

**Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Wildlife Conservation**

**Statewide Annual Report
1 July 1999 - 30 June 2000**

TRAPPER QUESTIONNAIRE

Jackie Kephart



Gerhard Kraus

June 2001

CODE OF ETHICS

A TRAPPER'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Respect other trappers' grounds particularly brushed, maintained trap lines 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

Frank Rue, Commissioner

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

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Statewide Annual Report
TRAPPER QUESTIONNAIRE
July 1, 1999 – June 30, 2000

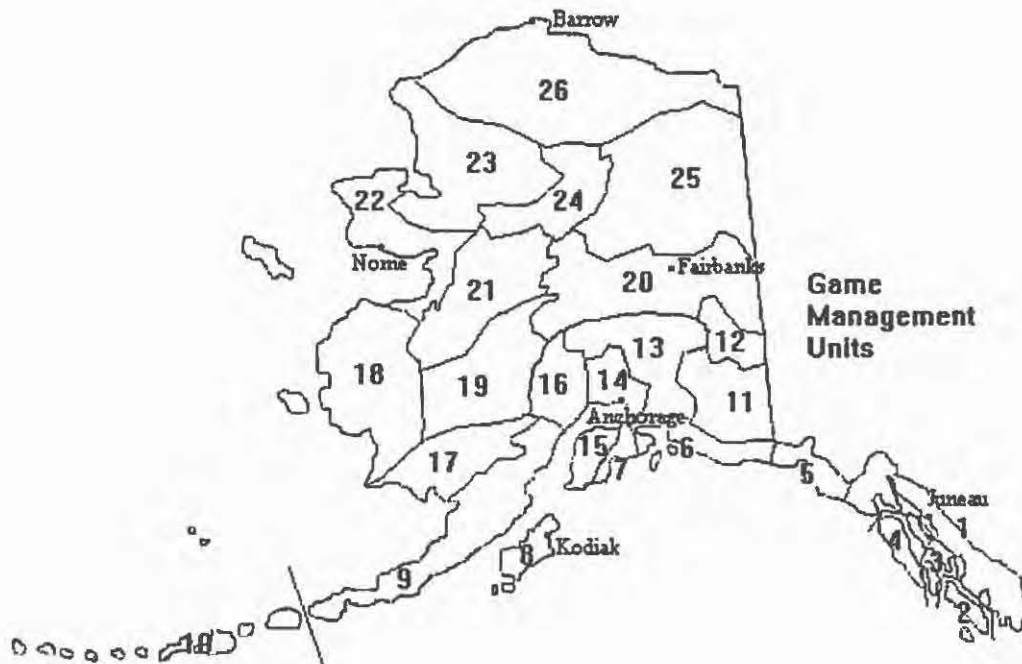
Jackie Kephart



June 2001

ALASKA'S REGIONS AND GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS

REGIONS



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ALASKA TRAPPER REPORT

1999–2000

INTRODUCTION

This report includes information contributed by you, the Alaska trapper. Our mailing list for the 1999–2000 season included 1313 trappers. We received information back from 414 individuals. Of these, 83 people trapped in Southeast, 145 trapped in Southcentral & Southwestern, 117 trapped in Interior Alaska, and 69 trapped in the Arctic/Western region. Others returned the questionnaire but did not trap. On the following pages you'll find out how other Alaskans run their traplines, how much effort they put into catching fur, how many furbearers were trapped in the state, and their primary target species. You'll also find summaries of Department of Fish and Game furbearer activities and comments of trappers that were written on the back of the questionnaires. As always, we strive to maintain strict confidentiality, and names of individuals and references to specific traplines are not included. We hope you find this report informative, and please let us know how we can improve it in the future.

A PROFILE OF ALASKA'S TRAPPERS

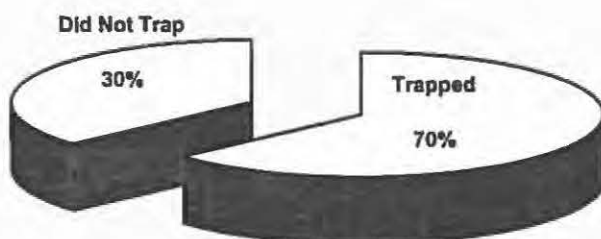
We asked trappers to answer questions to help us develop this report. In the following pages you will find how your fellow trappers answered those questions. Where possible, we show how trappers answered those questions over the past few years. Issues facing trappers and reports by Fish and Game's regional furbearer biologists begin on page 34. Comments by trappers begin on page 44.



Did you trap in 1999–2000?

70% of the trappers who responded to this questionnaire said they trapped during the 1999–2000 season. This represents a 7% increase from last year.

Of the 414 Trappers Who Returned the 1999-2000 Questionnaire



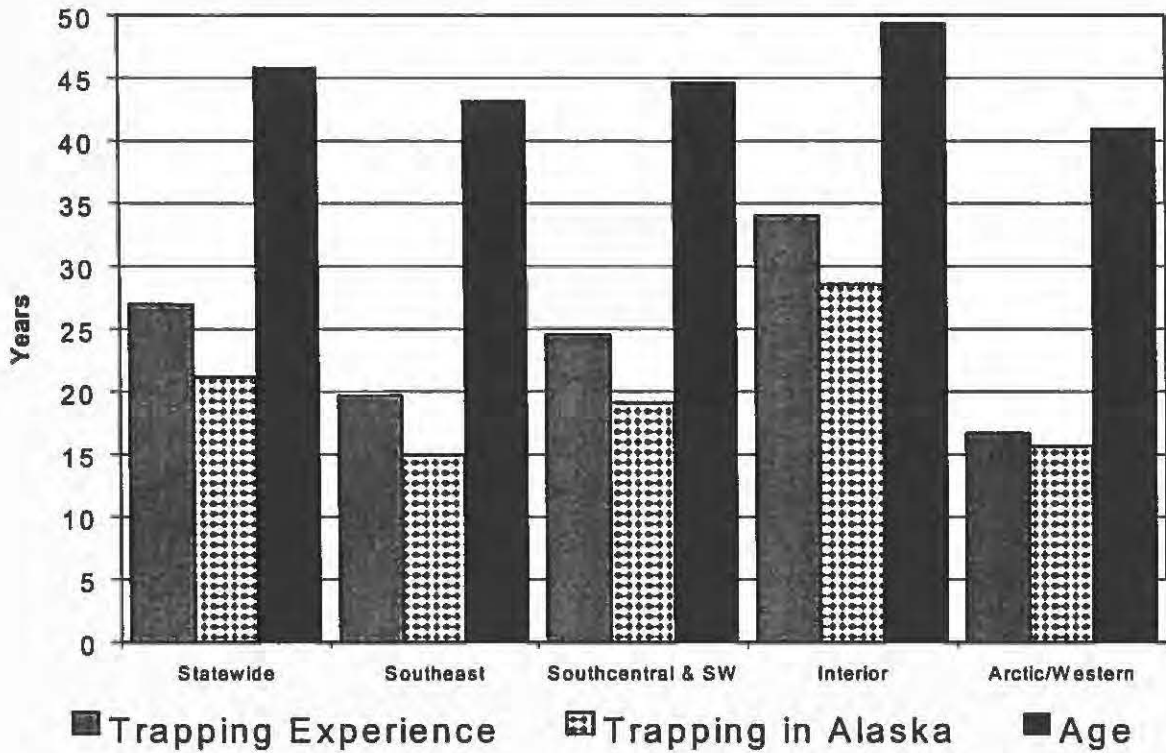
Trapper Age and Experience

On average, trappers in Alaska have been taking furs for over 27 years, 23 of those years in the state. The average trapper in Alaska is almost 46 years old. Average age was 43 in Southeast, 45 in Southcentral and Southwestern, 49 in the Interior, and 41 in the Arctic/Western region. The oldest trapper reporting was 94 and the youngest was 13. Since we began asking this question in 1993–1994, trapper age and experience has steadily increased. This suggests we either need to send the trapper questionnaire to more trappers or trappers need to recruit young people. If you know a young trapper who would like to get this report, please send us their name and address with your questionnaire.

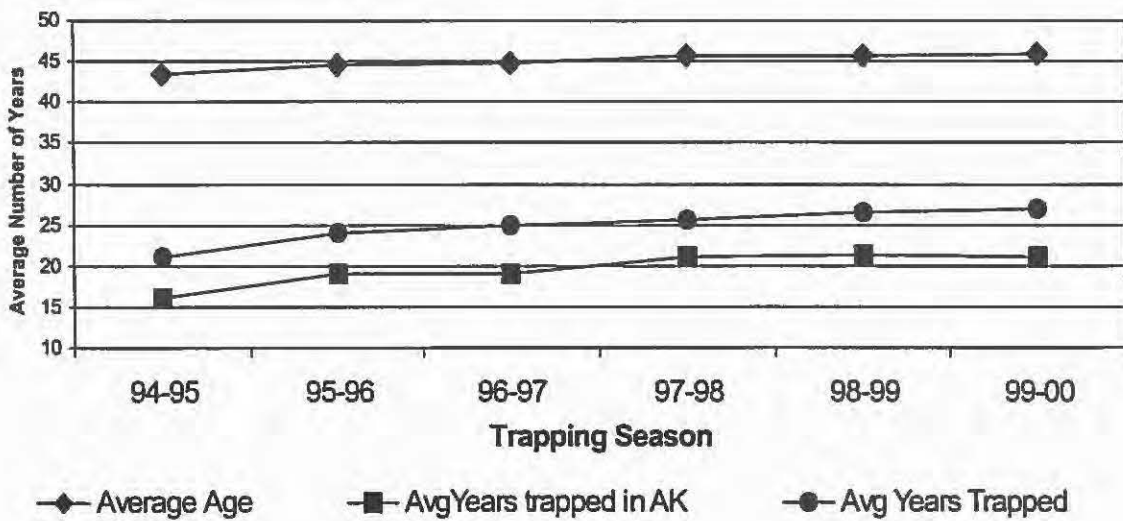
The graphs on the next page illustrate the breakdown by region and the trend over the last six winters.



