow was good this past season
- Poor snow conditions limited travel for 2 ½ months of season.
- Snow buried traps.
- Soft snow, white out, wind.
- No snow at the beginning of winter.
- Too much drifting snow.
- Poor conditions. No snow.
- Weather-sno-go problems
- After the first of the year, snow storms prohibited travel at times. Delayed trapping effort.
- Helped access.
- Easy to get to my sets, weather didn't stop me.
- Drifting snow/extreme cold.
- Little snow early on allowed me to drive my vehicle longer usual. Lack of snow also created heavy ice conditions for beaver trapping.
- Low snow levels made snow machine travel rough.

- Non-stop snow, blizzards and white out conditions effecting travel, unable to expand due to weather.
- It was a long time to wait for the snow, when it did come I hadn't made any efforts.
- East winds blew in late winter making it hard to track.

Did Other Trappers In Your Area Affect Your Trapping Effort?

Southeast

- A person moved in on our beaver sets so we moved.
- Couldn't set in same spots because other trappers had sets there.
- Stealing traps, disturbing sets.
- Shared territory with one other trapper out of Hoonah.
- I stayed away from areas I know other people to be trapping.
- Interfered by leaving human scent and presence at a number of sets.
- Overlap
- 1 new trapper crossed my line. We figured it out together.
- No other trappers.
- I shared some of my traditional area with a guy.
- Too many traps in the same spot.
- Other trappers have historically trapped marten and otter near where I trap, so I concentrate on mink. I stay out of their way.
- Others trapping the same inlet. I try not to overlap with someone else.
- Due to a misunderstanding of regulations by authorities, out-of-town trappers trapped two weeks before local trappers on federal land.

Southcentral/Southwest

- Several snapped traps, forced me to move sets to less productive areas.
- Lots of weekend hobby trappers. Some trappers used my sets and locations from previous years so I had to abandon certain locations since they were already there.
- I had young kids over trapping me at most of my Valdez mink sets.
- I did not see any sign of other trappers in my area.
- Recreational snowmachines completely wiped out my wolf trapping from new years till the end of the season with such a maze of trails it was well into spring before I could find two of my traps. Last year I only set a dozen marten traps close to home.
- One other person I grew up with traps the same line after January.
- A recent graduate from wolf trapping school started trapping in my area, however we seem to have come to an agreement.
- There was another trapper on part of my line so I stopped trapping there.
- Absolutely no ethics amongst others. New weekend trappers are really education canines. Had some fur taken (two years in a row).

- We were told that the area we trapped last year was someone else's area but they had not used it for four years. Still they claimed it as theirs and said we had to find a new area to trap.
- We made a few side trips but ran into other traplines so we stuck to our area.
- Indicates areas of easy access for trapping is also easy for other people. Snow machines etc. in these areas. Trap theft is very high. Too costly to take a chance.
- Limited area available to trap.
- People trapping in general vicinity one or two miles thinking they owned everywhere.
- Other trappers stole fur from my traps.
- In one area another trapper reduced my effort due to him being there.
- Airplanes targeted my bigger animals so I didn't.
- No, but wolf hunters and trapline runners always steal from me any chance they get. Forces me to hide my sets, but some are good at finding them.
- 25 miles of line I didn't trap because someone else in moved in. Recreational snowmobilers are a continuous problem and now wolfers becoming a problem (guys on fast sno-go's with submachine guns) they tear up trails and run trapline trails to try and access high country.
- Not really few other trappers around now a days.
- People moving and/or disrupting sets and stealing traps.
- Wolves exposed to another trapper before me are much harder to catch. I hit it harder earlier to catch more virgins.
- Increased number of trappers caused a loss of some previously set spots. It was not a big problem though.
- Another trapper (with my permission) hiked further up the river drainage where I usually trap; later in the season. So it slightly displaced my effort, because I usually trap there eventually, but he got there first.
- The pressure of another trapper this year did not affect my catch of lynx but the extra noise in the area may have affected wolf activity. Wolves were less common, perhaps due to increased snowmachine activity on the line.
- Need to get away far from road system
- Increased wolf population meant increased effort.

Interior

- Trappers moving in on both sides of Delta River. Some can't afford traps – so they steal mine. I'm also finding more snares left by others when I set up around November.
- I felt if I did not have a strong presence on my line someone else would move in.
- I have to get all close sets in at beginning of season to discourage want-a-be trappers from stepping on my toes.
- Many new trappers in the area.
- Had to make more sets to get the cream of the crop before other people did.
- Too many pilgrims, absolutely no respect for the ones there before them, they have messed up a good thing. The latest problem is the weekenders with \$50,000 outfits rolling out for a little rec. in our backyards from Fairbanks.

- They keep infringing on the area!
- Caribou hunters are ubiquitous only to scare away all wolves and fox.
- Heavy competition.
- I had a special permit to trap beaver in a closed area and teach children to do it.
- Less martin and wolverine.
- Only one wolf got set close to main travel track on the Kuskokwim River.
- Trapping to close to my line.
- A game warden kept trapping close to my line. We had disagreements about who owned and which part of lines. Appears to be a conflict of interest.
- I had to limit my area because another trapper wanted more area.
- Not that I know of.
- Although snow machines could of, because of pickup truck and snow machine trailers.
- With the fur populations at an all-time low I wouldn't have trapped at all if there weren't other trappers ready to "claim jump" if I didn't trap.

Arctic/Western

- In the effort to encourage trapping I let 2 other men run some of my former trails.
- Another trapper regularly sets wolf traps close to mine. This year he found fresh tracks near my traps and ran them down with his sno-go and shot the female.
Good news for our local moose, bad news for my trapline.
- Never saw another trapper other than my partner.
- I avoided some areas.

Do you Have Any Comments To ADF&G?

Southeast

- You're doing a fine job!
- I only trapped for two weeks this winter because of job commitments that took me out of state for the majority of the winter. Usually I trap for eight weeks on two different lines. One is six miles and covered on foot/skis/snowshoes. The other is five miles and run by kayak or canoe. I usually work out areas with the one or two other local trappers.
- Please keep me on the list for questionnaires and reports because I intend to trap this coming fall. Keep up the good work Ryan – I can tell the job is in good hands. I do feel the questionnaire and report are important functions that keep us and the public informed about furbearers in the state.
- I was harassed by local animal lovers. We marked all trails with signs that said warning trap line, please stay on trails. But they went out of their way to go near sets and at one point shot guns and honked car horns to scare wolves from our location. My partner told local State Troopers and also talked with person responsible but the damage was already done.

- I would like to see the lynx and coyote season extended to the same as wolverine so no incidental catches will occur.
- It is difficult for youngsters and others who might want to start trapping to do so without making a major commitment in the Juneau area due to the closure of so much of the easily accessible areas. Getting the city to re-open some of the areas along the beach and trails to small traps (110/120 conibear, and #1/1 ½ foot holds) would help this situation greatly.
- I've trapped briefly for two seasons in Yakutat. For the most part, it affords all the pleasures and freedoms people only glimpse in the lower 48. The idea of all land being public is entirely foreign and wholly endorsed by me. I grew up trapping in Connecticut and Pennsylvania where I loved it very much, but the crowds and private property were problems that constantly infringed on the pleasure of solitude in the woods, which is one of the greatest aspects of a trapline. For whatever its worth, I trapped for 10 or 11 days in two locations – one near Cannon Beach in Yakutat, the other along the Lost River headwaters. I used a canoe and snowshoes. All three pelts I took went to a tannery in Duluth MN. If I have any criticisms of ADF&G, they're two: one, I don't understand why wolf/wolverine seasons are so long, and two, why there is no minimum day check law in Alaska. Trapping is in great danger all over the country, and laws promoting the idea of its cruelty and its threat to various animal species – illusion or no – will only facilitate its end. Hopefully these laws will change. Other than that, all seems well.
- I recently moved to a new job in a more urban setting and miss the longer trapline. A lot more sightings of wolves on POW this year.
- Will move to a new area this season.
- Didn't trap 2001–2001 season due to other commitments. Will the coming year! The ADF&G folks are doing a great job. Keep it up!
- Have recently moved to the interior (Fairbanks) may do some trapping in near future.
- Come up with a good wolf control program that will work, maybe reinstate the bounty and, start catching these mighty hunters (pit lighters). That wolf study conducted on Heceta Island a few years ago is the most far from true report ever. There are more wolves than ever on the island and they are all eating deer meat. (eat SE Alaska deer meat. Five thousand wolves can't be wrong.
- The price of gas is high – price of furs (& fish) are really low. There should be a longer wolf season on Prince of Wales Island. The south end is so bad, we haven't been able to hunt deer for about eight years. Also, they're trying to eat our dogs.
- Thanks for this questionnaire and copy of the report.
- Started trapping because of a beaver problem on my property. They were damming the creek and eating too many trees. Haven't had any around for a couple years now. But they may come back, and one must be prepared. They can take down an alder patch and make a lake in a day or two.
- I think it would help if you gathered information on trap nights for each species. That way after getting a few years of data you would be able to get a sense of whether a species population is increasing or decreasing in a particular area,

regardless of the number of trappers putting forth effort. I know that many trappers may not want to share this information, but even if it was done just on a voluntary basis it might provide some helpful data. I hope to trap in Southeast Alaska again, maybe this next season.