Average Trapper Age & Experience

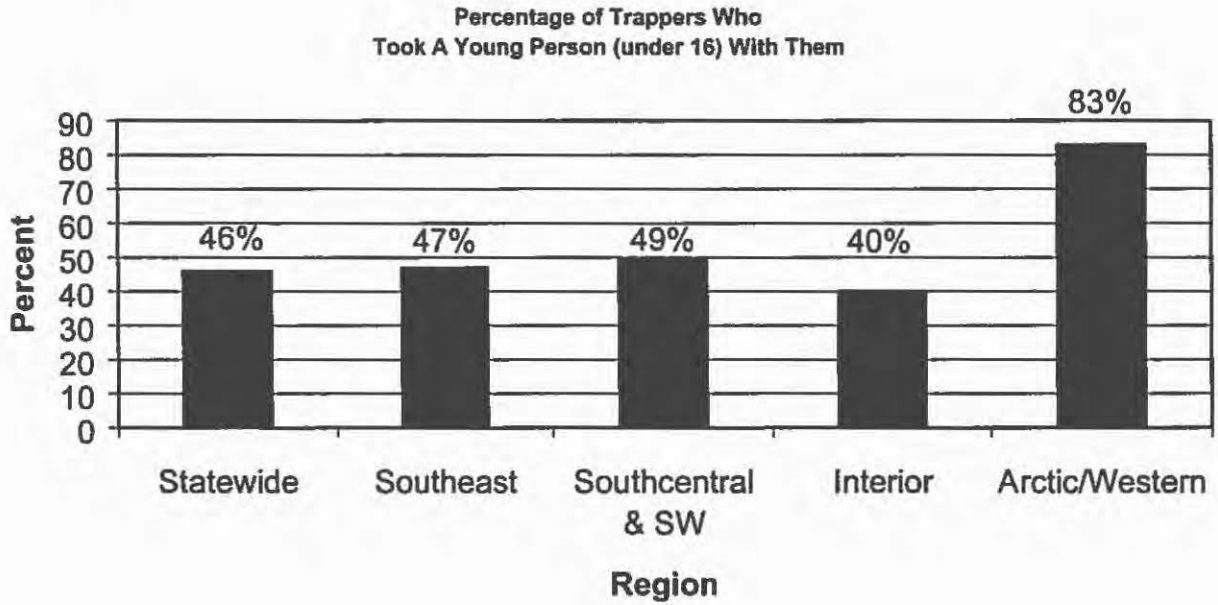


Trappers Get Older & More Experienced



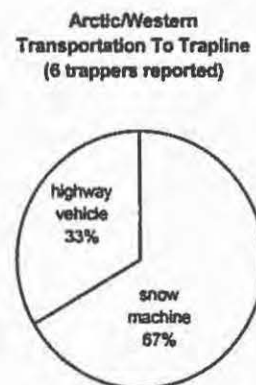
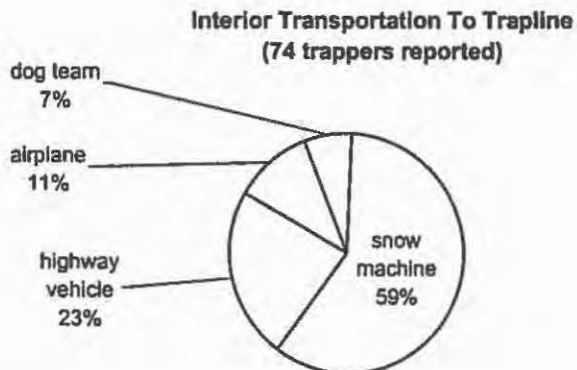
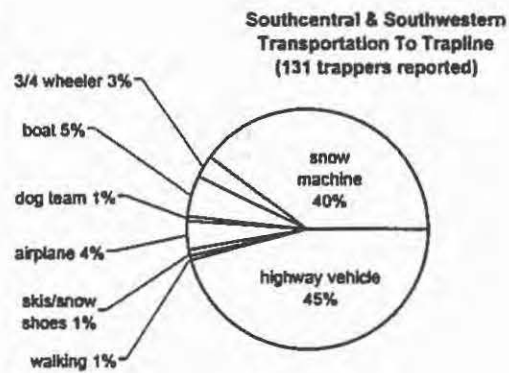
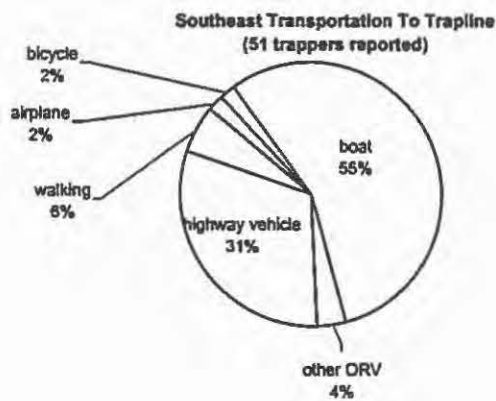
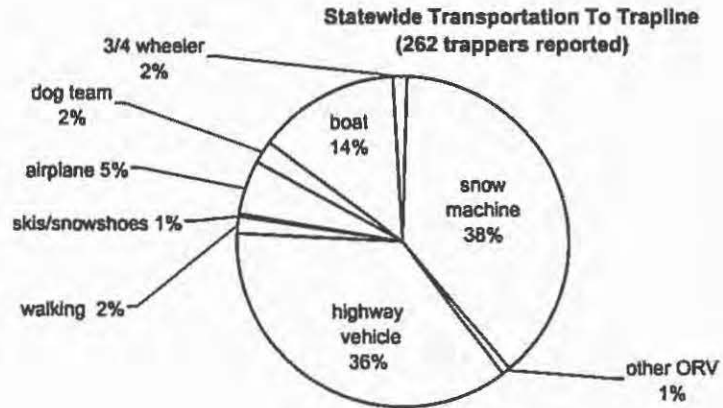
Did you have a youngster (under 16) with you on your trapline this year?

46% of trappers statewide had someone 16 or younger with them on their trapline at least once. Percentages are listed by region in the graph below.



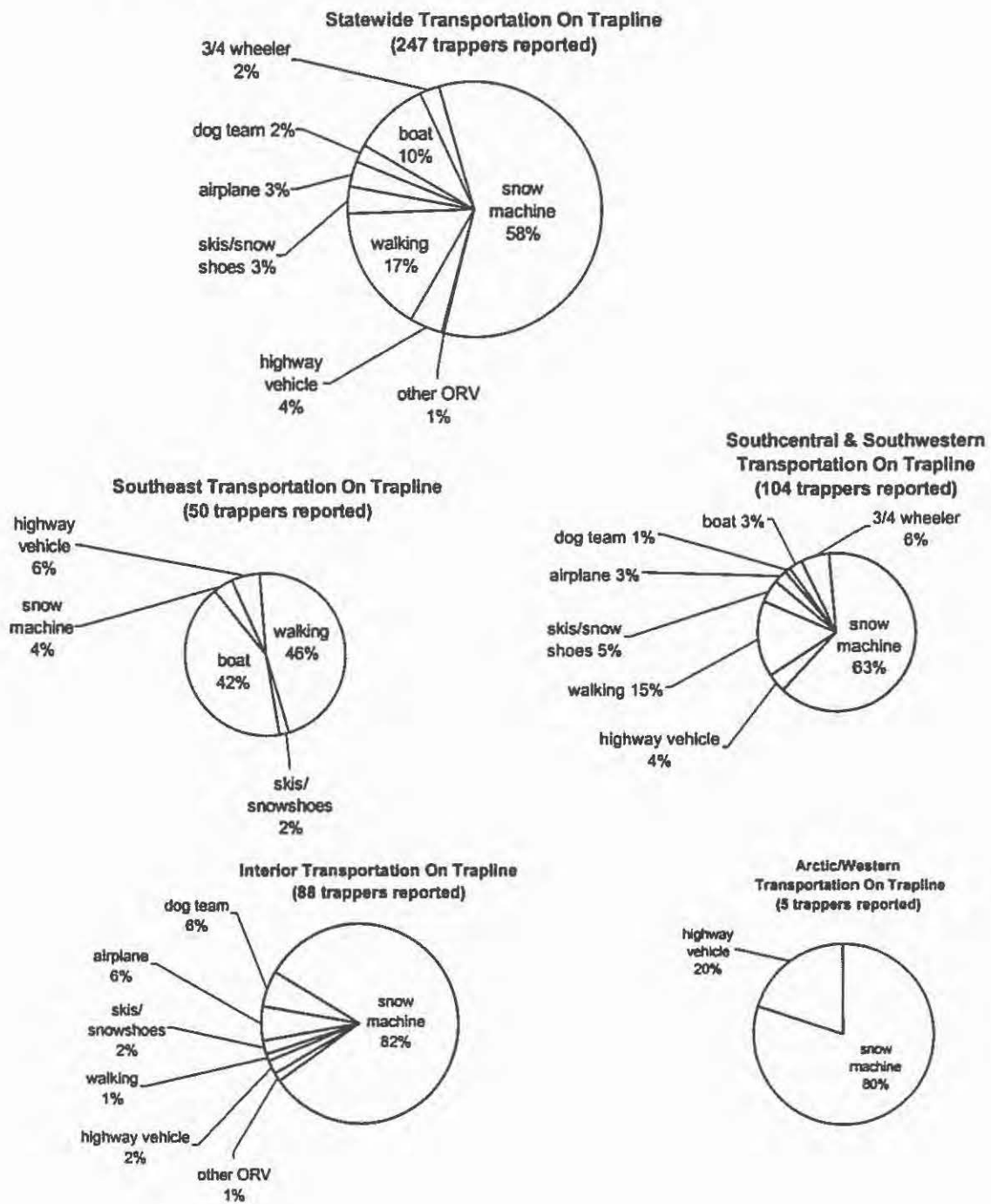
What transportation did you use to get to your main trapping area?

Transportation used by trappers throughout the state to get to their trapline(s) is summarized in the following pie charts:



What transportation did you use to run your main trapline?

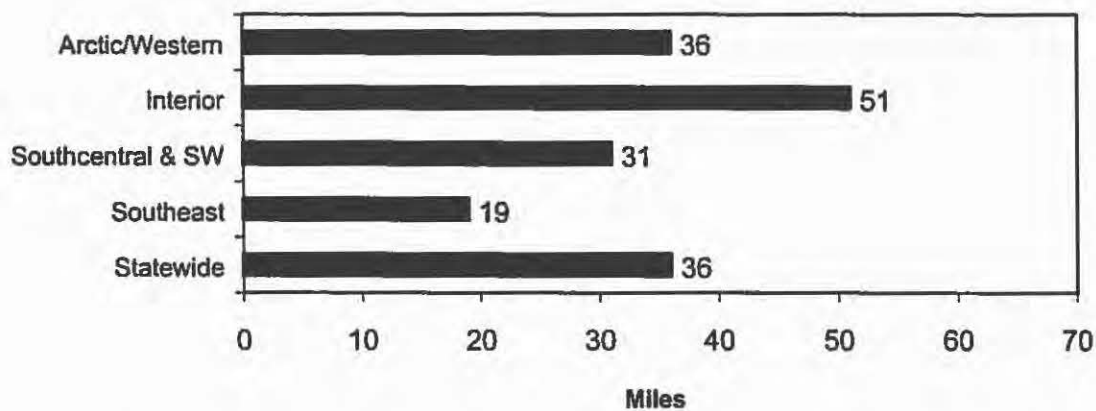
Overall percentages of transportation used by Alaska's trappers to run their traplines are summarized in the following pie charts:



How long was your main trapline in 1999–2000?

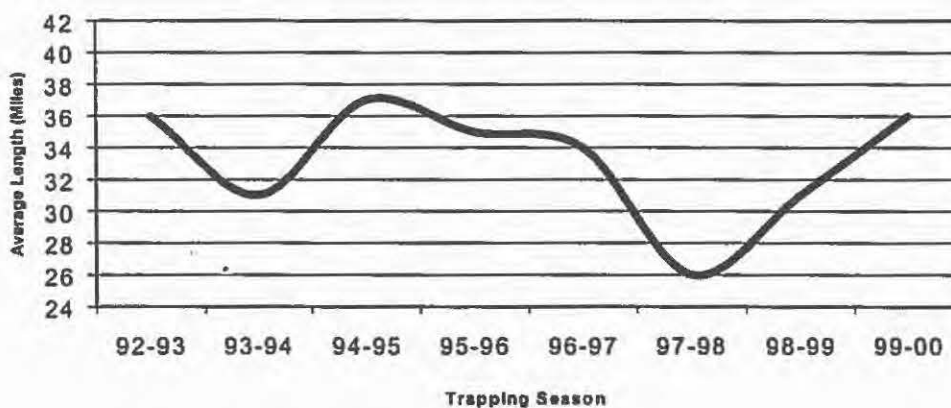
The average trapline length statewide in Alaska was 36 miles. Traplines varied from 1 mile in the Southeast, Southcentral, and Interior regions to 200 miles in the Southcentral and Interior regions. In Southeast Alaska, average trapline length was 19 miles and varied from 1 to 170 miles. In Southcentral, average length was 31 miles and ranged from 1 to 200 miles. In the Interior, traplines averaged 51 miles long and ranged from 1 to 200 miles. In the Arctic/Western region, traplines averaged 36 miles and ranged from 10 to 100 miles long.