- The department is doing a good job managing the resource. When a trapper turns in a wolf for sealing, they should receive a letter later stating how old the wolf was and any related information about the animal: health, diet, etc. The leg bone provides this information and I would like to know.
- I really enjoyed your information on trapping. Because of the snow and ice. I didn't get in to trap the beaver in March like I planned. I will probably increase my efforts in trapping in the 2002–2003 season. If goes as planned with friend. Since the otter and beaver are doing very well; since the wolf population is not as large as it was in 1998 and 1999.
- Area biologist and the Petersburg ADF&G folks are doing a very good job and are responsive and helpful to the community and trappers.
- Didn't have time to get out last winter, but plan on it this year. I let two kids use three of my wolf sets last winter, they managed to get three wolves. I hope it keeps them interested in trapping. My son and I hope to get out and take one of his friends again. We try to take a different kid out each year and spend the season with them and help them get started. Thirteen different kids so far, it sure is fun. My son is fifteen now he started going with me at four years old and snared his first wolf at eight – he's got it in his blood now, and loves the woods.
- I have not trapped in a long time and don't plan on doing for few more years until my kids get a few years older. Thanks.
- ADF&G needs to begin a history of trapping in Alaska over the past 200 years. In the future, this history will be critical in dealing with anti-trapping forces to reflect trapping as a historical social and economic process during the 1800s and 1900s. The cultural relationships dependent on trapping need to be documented now before the older trappers pass away. I would recommend ADF&G contract with an anthropologist in Sitka for critical work.
- This year I trapped around my home area to see what was around. The weather conditions were cold this year for us in Southeast and I didn't want to travel by skiff on the water.
- Don't use MARTENS for plural description. Only a few pseudo researchers talk that way, no one else; trappers, fur buyers, most biologists, say martens. It shows you don't know what you are talking about...and care less! We all appreciate these trapper questionnaires especially sending out the animal report. I hope it continues with the retirement of the statewide furbearer coordinator.
- I have moved from the Sitka area. I now live in Seward Alaska. I got this packet of information forwarded to me via past co-workers. Thank you for this information. I find questionnaire information interesting and the publication "Trapping and Furbearer Management" very informative.
- Regulations should be in favor of local trappers not out-of-town trappers.

Southcentral/Southwest

- NOTE: my only effort of trapping was under a nuisance permit. Caught one other mate left – beaver kept plugging culvert.
- Private ownership of land by individuals and native corporations, native allotments or university state land sales! Each sale reduces our access and trapping areas. I'm so thankful for all the state and federal land in our state!
- Due to the lack of snow we had a very poor trapping season, although prices were exceptionally well. Our average for martens was around \$50.00. Top was \$58.00. They were sold through a place which then transported them to Canada for auction. Our whole family only caught 15 or so and that was on almost ten miles of line. Much run on snowmachine, except for my brother's and mine line. We'll see what next year's like.
- I would like two more weeks for marten, east of King River-Carpenter Creek Drainages. We should be part of 13D.
- I would like to see an early muskrat season. A lot of rats den up in water that is to shallow and die because they freeze in, an early season would allow these to be harvested, instead of them just dying needlessly. Also, this year the rabbits hit the bottom of their cycle, there were very few left by spring, we also had a plague of shrews this winter, every time I checked my marten sets, I would see shrews on the bait, 90% of the time.
- Trapping is becoming a lost art and I'd like to see more young responsible people getting into it. Unfortunately, access to good trapping along the roads is already teaming with "weekend" trappers. I trap road system and on snow machine so I can get away from some of the crowds. Trapping among the crowds makes setting and checking your sets interesting, as people like to follow your tracks and steal your fur. I use to trap high numbers of animals but now like to experiment with different sets and target specific animals. Snaring is so effective and very deadly. My biggest thrill was snaring a beaver under ice last year (2001).
- Why are you giving permits to kill calves in 20!? Open lynx season the same as fox.
- Lots of wolves in 13C. 2) Muskrats are more abundant. 3) Lynx showed no interest in sets (walked right by). 4) Early beaver season is sure a plus. It allows for harvest before the weather gets too cold up north.
- Almost no moose left only saw two cows the whole season.
- Why is the marten season so short in 16A (Dec. 15- Jan. 15)?
- I work Beluga for Peak Oilfield Service as a contract hand for Phillips. I believe the Tier II moose hunt permits have way too long of a season. Those poor moose were always being disturbed by road hunters. Please shorten season to the end of year instead of closing two months later. I am a hunter and outdoorsman, but that particular season is too long. Those moose need to conserve some fat for winter/let alone the bear and wolf population jump.
- Closing the late spike fork moose hunt in unit 14 was a plus. It left the unfamiliar people out of the woods. I didn't have to worry so much about getting my wolf gear stolen, it has happened in the past during the hunt.

- We need land and shoot wolf hunting or better yet legalize shooting from planes. People have no idea how many moose they kill. Also we need a black bear and brown bear trapping season in 16B. They kill an amazing amount of moose and moose calves. Make black bear a furbearer and legalize the sale of their hides.
- Please have Fish and Wildlife Troopers attend trapper education. Maybe they can learn how to prosecute trap thieves. Liberalize any restriction on wolf (open up aerial wolf hunting again). I really appreciate the good work of the area biologist for 14A who has recently retired. I believe that the new staff is so behind that they will never reach the level of knowledge that he had. I would also like to advocate for registered lines.
- Large increase in moose calves this summer, '02. First snowshoe and lynx I have seen in five years.
- I started trapping two years ago and enjoy it a lot. I try to go after animals that are too abundant and leave alone the ones that aren't around. I follow the regulations and I'm glad that you mail out these surveys. I hope this helps and that other trappers do the same.
- I wanted to collect a beaver fur for personal use, within three days of setting the traps I had two beavers, this was more than enough so it was a short season, next season I may attempt to trap other furbearers as it was enjoyable this year.
- In 14A we could not access this area the last two years because of weather conditions. This year the river froze early and we were able to set traps. The two-year break and weather this year was a big help in our additional harvest from this unit. I think we were fortunate no one else moved into our area while we couldn't get to it! In 16A the snow conditions here were the biggest problem. Down low there wasn't any. Lots of brush and travel was rough. Up high, lots of snow and snow machiners. I think this excessive traffic moved animals around and out of the animal's general area. That's the breaks. We cannot deny snow machiners their enjoyment when there aren't too many places for them to run. Hopefully they had as much fun running as we did trapping.
- The trapping pressure and number of trappers working off the Copper River highway is too high. All furbearer populations are suffering except beaver. The board should consider closing Juneau's or reducing the allowable take in the area.
- Please consider opening wolf trapping from the air.
- Too many trappers in one area!
- Keep up the good work. I would like to urge other trappers to take youth along for perpetuating our political right to remain free trappers of furbearers. The kids are our future and animal rights activists are trying to influence future generations who have a removed perspective from participating with nature. They want to get humanity apart from the environment. Take a kid on your trapline. It is your duty to do that at least once per year. Thank you ADF&G for sending out the questionnaire.
- Just moved to Kenai area from valley – too many people and regulations over in this part of the world – poor-limited trapping effort this year.
- Great annual report! I appreciate being included in the survey. Snowmachine travel conditions the best I've seen in the last eight years. Several beaver were frozen out of their ponds (in tundra areas) during February and March.

- Wolverine have received more pressure each year and for fewer present. May be in part to the large number of drop off caribou hunters who take any wolverine they see. Thank you for the annual report and the report on furbearer management.
- The prices need to be up before I trap the way I used to. There is not enough money to really try hard.
- With so few beaver trappers and so many beaver we should get rid of the limit. Tagging beaver is a pain. I send all my fur for tanning and the rush to get beaver ready 30 days after season is a bit bothersome. Unless there is some real reason biologically why do we spend the state's money tagging beaver?
- My dad hasn't been doing some trapping since he started receiving old age benefits because it affected his benefits going up and down or completely not receiving his old-age income. He does not speak or write the English language.
- Beaver season is too early of an opening! Should go back to late season, January first or December first, because early furs are only worth half as much as late. The 40-beaver limit is just right – too many beaver. The wolf population is way high – they seem to be all over, everywhere. I noticed a severe drop in the lynx and wolverine population the past two years. The few wolverines I happened to catch are all scared up. Think it may be wolves. Hunters running my traps on the excuse of hunting when they are not.
- Why is the trapping season for wolverine go up 'til February 28th and you can shoot one after that. They are pairing up in late February?
- The Eastern portions of Unit 13E is hard or impossible to access until good ice (about mid December) Marten season closes December 31. This season I could not even get the line out until after the season closed. The eastern part of 13E has very little trapping pressure. The season was changed because one person pushed for the change – because of road trapping the Parks Highway about 100 miles and a mountain range from where I trap. I cannot go to the Board of Game with this because of the differing of opinions within the current administration. Eastern part of Unit 13E marten season dates should be the same as 13A & B. In fact, all species should be the same.
- Maybe lengthen the lynx season in units when the rabbits are dying out. Most lynx will die anyway.
- I trap only for fun and to get out in the winter and enjoy the outdoors. Trapping partner also ran a small line on his own in addition to the one we had together.
- I am a master guide and hunt primarily sheep in my area, so I make it a point to closely monitor predator populations. This season I loaned most of my wolf traps to a friend and bought his wolf pelts for clients, enabling him to continue trapping. He did well, seven or eight wolves I think. But not enough in my opinion. Local trapping and hunting pressure is the only thing that is keeping our sheep and moose population stable. In the last eight years there has been a dramatic increase in predators! Owls have severely impacted the introduced ruffed grouse in this area and I find coyotes hunting sheep more than in the past. Wolverine seem to be rebounding well. As of this writing the bears (grizzly) are really hurting our moose calves and have been at neighboring houses and on my fence lines, need to liberalize the unit 14 season.

- Did not trap this year due to warm weather. Low fur prices and too many recreational snow machiners. My two sons trapped all winter. Was the poorest season ever. Urban trappers and recreationists jumping line and warm weather and no snow.
- Worked this winter during trapping season. The magazine you sent is excellent, thanks, I will pass it on.
- Low snow pack caused me to not get out very much. When I did, I saw very little sign. Some fox but no lynx tracks caused me to not set.
- Thanks. Good luck to the retired statewide furbearer coordinator. Did not trap much this year.
- I sold my trapline.
- I am getting upset with the recreational trappers that claim 300 sq/miles, who trap one species and only check traps once or twice a month. It might be time for a requirement to check traps at least once a week.
- Again, I'd like to see a November first opening for beaver.
- Area biologist recently retired. I appreciate him for his work in helping trappers and many other areas that support the sportsman and responsible balanced wildlife management. I hope we get a biologist who is a trapper and a friend of trappers. I'm a charter member of "Friends of Moose", (not the moose lodge), I propose that we be allowed to "cowboy" a few wolves with our snowmachines, give the moose a break. Other areas of the state are open to this, where the Board of Game or ADF&G has determined that the wolf numbers are too high in relation to the prey species. This was the last season for trapping lynx on the Kenai Peninsula, for a number of years to come. I'm gonna miss those big-footed bunny killers! They are tasty and I love these pan-fried kitty tenders.
- In unit 15A would like to see beaver season open earlier or stay open later so some open-water trapping would be possible. I also miss the old June 10 season, ending of muskrat trapping – by shooting with 22 cal. Was a time for recreation in spring. I think otter and mink and weasel season could last longer. Why not just end them March 31st, like wolf and coyote? How about transplanting fisher to the Kenai Peninsula? Would like to see an end to the federal four-day trap check requirement on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. How about a hunting season for beaver where they are overabundant or a problem?
- Excellent summary. Keep up the effort to introduce young trappers. The department should think about a contest for young trappers. Best photo of kid with a trapped furbearer or trapping shot wins a dozen (#1s) mink traps??
- Hunting related. Start watching the Saltery Cove Road in November and December for people working the line for deer/road. Be watchful of "game-hogs" on the Kodiak road system. (Moonies Psagshak Pass) Warn family members killing antlerless deer?? No one did anything. Check hunters tags, guys are killing more than one deer on the road. Not a lot of people really trapping those that do abide by the rules. Also, hunters chasing foxes down on four by fours, sleds in lake in February, early to mid March, April on frozen crusted snow. Season is closed to hunting after February 15th and open to trapping, may be shot March 31st.
- Thank you!