Average Trapline Length



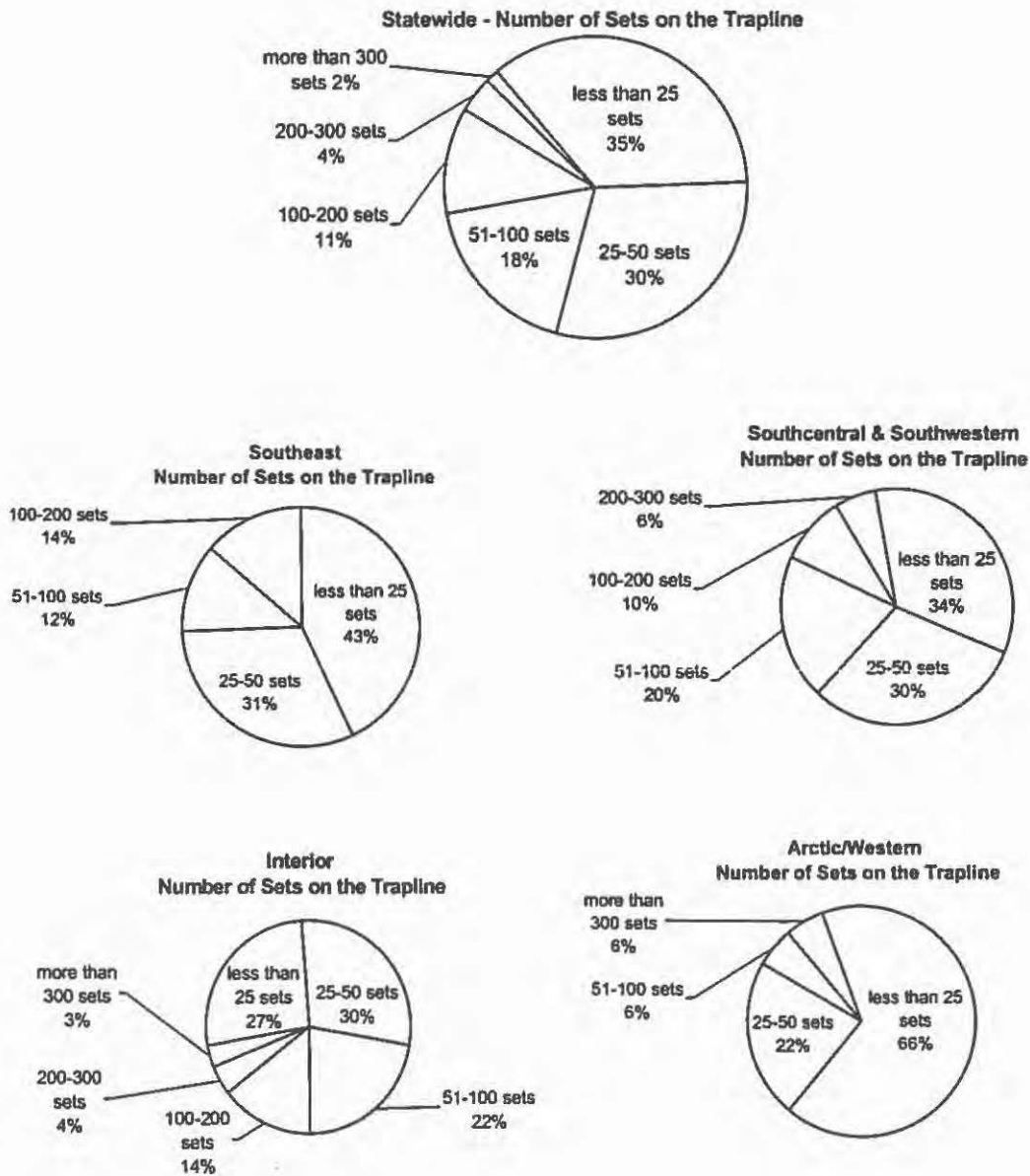
Since the 1992–1993 season, the statewide average trapline length has remained between 26 and 37 miles. The longest trapline in the state has fluctuated between a low of 200 miles in 1999–2000 and a high of over 400 miles in 1992–1993. These changes are probably due to different people answering the questionnaire, as well as trappers adjusting the length of their traplines for a variety of reasons, including weather, fur prices or abundance, and time spent doing other things.

Statewide Trend in Trapline Length



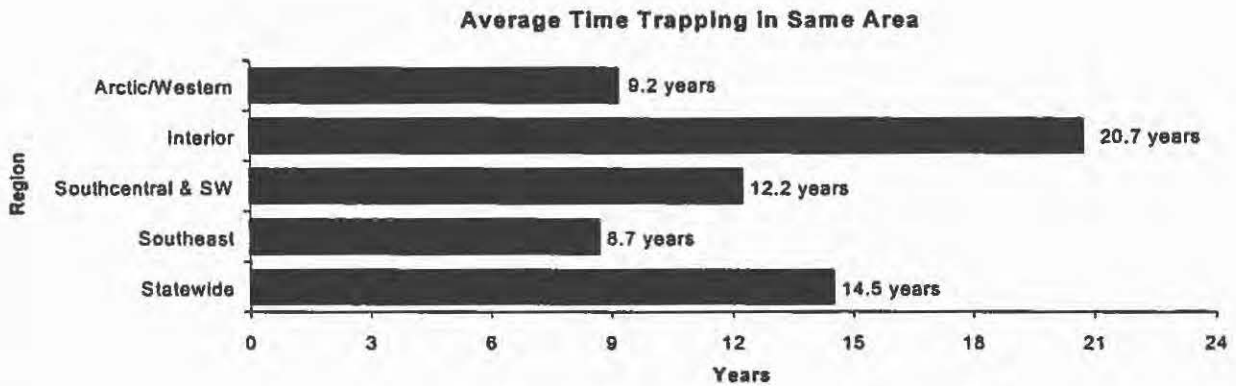
How many sets did you make on your line in 1999–2000?

As shown by the graphs below, the number of sets per trapline varied a lot. Most trappers (83%) put out 100 or fewer sets. Throughout the state approximately 2% of trappers put out more than 300 sets. Most Southeast trappers (74%) put out fewer than 50 sets, and only 14% of Southeast trappers put out more than 100 sets on their lines. In Southcentral and Southwestern, 64% of trappers had 50 or fewer sets on their lines, and 16% had more than 100 sets. Many Interior trappers (57%) had 50 or fewer sets, while 21% had more than 100 sets on their lines. In the Arctic/Western region, most trappers (88%) had 50 or fewer sets.



How many years have you been trapping in the same area?

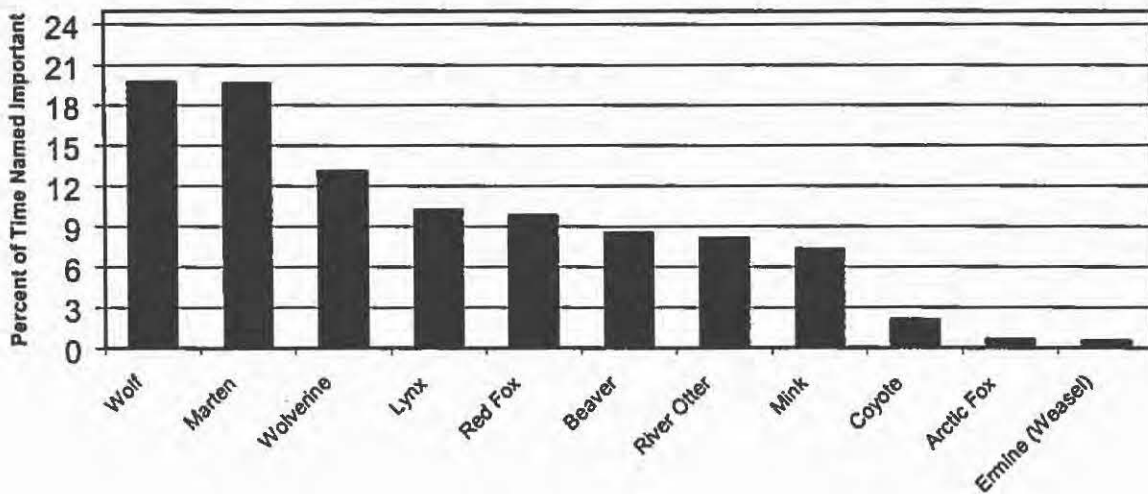
The average time Alaskans have been trapping the same area is over 14 years. The longest time in the same area is 69 years by a trapper in the Galena area. In Southeast, the average time in the same area is almost 9 years. In Southcentral and Southwestern Alaska, the average is slightly over 12 years. In the Interior, trappers averaged almost 21 years, and in the Arctic/Western region, trappers averaged slightly over 9 years of trapping in the same area.



What were the three most important species you were trying to catch in 1999–2000?

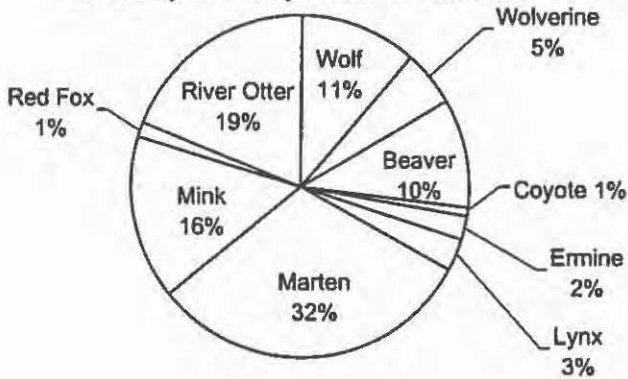
The two species most often listed as important by trappers statewide were wolf and marten. For the first time since 1992–1993, wolf edged marten as the species most often mentioned as important to Alaskan trappers. Wolverine, lynx, and red fox also continue to be among the top species named as important, although their rank changes from year to year.

Most Important Species Statewide

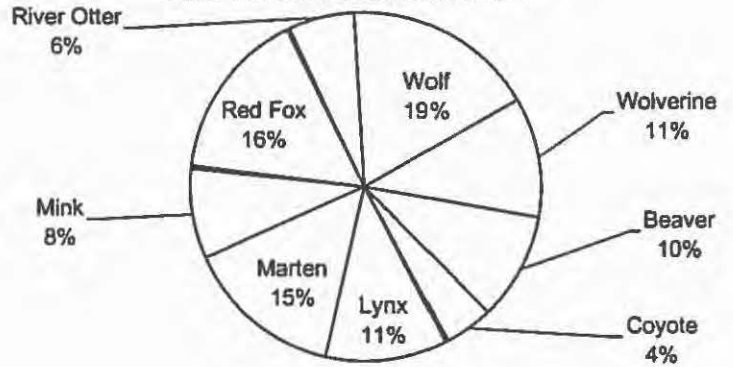


Broken down by region, the results are a little different: These regional differences reflect which furbearers are available and current market values.

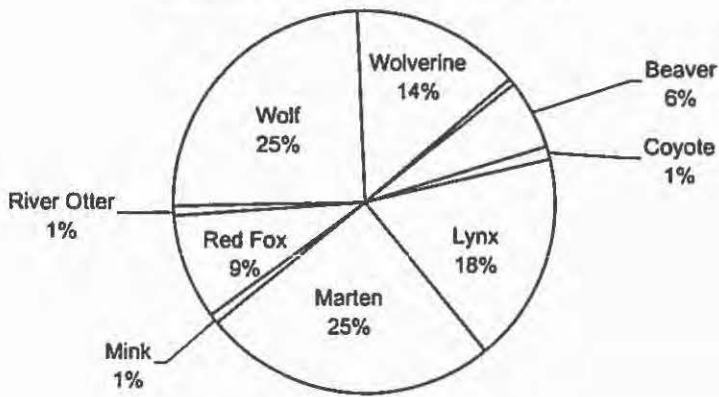
Most Important Species -- Southeast



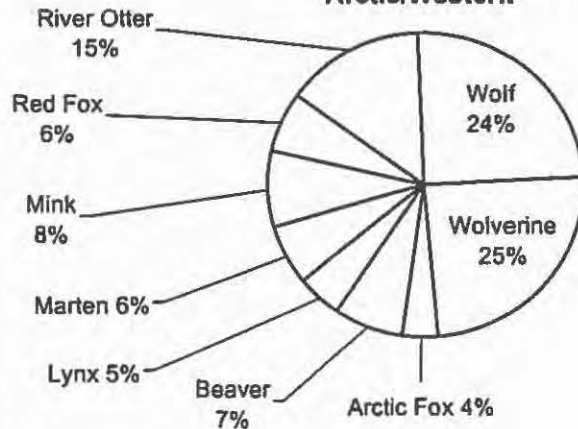
Most Important Species -- Southcentral & Southwestern



Most Important Species -- Interior



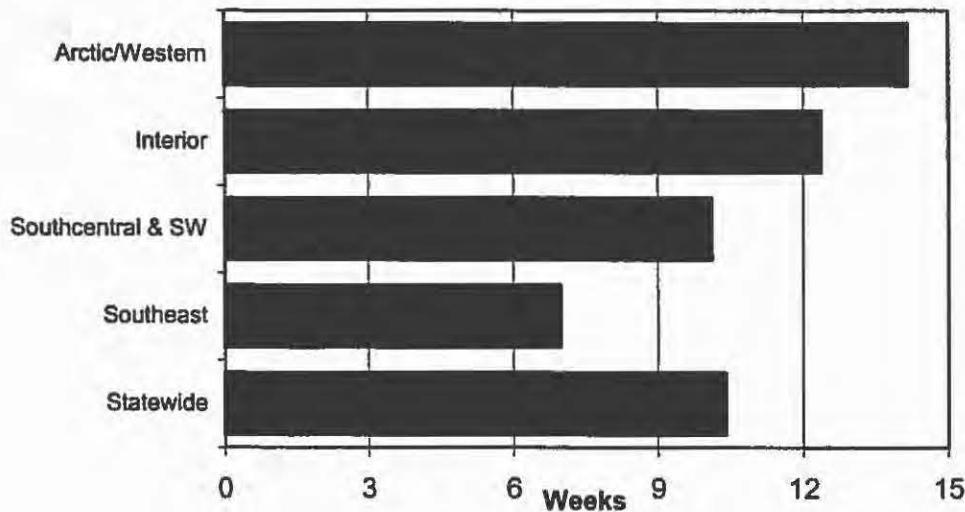
Most Important Species Arctic/Western



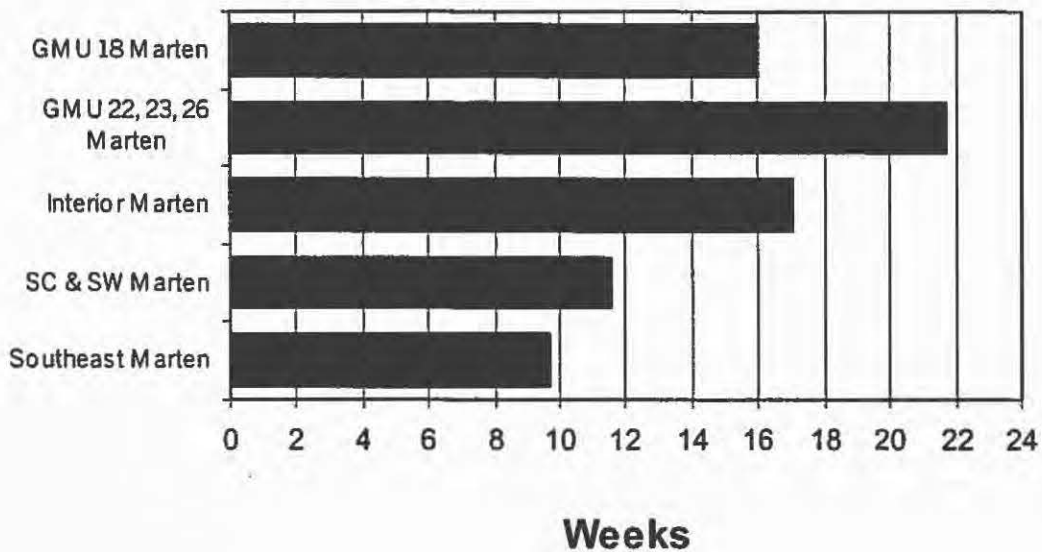
How many weeks did you trap during the 1999–2000 season?

The average trapper in Alaska trapped for almost 11 weeks. Compare the graph of average number of weeks trapped with the average season length for marten.

1999-2000 Average Number of Weeks Trapped

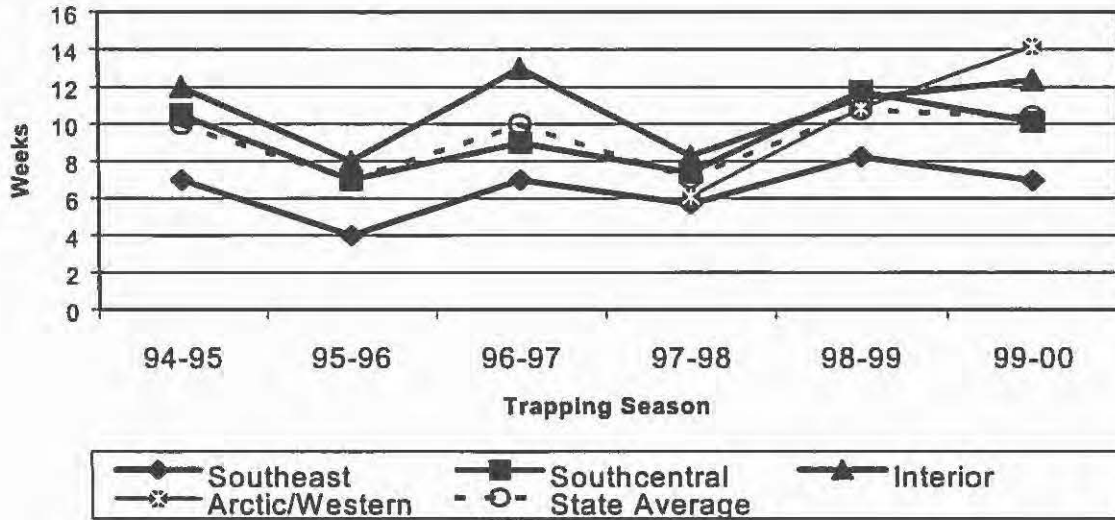


1999-2000 Average Season Lengths



Notice the trapping effort increased in some regions and decreased in other regions.

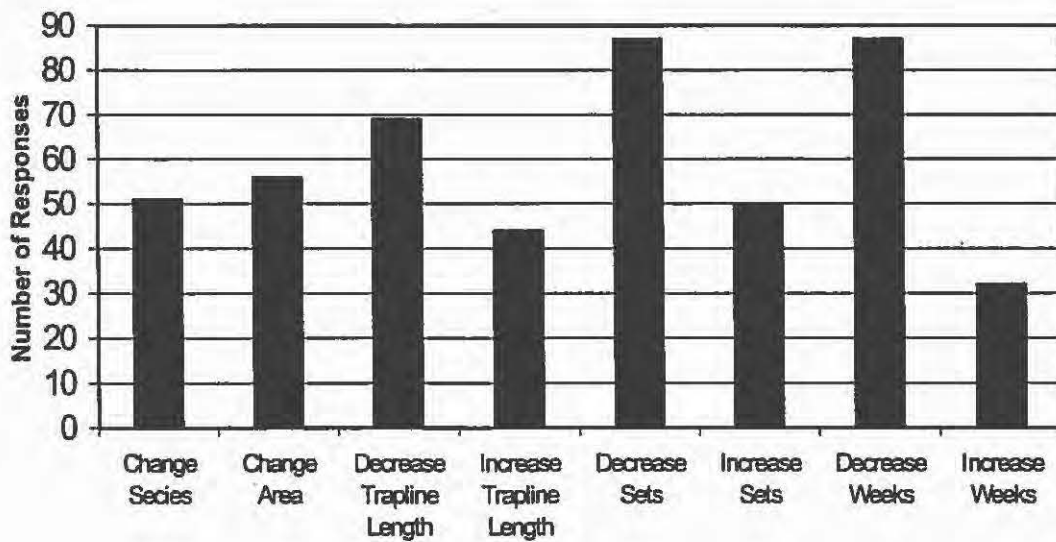
Trend: Average Weeks Trapped



How did you change your trapping effort for the 1999–2000 season?

This chart shows which types of changes trappers made.

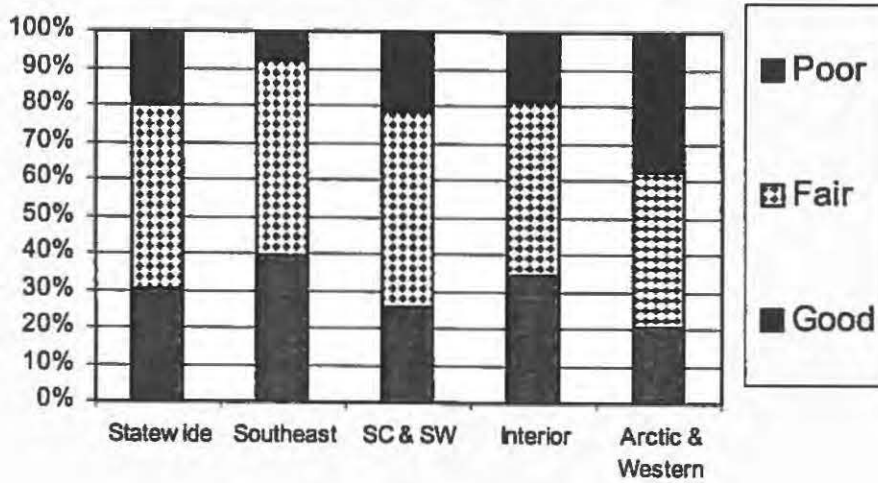
Types of Changes in Trapping Effort



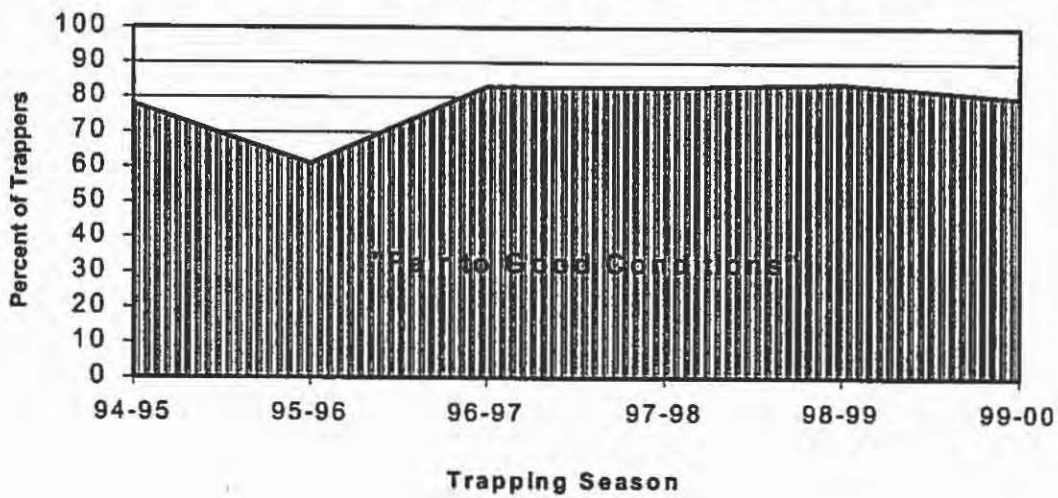
What were trapping conditions like on your trapline?

Statewide, most trappers (80%) said conditions on their traplines were good to fair. The following charts break this down by region and show the 6-year trend.