- I had to delay otter season over three weeks due to ice on the bay. Then I caught five females in a row and pulled the gear. Plenty of otter sign. Too many females. Got one male pulling the traps. Next year!
- Closing otter in GMU 8 one month later at the end of February would help us trappers be better able to harvest along with the beavers I'm after then, and not have to worry about incidental catches. The days are a little longer (safer) ice and snow depths are good for travel with no harm to trails. Otter pelts are prime still. If I had to give all but one up. It would be trapping the last. And this year my three-year-old daughter went with me and of course was the good luck charm to get that last otter at the last set. She is the next generation. Let us all support our ADF&G because without them it's over.
- Like to see some martin brood stock from Afognak Island transplanted on Kodiak Island. No martin available near village of Port Lions.
- Stop pursuit of furbearers by airplane and snowmobiles.
- The fish and game has to do something about the wolves around the state. Why don't you put an air permit to people who know how to fly and land and shoot? Because if you let people from F&G they are going to get hurt, they (F&G) don't have the experience to do this kind of flying. Plus it would generate income for F&G.
- Land restrictions kept me from old line. Freezing and thawing of river kept me off my main line. I may move north as four of the last six years trapping reminded me of living in Kodiak.
- Snow machines, should be looked at as an aggressive management tool in regards to a booming wolf population, and regulations should follow suite. Not only in wolf management areas, wolves will only continue to repopulate from areas, not yet under wolf management regulations, ADF&G seems to be a year behind the curve concerning wolves, other than that good job.

Interior

- Would be nice if wolf pelts were undamaged by radio collars – another means of attaching radio transmitters would be good. Under current AK laws the only way to protect a trapline from other trapline: that is, setting for every species, every year to discourage encroachment by other trappers. Some form of registration would allow me to reduce the number of sets in some years on the fringes of my trapping area.
- Our hare cycle is down at present and the furbearer population is also down. As it picks up I will increase my time and effort on my line. My children all enjoy going out on my line during the winter and I encourage them to come along.
- There seems to be fewer animal sign general in the area I trapped. There has been a large number of Russian trappers in the area. The Delta Mine Center has a training site in the area, which I believe has also affected the animals in that area.
- Please do not promote any more people to use the fur and game resources in the greater Manley area it is over taxed all ready.
- No juvenile lynx; several yearlings. Heard many comments from others within 80 miles – very few young marten; few mice-voles-camp robbers-ravens-owls.

Wolves appeared hungry but not as hungry as 00-01. At least three different wolves were attacking pet dogs in Minchumina-Talida area this year. Muskrats have been very low for 20+ years but are gradually coming back.

- ADF&G biologists are great!
- The caribou hunt in the White Mountains brings in lots of joy riders, but no caribou, why do the managers at ADF&G continue to have an unlimited caribou hunt when the outcome only affects trappers not caribou?
- Warm weather, low snow, fair fur numbers. Tough trappers competition. Lots of cats no marten poor ice on Tanana overall good year.
- Leg hold traps larger than #1s should be checked at least every three days.
- Fur prices are still too low to spend a lot of time trapping. Most people in my village feel that way about it. There is a good supply of fur animals around.
- Wolf trapping and/or hunting needs to be expanded. Same day air-borne hunting is a must. Wolf populations are creating huge moose, sheep and caribou kills. The amount of kills I viewed from the air this year that were positively from wolf packs were more abundant than I have ever seen. The moose population in Unit 13 is the lowest I have ever witnessed. The moose population on the Nowitina River has also been crushed. Please, help create a policy of sustained yield concept that lets us harvest predators in any way to positively affect game animals. If we reduced the number of predators by 25 percent, it would enable the human harvest to be improved ten fold without lowering the population. Fur prices have decreased trapper effort, especially mine.
- What a relief it will be to have a new administration! Maybe we can even get a commissioner who knows something about wildlife science. Let the biologists do their job! Let's also get rid of all the anti-trappers on the Board of Game.
- I take advantage of the ATA and ADF&G "Take a Kid Trapping" program on the Chena River inside Fairbanks. It was really a lot of fun to watch those kids when they pulled beaver out of the water. Keep that program going.
- Really a dead year for about everything but wolves. Hardly even any chickadees around.
- I have trapped the same country and trails for 14 years and have learned much about animal populations as I keep an extensive journal. In my area I do not believe that my trapping has a long-term effect on animal populations. They rise and fall regardless of trapping pressures whether heavy or light but I do not try to catch everything but try and just take what I feel the country can handle. The moose population has been devastated over the years. No one hunts there but me and it is sad to see. I enjoy trapping wolves a lot and I am glad they are there but they are taking a heavy toll. I never saw a moose until late February. I won't get started on how absurd and laughable the management of wolves has become. But I feel sorry for the folks who are trying to do the right thing and have their hands tied by bureaucracy that cares not at all for the moose or the wolves.
- I have moved out of state please take me off your mailing lists you're wasting money. I no longer tag furs for you guys. Keep up the good work. I can't believe they outlawed trapping here in Washington state. I have cougars/bobcats in my yard. I don't think people should have the vote. You guys are our fur managers.