1999-2000 Trapping Conditions

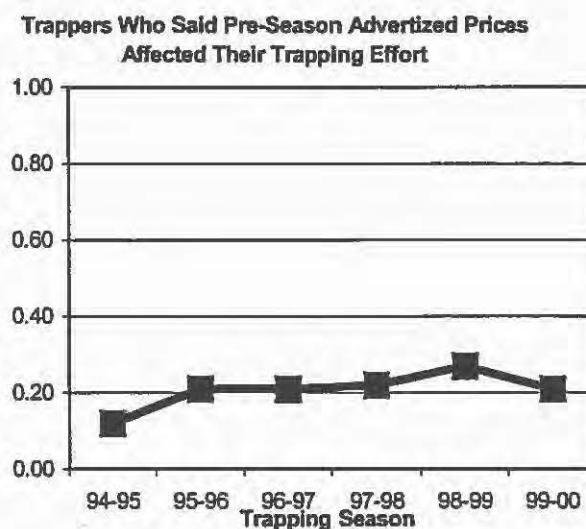
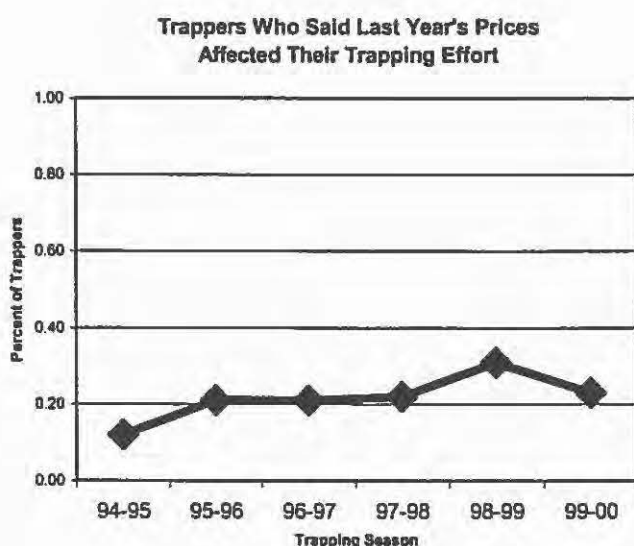


Statewide Trend in Trapping Conditions



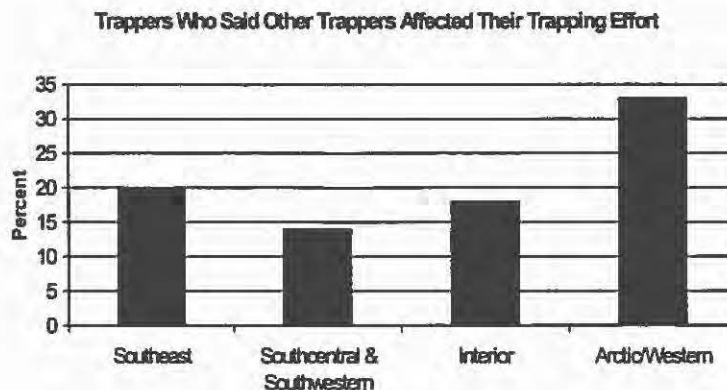
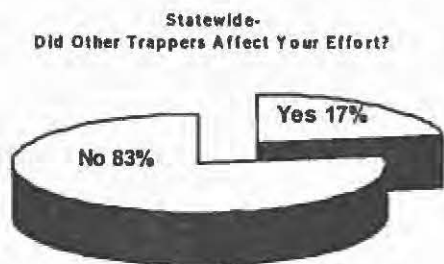
Did last year's fur prices or the pre-season advertised prices affect your trapping effort in 1999-2000?

Statewide, 77% of the trappers said last year's price (see table left) did not affect their trapping effort this year. In the Interior, 60% said last year's price didn't affect their effort. Most Southeast (84%) and Southcentral and Southwestern (88%) trappers said last year's price didn't affect their effort. 83% of the Arctic/Western region trappers said last year's prices did not affect their trapping effort. Statewide, 79% of trappers said pre-season prices (see table right) did not affect their effort. In Southeast, 88% of trappers said pre-season prices didn't affect their effort. In Southcentral and Southwestern, 88% of trappers were not affected by pre-season prices. In the Interior, 66% did not change their trapping effort because of pre-season prices. Seventy percent of the Arctic/Western region trappers said pre-season prices did not affect their trapping effort.



Did the presence of other trappers in the area that you trap affect your trapping effort in 1999-2000?

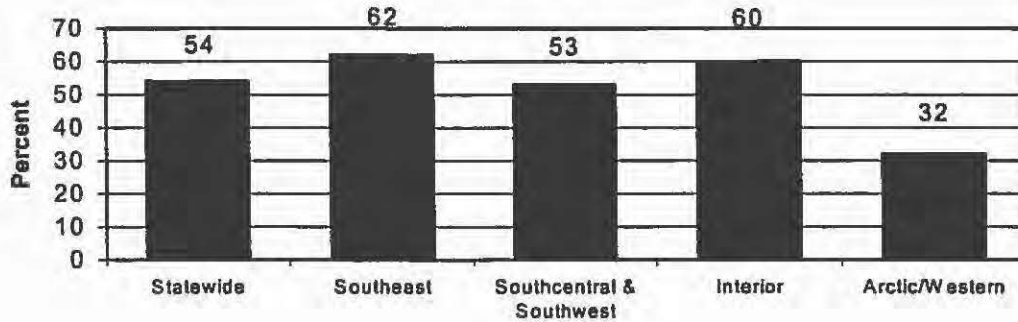
About 83% of trappers in the state said the presence of other trappers did not affect their trapping effort this year.



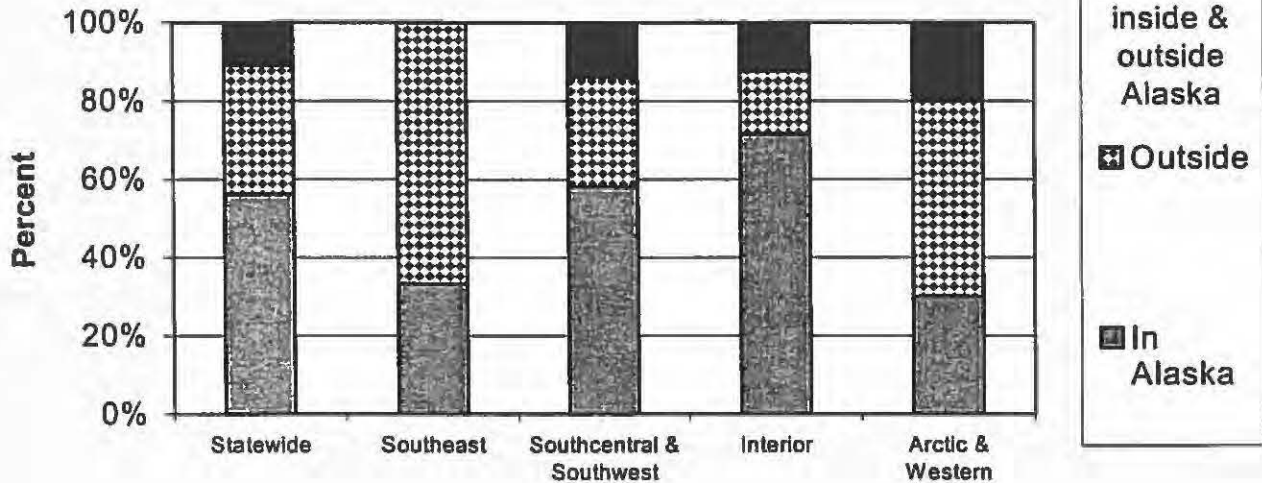
Did you keep or sell most of your furs?

Statewide, most trappers (54%) sold their furs to fur buyers rather than keeping them for personal use.

Trappers Who Sold Most of Their Furs to Fur Buyers



Trappers sold to these fur buyers:



Most trappers from the Southcentral/Southwestern and Interior regions sold their furs to Alaskan fur buyers. Trappers in Southeast tended to sell furs to fur buyers outside the state. This is probably because Southeast trappers are less likely to have easy access to Alaska fur buyers.

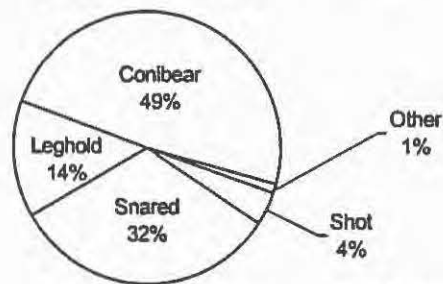
METHODS OF TAKING FURBEARERS

For each furbearer species taken, trappers were asked to provide the approximate percentage of animals taken by leghold trap, conibear, snare, shooting, or "other" method.

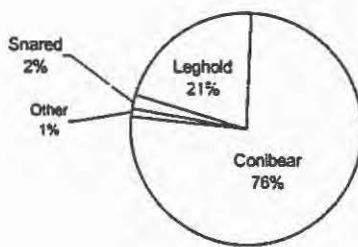
We asked this question because of the increasing pressure from animal rights activists to require more humane trapping methods. We want to document the extent to which Alaskan trappers rely on legholds, conibears, snares, etc. As time goes on, we hope to document what changes in trapping methods trappers initiate despite outside pressures from activists.

The following pages show the average percentage of animals taken by leghold trap, conibear, snare, shooting, or "other" methods. There are 5 charts for most species. The first chart is the average of all trappers statewide who reported this information, and the other 3-4 break the information down by region. You will note regional differences in traps used for some species.

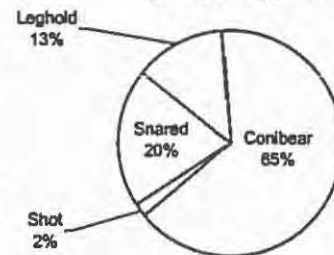
Statewide - Beaver Trapping Methods
(130 Trappers Reported)



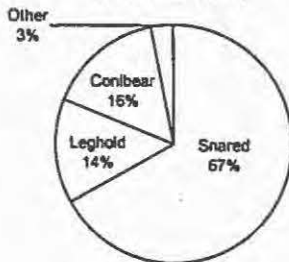
Southeast Beaver
(28 Trappers Reported)



**Southcentral & Southwestern
Beaver Trapping Methods**
(59 Trappers Reported)

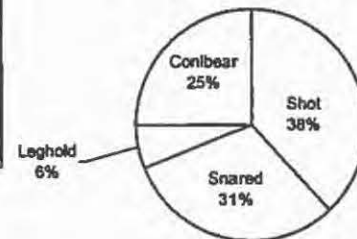


Interior Beaver Trapping Methods
(35 Trappers Reported)



Note the difference in trapping methods in Southeast where a lot of beaver trapping is in open water (drowning leghold sets) and the rest of the state where beavers are trapped primarily under the ice. Also note the percentage of beaver shot in the Arctic & Western region where beaver may be shot in the late-season open water.

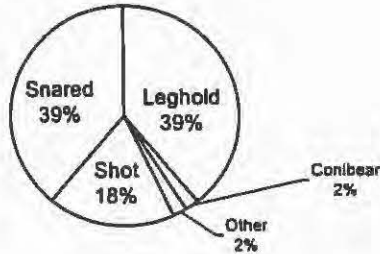
**Arctic/Western
Beaver Trapping Methods**
(10 Trappers Reported)



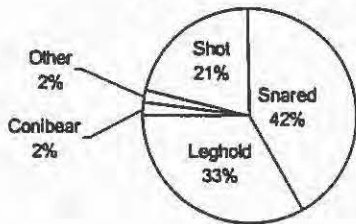
METHODS OF TAKING FURBEARERS

continued

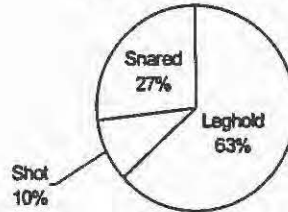
Statewide - Coyote Trapping Methods
(67 Trappers Reported)



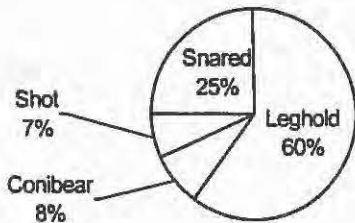
Southcentral & Southwestern Coyote Trapping Methods
(53 Trappers Reported)



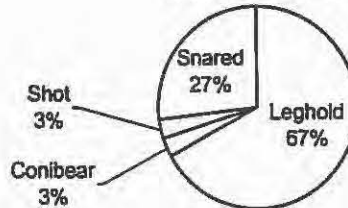
Interior Coyote Trapping Methods
(12 Trappers Reported)



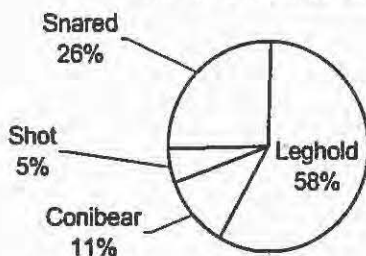
Statewide Fox Trapping Methods
(211 Trappers Reported)



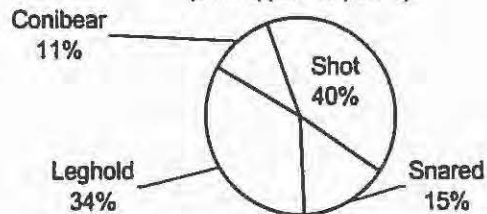
Interior Fox Trapping Methods
(81 Trappers Reported)



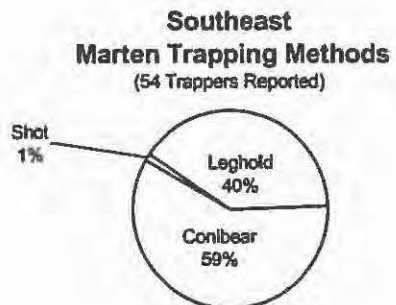
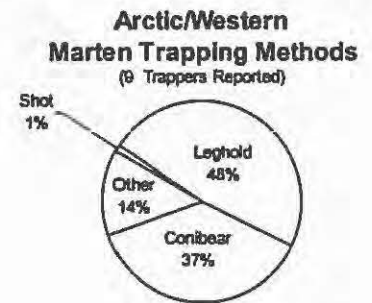
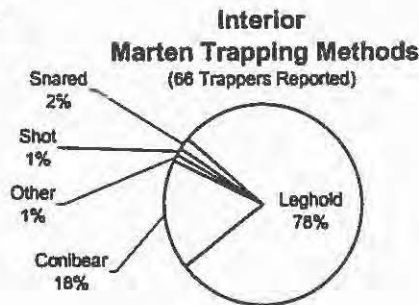
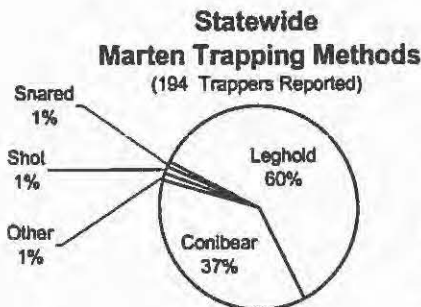
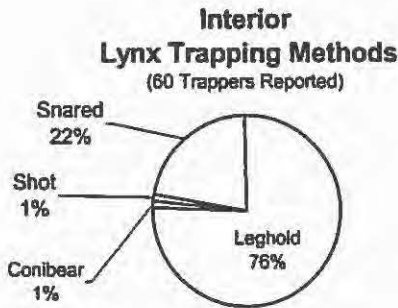
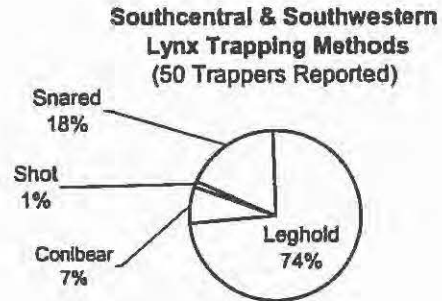
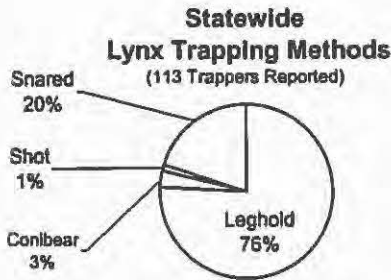
Southcentral & Southwestern Fox Trapping Methods
(105 Trappers Reported)



Arctic/Western Fox Trapping Methods
(25 Trappers Reported)

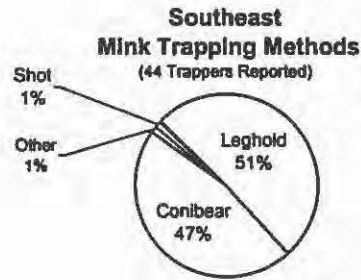
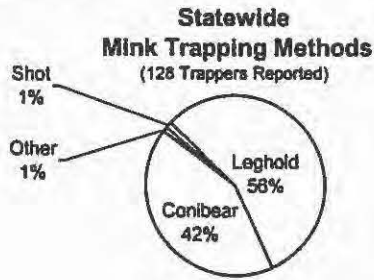


METHODS OF TAKING FURBEARERS

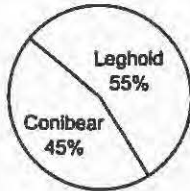


METHODS OF TAKING FURBEARERS

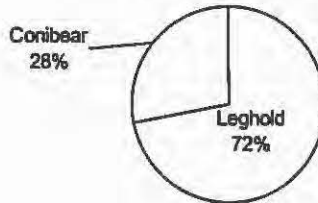
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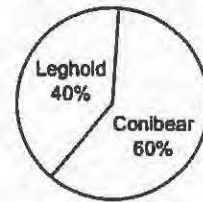
Southcentral & Southwestern Mink Trapping Methods
(54 Trappers Reported)



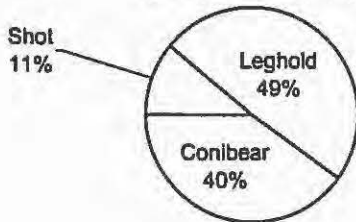
Interior Mink Trapping Methods
(25 Trappers Reported)



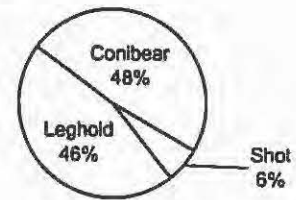
Arctic/Western Mink Trapping Methods
(5 Trappers Reported)



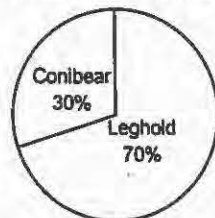
Statewide Muskrat Trapping Methods
(31 Trappers Reported)



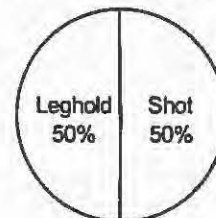
Southcentral & Southwestern Muskrat Trapping Methods
(18 Trappers Reported)



Interior Muskrat Trapping Methods
(6 Trappers Reported)

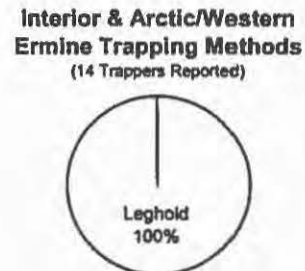
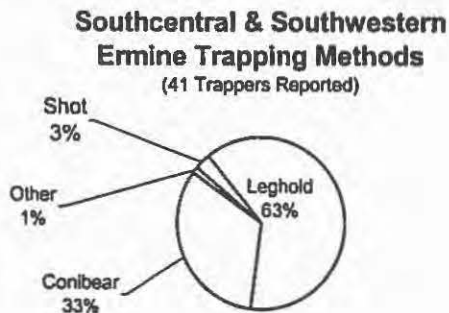
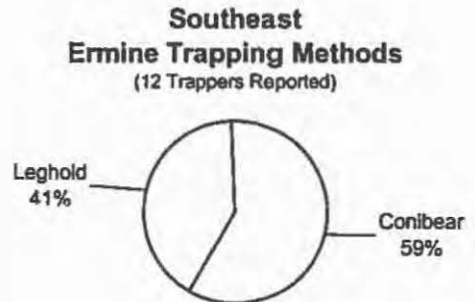
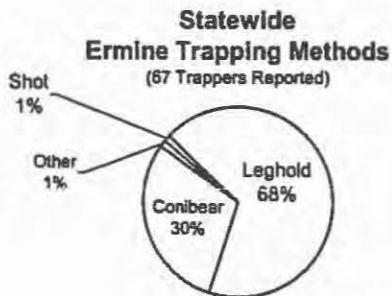
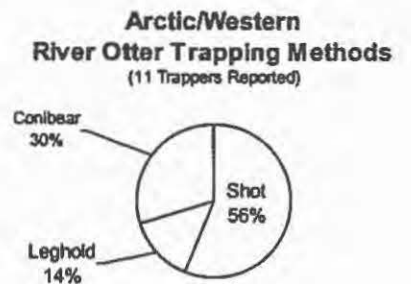
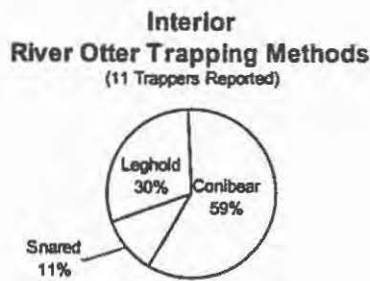
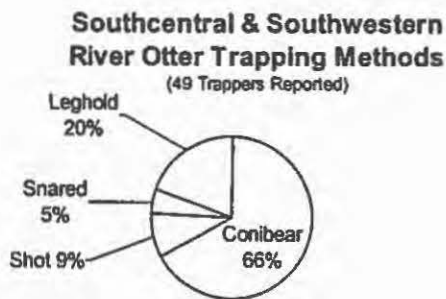
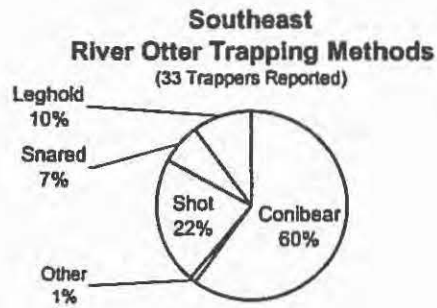
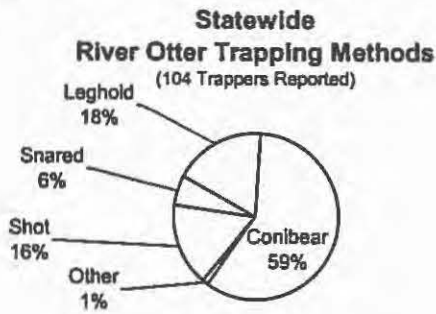


Arctic/Western Muskrat Trapping Methods
(4 Trappers Reported)



METHODS OF TAKING FURBEARERS

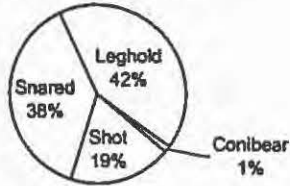
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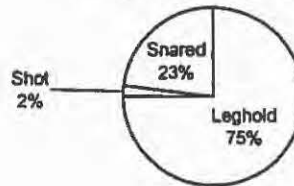
METHODS OF TAKING FURBEARERS

continued

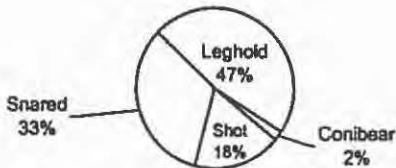
**Statewide
Wolf Trapping Methods**
(157 Trappers Reported)



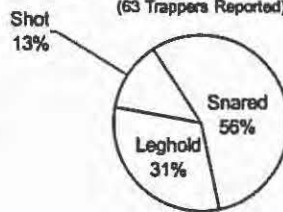
**Southeast
Wolf Trapping Methods**
(16 Trappers Reported)



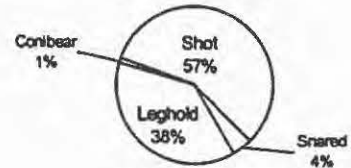
**Southcentral & Southwestern
Wolf Trapping Methods**
(82 Trappers Reported)



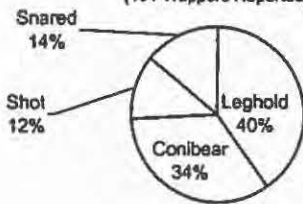
**Interior
Wolf Trapping Methods**
(63 Trappers Reported)



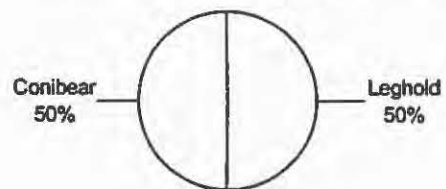
**Arctic/Western
Wolf Trapping Methods**
(16 Trappers Reported)