- Perfect trapping conditions last season. Snow just right. Very little wind. Not cold. I wish every season from now on was the same.
- Thank you for letting us trap.
- Only ran a short line close to town this year. Wanted to introduce my 12-year-old daughter to trapping. Responsibilities at home made it impossible to run an extensive line. Saw very few grouse, ptarmigan and hares. Expect lynx population to crash.
- The prices on furs is out greatest downfall. To low and gas is \$3.00 per gallon here in Allakakeet and oil is \$3.75 a quart. But even if prices are low I'll be out again, God willing. I used to take young boys out. This village used to make a living with trapping. People used to just live out in camp, martens went for \$100, lynx went for \$300, and beaver went for up to \$75. One year I caught the biggest beaver, 80 ½ inch and a fur buyer had \$500 for the biggest beaver. Well I won it. Now I'm 63 and retired. But I still want to go out. We'll see, all depends on snow and how it works. Also I'm not a duck hunter. I never even got one yet this year. One year about 15 or 20 years ago my late wife and our five kids were back in Kanuti River and in this little lake I snuck up to it slowly and told her to hold the willow and I thought I shot one geese that was fine geese one shot. Maybe that is why I never get any geese again. And this spring up about ten miles on Koyokuk River I never seen so much geese in my life, and also ducks. So they'll be a lot of geese and ducks again. Also one year about 70's I got a white fox back there in my wood yard. My daughter had it for a hat for a long time. Don't know were it came from. Also there used to be small owls in winter time. They'd stay under inches. No more. And after the oil spill we never hear geese on the lakes up here anymore. Could be the spill had something to do with it.
- Trap theft in a very remote location by another so-called trapper. This is very discouraging in an area where locals want as many wolves as possible caught.
- The hare population declined at mid-winter to 10–15 percent of the peak. Predation factors brought the hare numbers down to 5–10 percent of peak. Lynx are still abundant in the Brooks Range and all adults were carrying an inch of fat on their bellies. Marten population declined 60 percent, more likely due to a disease. We had a similar decline having 1/8" fat on the hide, to flesh. Moose and sheep numbers remain low, which is the wolves' main prey. There were some Central Arctic Caribou that came into this country, only a few hundred.
- Trapping was fun, me and my brother did a lot of teamwork. We did a lot of work getting our foxes. We did have problems with our traps and some foxes got away. When I grow up I want to be a trapper.
- Wolf populations are still down along the divide of the Brooks Range/North Slope. Seem to have some sort of disease – still no pups. Took my 11-year-old son along this year, was good fun. Lynx populations were good but hares were crashing so the lynx will be gone next year. All and all a good and enjoyable season, thanks for letting me be a part of your questionnaire and hope any of my information is of help in preserving our fine state and its resources.
- I generally only trap beaver for the meat (human consumption) and I use the pelts for hats and trim on moccasins and gloves.