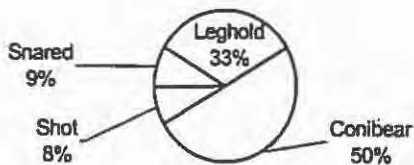
**Statewide
Wolverine Trapping Methods**
(104 Trappers Reported)



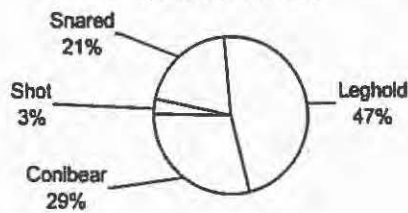
**Southeast
Wolverine Trapping Methods**
(4 Trappers Reported)



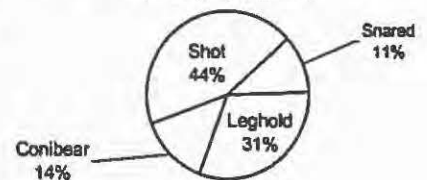
**Southcentral & Southwestern
Wolverine Trapping Methods**
(33 Trappers Reported)



**Interior
Wolverine Trapping Methods**
(48 Trappers Reported)



**Arctic/Western
Wolverine Trapping Methods**
(16 Trappers Reported)



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 results of 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, as they were 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, 1999–2000

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



Relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations, 1999–2000, continued

	Interior Region									
	Lower Tanana Basin GMUs 20ABCDF, 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
Furbearers:										
Arctic Fox	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	common	same
Beaver	abundant	same	common	fewer	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same
Coyote	common	same	common	same	scarce	same	scarce	same	scarce	same
Ermine	common	same	common	same	common	same	common	fewer	common	more
Lynx	abundant	more	common	same	scarce	same	abundant	more	abundant	more
Marten	common	same	common	same	abundant	more	abundant	same	common	same
Mink	common	same	scarce	same	common	same	scarce	fewer	scarce	same
Muskrat	scarce	same	common	same	scarce	same	scarce	fewer	scarce	fewer
Red Fox	abundant	same	abundant	more	common	more	abundant	same	abundant	same
Red Squirrel	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same	common	same
River Otter	common	same	common	same	common	same	common	same	scarce	same
Wolf	common	same	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	more	common	fewer
Wolverine	common	same	common	same	common	more	common	same	common	same
Prey										
Grouse	common	fewer	common	same	common	same	common	same	scarce	fewer
Hare	abundant	same	common	fewer	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	same
Ptarmigan	common	same	common	same	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	more
Mice/Rodents	common	same	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same

x means no data available or
species does not occur in the area

Relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations, 1999–2000, continued

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

x means no data available or species does not occur in the area

Relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations, 1999–2000, continued

	Southwestern Region				Southeastern Region							
	Bristol Bay Area GMU 17		Alaska Peninsula GMUs 9, 10		Ketchikan, Prince of Wales & vicinity GMUs 1A, 2		Petersburg, Wrangell, Kupreanof & vicinity GMUs 1B, 3		Juneau, Douglas, Haines, Yakutat GMUs 1CD, 5		Admiralty, Baranof, Chichagof GMU 4	
	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend	Relative Abundance	Trend
Furbearers:												
Arctic Fox	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Beaver	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	more	common	same	abundant	same	scarce	same
Coyote	common	same	common	same	x	x	x	x	common	same	x	x
Ermine	common	same	common	same	common	same	abundant	same	common	same	common	same
Lynx	common	same	common	same	x	x	x	x	scarce	more	x	x
Marten	abundant	same	common	more	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	same
Mink	abundant	same	common	same	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	same
Muskrat	scarce	same	scarce	same	x	x	scarce	same	x	x	x	x
Red Fox	abundant	same	abundant	more	x	x	x	x	scarce	same	x	x
Red Squirrel	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	same	abundant	same	scarce	same
River Otter	common	same	common	fewer	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same
Wolf	abundant	same	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	abundant	more	x	x
Wolverine	common	same	common	same	scarce	x	common	same	scarce	same	x	x
Prey												
Grouse	common	same	common	same	common	same	common	same	scarce	same	scarce	same
Hare	abundant	more	common	same	x	x	x	x	scarce	more	x	x
Ptarmigan	abundant	more	abundant	more	scarce	same	common	same	scarce	same	scarce	same
Mice/Rodents	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same	abundant	same	common	same	abundant	same

x means no data available or
species does not occur in the area

WOLF HARVEST METHODS

The following tables are compiled from mandatory wolf sealing certificates from 1995 through 2000.

1995–1996 Trapping Season	Total		
Region	Wolves sealed	Wolves snared	% snared
Southeast	200	64	32
Southcentral	301	72	24
Interior	624	277	44
Arctic	126	7	6
Total	1251	420	34

1996–1997 Trapping Season	shot	trapped	snared	other	unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	57	110	77	0	1	245
Southcentral/ Southwestern	147	104	60	4	18	333
Interior	139	139	297	2	16	593
Arctic/ Western	72	28	1	1	7	109
Total Wolves Sealed	415	381	435	7	42	1280

1997–1998 Trapping Season	shot	trapped	snared	other	unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	33	98	38	0	3	172
Southcentral/ Southwestern	175	124	70	2	3	374
Interior	103	157	187	4	8	459
Arctic/ Western	29	38	4	0	5	76
Total Wolves Sealed	340	417	299	6	19	1081

1998–1999 Trapping Season	shot	trapped	snared	other	unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	55	70	50	0	1	176
Southcentral/ Southwestern	206	155	116	2	1	480
Interior	154	177	233	3	0	567
Arctic/ Western	72	18	0	0	5	95
Total Wolves Sealed	487	420	399	5	7	1318

1999–2000 Trapping Season	shot	trapped	snared	other	unknown	Total Wolves Sealed
Southeast	55	70	50	0	1	176
Southcentral/ Southwestern	208	163	124	2	1	498
Interior	160	203	281	0	12	656
Arctic/ Western	84	18	1	0	5	108
Total Wolves Sealed	507	454	456	2	19	1438

ALASKA'S FURBEARER HARVEST

Beaver, lynx, river otter, wolf, and wolverine require sealing statewide. Marten are required to be sealed only in Game Management Units 1-7, 13E, and 14-16. Harvest estimates below are determined from sealing records.

Species	Region	Reported Harvest 1995-96	Reported Harvest 1996-97	Reported Harvest 1997-98	Reported Harvest 1998-99	Reported Harvest 1999-00**
Beaver*	Southeast	385	420	430	188	469
	Southcentral/Southwestern	1450	2027	1293	1231	1139
	Interior	1114	2290	1998	1241	1048
	Arctic/Western	665	1039	1185	407	359
	Total Beaver	3614	5776	4906	3067	3015
Lynx	Southeast	5	6	0	0	0
	Southcentral/Southwestern	113	330	618	553	742
	Interior	439	1338	2040	2159	2032
	Arctic/Western	17	45	56	41	66
	Total Lynx	574	1719	2714	2753	2840
Otter	Southeast	496	410	645	541	506
	Southcentral/Southwestern	586	728	511	401	354
	Interior	126	168	100	56	81
	Arctic/Western	298	436	456	137	68
	Total Otter	1506	1742	1712	1135	1009
Wolf	Southeast	209	245	172	176	211
	Southcentral/Southwestern	292	333	374	498	566
	Interior	624	593	459	656	654
	Arctic/Western	126	109	76	108	178
	Total Wolf	1251	1280	1081	1438	1609
Wolverine	Southeast	29	39	25	18	26
	Southcentral/Southwestern	165	222	220	166	149
	Interior	133	195	166	189	246
	Arctic/Western	62	75	85	59	54
	Total Wolverine	389	531	496	435	475
Marten*	Southeast	2787	3703	3125	2376	2890
	Southcentral/Southwestern	416	781	571	798	925
	Total Marten	3204	4485	3696	3174	3815

* Marten are sealed only in Game Management Units 1-7, 13E, and 14-16. Beginning with the 2000-2001 season, beaver will be sealed only in Game Management Units 1-17, 19-21, 24-25, 26B, and 26C.

** Preliminary data. Totals for the 1999-2000 season may change slightly when data entry is completed.

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 the table below.

Species	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2000-01
	Average \$	Average \$	Average \$	Average \$	Average \$	Top \$
Beaver	35.00	32.50	25.75	21.77	20.65	50.00
Coyote	27.50	25.00	21.67	22.17	24.34	32.00
Fox	24.00	15.00	16.13	21.97	17.35	35.00
Lynx	77.50	61.00	42.50	54.75	60.25	100.00
Marten	42.50	27.00	24.00	26.89	35.36	37.71
Mink(wild)	18.50	12.25	10.25	13.14	7.36	9.39
Muskrat	2.00	2.00	1.31	1.47	1.33	1.60
River otter	45.00	50.00	38.75	41.13	72.82	75.00
Squirrel	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.92	1.33	1.33
Weasel	2.00	3.00	2.75	4.00	4.35	4.35
Wolf	237.00	137.50	231.25	213.75	159.00	500.00
Wolverine	250.00	185.00	281.25	233.75	257.500	350.00



FUR VALUE

The following table summarizes the total estimated value of furs trapped during the 1998–1999 trapping season. The estimated average price paid by Alaska fur dealers was used in this calculation.

1998–1999 fur value in Alaska (1999–2000 data not yet available)

Species	Total Number	Average Price Paid in AK	Total Estimated Value
Beaver*	3067	25.75	\$78,975
Coyote**	211	21.67	4,572
Fox, Arctic**	208	16.13	3,355
Fox, Red**	1399	16.13	22,566
Lynx*	2753	42.50	117,002
Marten**	8126	24.00	195,024
Mink**	1501	10.25	15,385
Muskrat**	787	1.31	1,031
Otter*	1135	38.75	43,981
Squirrel, red**	395	0.50	197
Weasel (ermine)**	341	2.75	938
Wolf*	1438	231.25	332,537
Wolverine*	435	281.25	122,344
Total:	21,796		\$937,907

* Compiled from mandatory fur sealing records

** Compiled from fur export records



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.

1998–1999 Fur Acquisition and Export (1999–2000 data not yet available)

Species	Acquisition of Furs By Alaskan Fur Buyers (Number of Furs)	Furs Exported out of Alaska (Number of Furs)
Beaver	329	3052
Coyote	9	211
Fox, Blue (Arctic)	0	41
Fox, White (Arctic)	2	167
Fox, Red (Cross color)	19	202
Fox, Red (Red color)	128	1160
Fox, Red (Silver color)	7	37
Lynx	297	837
Marten	2488	8126
Mink	504	1501
Muskrat	49	787
Otter, land (river)	234	692
Squirrel, red	121	395
Weasel (ermine)	793	341
Wolf	98	369
Wolverine	48	120
Other	1	2
Total Furs	5127	18,040



FUR SEALING REQUIREMENTS

Beaver, lynx, land otter, wolf, or wolverine taken anywhere in the state and marten in Game Management Units 1-5, 7, 13E, 14, 15, and 16 must be sealed by an authorized department representative. If you ship furs to a buyer or auction house out of the state, furs must be sealed before you ship them.

All raw skins of wild furbearers shipped from Alaska must have a Fur Export Permit (blue shipping tag) attached to the shipment. 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 available free from Alaska Department of Fish and Game offices or authorized fur sealers.