- None to very few marten anymore. Few white trappers. None to very few Indians track you the state lost most all your management on big game. I hope you don't expect to manage furbearers. The system has lost its gut. No one seems to listen to the people who use the wildlife as a major part of living.
- Wolves have been on the increase last three years. The two years previous to this year we went without seeing a single calf of either a buffalo or a moose. This year we saw two buffalo calves. One I know didn't make it. We also saw two moose calves in December. I know the wolves got one of them.
- Do away with sealing requirement or make it easier to get fur sealed by mail or something.
- I would like to see more natives working for ADF&G, more education about our wildlife, this should be taught in our schools, so our younger generation will have a knowledge to pass on to their children.
- Please stop the airplanes that are shooting from the air and picking up wolves with snow machines. In area of Iditarod Trail west of Farwell Lake.
- I trapped in the Fairbanks area for 25 years. Noted marten decrease during high bunny years. Especially when lynx were abundant. Last 25 years in GMU 19 marten have been relatively abundant since mid-seventies in the GMU 19 areas I have trapped. Muskrats began decline in late 50's early 60's and have never returned to the former numbers. Wolf populations in 19 are the highest I have seen since the mid 50's.
- Sorry to hear the statewide furbearer coordinator has retired from F&G. Lost a good hand and the Alaska trappers have lost a good friend.
- Wolf management is a big issue. The trapper is not making much of a dent in them. They are very hard to trap. I am watching our moose population go down hill and it is sad. They need to open aerial hunting for wolf. I and a lot of people here say forget fair chase! Something has to be done. And it is not getting done talking and making empty promises like our governor does. And did to us. I don't want to sound angry but my daughter was stalked by a wolf and I am seeing first hand the harm they are doing.
- Fish and game has always been good to us in years past. I think ADF&G has failed in wolf control. Moose are rare in an area once rich in moose. It's getting too late to complain about wolf. Action should have been taken 10-15 years ago.
- I would like to see a longer wolf trapping season in 19D because of low moose numbers.
- Appreciate receiving the questionnaire. Thanks.
- Very few boreal owls. Same with Great Northerners. Ravens seemed to be fewer. Fewer squirrels. I believe we're in a low cycle on everything. But will see a change soon. I get two copies of questionnaire, one at my address and one at general delivery.
- Let biologists do their jobs and the political appointee do other things. Lethal predator control should be allowed.
- 2000-2001 season – first time I trapped in Alaska. Trapped approximately 12 weeks. One wolf snared, two wolverine – one snare and one conibear, two lynx- one snare and one leg hold, four beaver – one snared and three conibear, 13

marten – four leg hold and nine conibear. I hope to be in the same area 21A, 12 to 14 weeks in the 2002–2003 season.

- Harvested two wolves, no trapping.
- I feel that game wardens should trap in units other than those where they must enforce fish and game laws.
- I think this is a great program.
- There were no fox this year. I saw only a couple of tracks the entire season. Very unusual, I normally catch about a half dozen and could catch many more. Back to the lynx? No rabbits but very fat cats. I almost never see a lynx track because I almost never see a lynx on my trap line. They seemed to be roaming a lot further than usual. My poor luck with wolves this year was a function of the weather and the caribou so I couldn't hang snares and the caribou kept springing leg hold traps. Next year will be the good year.
- I had to give up my old trap line when I moved to another area of Alaska. I trapped this area one season but it just did not have the fur. I now go south for the winter to work, but I sure enjoyed the years I trapped, it was a good experience.
- Fight the greenies any way you can.
- I set my traps this year and had two lynx, three fox when my garage burnt down. I went out after that and pulled what traps I had set and never went back.
- What the heck happened to the marten population!?! Unreal how they just disappeared. Like the link 'crashes'. Worst season for marten in 27 years, by far. 1/10th of my normal catch.
- People are doing a great job. Keep up the good work.
- The last few years the mink here seem to have thinner skin and when dried it's not like years ago, when still soft all right or better until dried on wooden stretcher. I have helped raise a few mink at home about 1953 it was just an extra at home, I don't mind the experience of freezers, home made freezers, to keep meat. And there was a gallon of wheat germ oil to put in the meat ration for a month or so. I think the mink are called mutation mink. Maybe because of the different colors. If I was to raise mink again it would only be a few and they would be caught wild. Like North Dakota or Alaska.
- Would like to see an earlier open water season for beaver and otter in units 20E and 25B (say October). This would save some loss which is due to having to shoot them and losing some.
- What did happen to the marten? One of my late season scouting trips took me 25 miles up my normal line to find my first marten track!

Arctic/Western

- When do you expect the fur (fox pelts) prices to reach the \$50.00 range? I do not trap as much as I used to because of low prices on the pelts. Not worth setting trap line when gas prices are at or over \$3.00 a gallon. Five gallons is \$15.70. Twenty-one dollars for a pelt would not cover the cost of labor and maintain a trap line.
- I do not go trapping hunting 2001–2001 because lack of work and sno-go problems. Plan to go 2002–2003.

- I did not hunt this season. Because I was working all winter but I will hunt this season.
- Lack of snow rubbed the fur before it was prime. Kept my effort to a minimum. But rubbed fur is almost worthless. Spent most of my time trying to trap and snare wolves. We had the highest wolf harvest (5) I have ever seen in my 18 years in this village. Most were pairs male/female. Just up river in St. Mary's. Two guys caught four each (sno-go) probably more were caught by others there. There were two wolverines caught (sno-go) and at least two in St. Mary's and they were also tracked down and shot. The lynx population is getting up to its high cycle but I think it's still building in this local area – about a dozen were shot from this village this year. I only trapped a couple of beaver for food. Had the price been right me and my power auger would have had a busy season. They sure are defoliating some of these smaller sloughs of vegetation, including a lot of large stands of cottonwood trees including the old growth. One thing that struck me as strange is I didn't see one weasel or even their tracks. Normally they're eating my bait and getting caught in lynx and fox traps but none this year, go figure. Our moose numbers are doing good and I would like to compliment our local area biologist for doing a great job of keeping us informed via the local newspaper of aerial moose counts. It's a good thing and should be done everywhere and even for other species. In fact I would like any information on our area wolf counts if there are any. It might help my trapping effort one way or another. I would also like to say I think the board of Game is getting ridiculous giving the wildlife viewers seats on the board when it's the hunters and trappers paying for all the data collected through purchase of hunting and trapping licenses (and its not cheap). If they want to help manage they should put their money where their mouth is and while I'm on a rant I would like to comment of the notion that the state would consider financially bailing out the tourism industry. That's primarily based outside of Alaska and yet the state does nothing when our only winter economy in rural Alaska (trapping) gets pretty much totally wiped out and after fifteen years has never even been publicly mentioned but just quietly replaced with welfare and food stamps. Well, keep up the good work. I appreciate getting the annual report. Thanks.
- Good job. Looking forward for next year's reports.
- The only reason I didn't trap was due to the fact that I was spending free time at home as my wife was having a difficult pregnancy. Otherwise I would have trapped beaver mostly. My wife and I practice "value added" trapping as she makes handicrafts (traditional Yup'ik) for family and sale. The low price paid by fur buyers has no effect on my efforts. I can hold one large beaver commercially tanned for \$20.00, and my wife can sew that up in a few hours into a \$180.00 winter hat. Otter too!
- I really appreciate your interest. We trappers work very hard and are rarely taken seriously by anybody but other trappers. My partner and I noticed an immediate change in moose behavior as soon as we cleaned out a resident wolf pack near the cabin. Suddenly they were feeding on the willows in the more open areas and wandering around fearlessly looking for feed. Before that they were jammed up in heavy cover with limited food because of wolf pressure. It was gratifying to

see we had made a difference in our struggling moose herd. Lynx were on the decline. Only the adults left. They were eating anything they could get their paws on including fox. Pretty honorable village guys still left around here. They shot one trapped wolf for us and left it lay. Closer in to the villages the younger people will gladly grab one's fur. But the real travelers still have ethics.

- With the wolf population at a high you should think about bring back a state bounty, to give trappers more incentive to trap them more vigorously.
- Actually I'm planning to trap this year and already harvested some beaver. So you might get some information out of me next spring. I'm still really curious about markets, new technology in quick-kill traps and home tanning methods as an attempt to secure a little profit.
- I'm 62 years old. I don't travel anymore now. Thanks for everything.
- In unit 22 it seems like there was an increase in airplanes or super cubs hunting wolves and wolverines. Otherwise not much of any hunting. More tagged reindeer around (deer) means more caribou traveling more west towards Shishamarof and Wales.
- I do not trap or hunt anymore but the population of lynx and beaver are very abundant here in Selwick Drainage.
- I'm thankful for the support of ADF&G in opening out lynx season back in line with that of the other species in Unit 23. I really enjoy reading the trapper questionnaire. Keep it up!
- When certain populations are high, increase the harvest number.
- Prices on certain fur bearing animals do not get much interest in Brevig Mission. I still have yet to learn how to set traps for certain species.
- Need more permits for musk ox! 22E and Seward Penn too many out there. For doing this survey, you should give out tickets for prizes to all hunters and trappers. I think we would be more anxious to do this survey every year and make it fun to do.
- I sincerely hope that the retired statewide furbearer coordinator's position is filled. Alaska needs a representative at the national and international level.
- Caribou were found at the end of my trapline and traffic got heavy.
- I would like to see a bear trapping season in Alaska. I understand Maine is the only state that allows this right now. Please note address has changed.
- I enjoy this questionnaire each season. I hope trapping continues to be regarded as an important management tool, and public opinion doesn't turn completely against those of us who still enjoy this tradition.

Author's Notes

I truly enjoyed working on this year's Trapper Questionnaire Report. The information that has been compiled in this report has shown me just how important trapping is to Alaskans. The information in this report has demonstrated to me the importance and trends in the populations of the different furbearers throughout Alaska. With that thought in mind, I'd like to emphasize how important that we get back as many questionnaires as possible. The more complete our understanding of trends in the field, the better the management decisions will be regarding the resources.

We all know that Alaska isn't like any other place in the United States. Our lifestyles are different, and our dependence on the resources is stronger than any other place in the country. Responding to the questionnaire is just one way in which you can show how important trapping is to your way of life. I urge you to stay in contact with us and your local area biologist, so that we can do a better job of managing your resources.

Good luck in the field this year. I look forward to hearing from you, and working on next year's report.

Tim Peltier
Wildlife Biologist
(907) 465-4148
tim_peltier@fishgame.state.ak.us

Thanks to all the trappers who responded to the 2001-2002 Trapper Questionnaire; I hope that you enjoyed the latest Trapper Questionnaire Report. Please take the time to complete the accompanying questionnaire and return it to us in the postage paid envelope provided. We continue to ask for your help in recruiting new trappers as well as encouraging other trappers to complete questionnaires. The information provided by trappers is used from the local to statewide level to manage Alaska's furbearers. More information means better management and a sustainable resource for future generations.

As you have noticed this year's report and questionnaire arrived later than normal. I hope this does not cause many problems. I am very interested in knowing how you, the trapper, feel about receiving the report and questionnaires a few months later.

I wish you well in the upcoming trapping season. If you have any comments, suggestions or would like to discuss this report or the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact me or your local department wildlife biologist. Good luck trapping.

Ryan Scott
Trapper Questionnaire Coordinator
(907) 465-6197
ryan_scott@fishgame.state.ak.us