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

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

Southcentral/Southwestern Region

Dr. Bill Taylor
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

Pat Bunting
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**

<p>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</p>	<p>GMU 9, 10 Richard Sellers Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 37 KING SALMON, AK 99613 Phone: (907) 246-3340 Fax: (907) 246-3309</p>	<p>GMU 19, 21(A),(E) Toby Boudeau Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 230 MCGRATH, AK 99627 Phone: (907) 524-3323 Fax: (907) 524-3323</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>GMU 4 Jack Whitman Alaska Department of Fish & Game 304 Lake Street Room 103 SITKA, AK 99835-7563 Phone: (907) 747-5449 Fax: (907) 747-6239</p>	<p>GMU 12, 20(E) Craig Gardner Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 355 TOK, AK 99780-0355 Phone: (907) 883-2971 Fax: (907) 883-2970</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>GMU 14(A),(B), 16(A) Herman Griese Alaska Department of Fish & Game 1800 Glenn Hwy Suite 4 PALMER, Alaska 99645-6736 Phone: (907) 746-6327 Fax: (907) 746-6305</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>GMU 6 Dave Crowley Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 669 CORDOVA, Alaska 99574 Phone: (907) 424-3215 Fax: (907) 424-3235</p>	<p>GMU 14(C), 16(B) Rick Sinnott Alaska Department of Fish & Game 333 Raspberry Road ANCHORAGE, Alaska 99518 Phone: (907) 267-2185 Fax: (907) 267-2433</p>	<p>GMU 22 Kate Parsons Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 1148 NOME, Alaska 99762 Phone: (907) 443-2271 Fax: (907) 443-5893</p>
<p>GMU 7, 15 Ted Spraker Alaska Department of Fish & Game 34828 Kalifornsky Beach Rd Ste B SOLDOTNA, Alaska 99669-8367 Phone: (907) 260-2905 Fax: (907) 262-4709</p>	<p>GMU 17 Jim Woolington Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 1030 DILLINGHAM, Alaska 99576 Phone: (907) 842-2334 Fax: (907) 842-5514</p>	<p>GMU 23 Jim Dau Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 689 KOTZEBUE, Alaska 99752 Phone: (907) 442-3420 Fax: (907) 442-2420</p>
<p>GMU 8 Larry Van Daele Alaska Department of Fish & Game 211 Mission Road KODIAK, Alaska 99615 Phone: (907) 486-1876 Fax: (907) 486-1869</p>	<p>GMU 18 Roger Seavoy, Assistant Area Biologist Alaska Department of Fish & Game P.O. Box 1467 BETHEL, Alaska 99559 Phone: (907) 543-2979 Fax: (907) 543-2021</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>Green = Region 1 Management Coordinator Bruce Dinneford Blue = Region 2 Management Coordinator Steve Machida Red = Region 3 Management Coordinator Roy Nowlin Yellow = Region 5 Management Coordinator Peter Bente</p>		<p>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</p>

FISH AND GAME FURBEARER BIOLOGIST'S REPORTS

STATE, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL FUR ISSUES FACING ALASKA

Steve Peterson
Statewide Furbearer Coordinator

During the past year I continued to represent Alaskan trappers on issues that directly affect trappers' lifestyles. These efforts have primarily involved membership on the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) Furbearer Resources Technical Work Group (formerly the Fur Resources Technical Subcommittee). This year's work on that committee continued to focus on testing more restraining traps nationwide, developing a model Best Management Practices (BMP) document, drafting a NE Coyote BMP document, and continuing with a national pilot outreach project to test public knowledge on trapping-related issues.

STATE LEVEL

I wrote an article for the Alaska Trappers Association magazine, the *Alaska Trapper*, reporting on BMP results in Alaska. Our work compared the efficiency of two traps to take marten and the humaneness and practicality of two traps to take lynx in the Interior. The marten study compared 120 Conibears to No. 1 Longsprings. A total of 154 marten were caught of which 80 were taken in conibears and 74 in footholds. Our conclusion was that neither trap was any more efficient for catching marten, but when the animal is frozen between the jaws of a conibear, it can be difficult to remove the animal unless it is brought back to camp to thaw. Two traps were tested for lynx: a Belisle foot snare and the No. 3 coilspring. Ten lynx were caught in the former and 12 in the latter trap. The foot snare is a good trap that has since been approved by Canada for humanely taking lynx. One of the problems with using this trap is that it cannot hold a lynx like the No. 3 Coilspring can when the animal is caught by a toe. Overall, injury rates were similar, but I do not have the veterinary report on specific injuries as of this date.

I attended the 10th Northern Furbearer Conference held 16–18 April in Fairbanks. It was a good conference with about 40 people attending, mostly from here and northern Canada. This conference is held every other year, and I have participated in most of them held over the past 15 years. Attendance at this one was about normal. Unfortunately, this year few papers discussed the practical implications of furbearer management in the north; however, quite a few papers discussed the genetic relationships between populations of ermine, marten and mink in Southeast.

This past fall I distributed to various ADF&G area offices for educational purposes a number of tanned lynx pelts taken on our BMP project. I think the area biologists appreciated them because several biologists were using their own fur for school demonstrations and heavy handling tends to wear out the pelts rather quickly.

NATIONAL LEVEL

I attended two meetings of the Fur Resources Technical Work Group: one in Louisiana (Jan. 21–26) and one in Chicago (12–17 August) to discuss BMP-related matters. I also attended the 18th Midwest Furbearer Symposium held in Columbia, Missouri, 25 June–3 July. My attendance at these meetings is paid for through a grant the Work Group receives from the Department of Agriculture, so ADF&G funds do not have to be allocated to support our work in this area. The meetings were well attended, and I learned a lot from them that will benefit furbearer management in Alaska. The Midwest Conference is a good meeting of furbearer biologists from around the country.

New Traps

I wrote an article for the NOV/DEC 2000 issue of the *American Trapper* discussing the pros and cons of new Canadian body-gripping traps for taking marten and mink. The Department purchased one dozen each of four different kinds of these traps to show trappers what is new on the market. I sent one of each and a copy of the article to 12 different offices. The next time you bring furs in to be sealed, you may want to ask about them. They just might be there for you to take a look at and try setting. I think you will agree that these new traps are much tougher traps than the standard C120s many trappers are using.

Last year, the Fur Resources Technical Work Group contracted with a consulting firm to do some public outreach research. They selected three states (Connecticut, Indiana and Wisconsin) and conducted numerous focus group meetings with the general public and workshops with agency biologists to test a variety of trapping messages and the means to deliver them. From these meetings, one of the things the consulting agency developed was a generic trapping brochure that each state can customize for its unique needs in a particular area of the country. I have received and distributed a few “advance” copies for evaluation. These brochures are meant to help get the message out to the general public about the benefits of trapping to society. If you have some ideas, please let me know. A final report will be available in Spring 2001.

INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Things continue to be relatively quiet on the international scene related to furbearers, so I have spent little effort in this area.

Good Hunting and
Good Trapping

Steve Peterson

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SOUTHEAST REGION

Bruce Dinneford, Southeast Management Coordinator

Six furbearer species are trapped and sealed in Southeast Alaska, including beaver, lynx, marten, river otter, wolf, and wolverine. Mink are also trapped but do not need to be sealed. Marten continue to be the species taken in the largest numbers by trappers. Between the 1994–1995 and 1999–2000 trapping seasons, the annual catch in Southeast Alaska averaged 2830 animals. During the 1999–2000 trapping season, Southeast trappers sealed 2890 marten. By unit, the greatest number of marten were taken in Unit 4 (1134) followed by Unit 2 (781), Unit 1B (352), Unit 1A (221), Unit 1C (174), Unit 3 (167), and Unit 1D (61); none was reported taken in Unit 5 in 1999–2000. In recent years the marten harvest peaked in 1996–1997 when 3703 were harvested in the region. The greatest numbers of marten are generally taken from Units 4 and 2 and to a lesser degree Units 1A and 1B.

The Region I 1999–2000 beaver harvest was the highest in recent years at 469, well above the 1994–1999 mean of 329. Most of this increase can be attributed to Units 1A and 2, where unemployment may have encouraged higher trapping pressure. The otter harvest was the 2nd lowest since 1994–1995, with harvests down in both Units 2 and 4. Because mink pelts are not required to be sealed in Region I, annual harvests are difficult to assess. The wolverine harvest was close to the average, and for the 3rd year in a row, no lynx were taken. The wolf take was similar to the 1994–1999 mean (204) at 213 animals, due to increased kill in Units 1A and 3. An emergency order was issued for Unit 2, closing the wolf hunting and trapping seasons within the Board of Game established guideline harvest level. Current pelt prices on international markets remained relatively low; thus, incentives for increased trapping pressures were nonexistent.

The 1999–2000 winter was relatively snow free, especially at lower elevations. Unit 1A tends to be less affected by changing snow conditions because trappers use boats as their primary transportation to traplines. Increased harvests may have partly been caused by weather and rural residents out of work than by increased numbers of furbearers. In Unit 4, the marten harvest was the highest since that of 1559 in 1996–1997. Results of 1999–2000 carcass necropsies in Unit 4 revealed favorable male:female ratios of 60:40 and young:adult female ratios of 3.7:1 in a harvested segment of the marten population. River otter male:female ratios from a harvested segment of the Unit 4 population were also favorable at 78:22 during the 1999–2000 season. Although considered furbearer species, short-tailed weasels and red squirrels are caught only incidentally to other species, and documenting accurate harvest is not currently possible. Certainly, total harvest of these species is negligible.

Numbers of furbearers sealed by Unit for 1999–2000

Species	Beaver	Lynx	Marten	Otter	Wolf	Wolverine
Unit 1A	37	0	221	133	47	1
Unit 1B	4	0	352	13	10	18
Unit 1C	36	0	174	8	5	4
Unit 1D	10	0	61	1	7	2
Unit 2	308	0	781	194	82	0
Unit 3	64	0	167	42	57	0
Unit 4	2	0	1134	115	0	0
Unit 5	8	0	0	0	3	1
Totals	469	0	2890	506	211	26

Bruce Dinneford, P.O. Box 240020, Douglas, AK 99824-0020, (907) 465-4369,
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SOUTHCENTRAL/SOUTHWESTERN REGION

Howard Golden, Southcentral Furbearer Biologist

The 1999–2000 trapping season in southcentral Alaska resulted in higher harvests of lynx, marten, and wolf but lower harvests of beaver, river otter, and wolverine than last year. Marten that had to be sealed increased by 14% with most taken in the Mat-Su Valley/Upper Cook Inlet. Trappers also took 14% more wolves than last year with most coming from the Nelchina/Copper River Basin and the Alaska Peninsula. Beaver was still the most heavily harvested species, although the take dropped by 7% from last year's 1231. The biggest increase in beaver harvest occurred in Prince William Sound where it jumped by over 200% from the 1998–99 harvest of 33. River otter harvest in the region dropped by 12% from last year's take of 401. The Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian area still accounted for the greatest proportion of harvested otters. Wolverine harvest declined by 10% from last year with the highest take in the Nelchina/Copper River Basin and Mat-Su Valley/Upper Cook Inlet.

Lynx harvest in the region increased by 34% from last year. Most of that increase was due to the take of 539 lynx in the Nelchina/Copper River Basin. This was the highest harvest reported for that area since we began sealing lynx pelts in 1979. The Nelchina/Copper River Basin and Kenai Peninsula accounted for 92% of the total lynx harvest of the region. Lynx and snowshoe hare populations are still relatively high throughout much of the region; however, we expect them to be at or just past the peaks in their 9–11-year cycles. Snowshoe hare populations and the percentage of kittens in the harvest have both begun to decline in many areas of the region. In the next year or two, trappers should expect to see shorter lynx trapping seasons as lynx and hare populations across the region begin 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, 1999–2000

Area	Beaver	Lynx	River Otter	Wolf	Wolverine	Marten
Prince William Sound	108	1	47	9	10	184
Kenai Peninsula	159	146	43	37	16	74
Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula/Aleutians	121	32	129	138	24	0
Nelchina/Copper River Basin	190	539	21	241	36	85
Mat-Su Valley/ Upper Cook Inlet	346	12	72	62	34	568
Dillingham/Nushagak Basin	215	12	42	79	29	0
Region Total	1139	742	354	566	149	911

Good luck on your traplines!

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

INTERIOR REGION

Mark McNay, Interior Furbearer Biologist

Preliminary harvest figures suggest that the 1999–2000 trapping season was almost a mirror image of the previous year, at least in terms of harvest. Interior trappers took about 2032 lynx, 81 otters, 1048 beaver, 654 wolves and 246 wolverine. The lynx harvest was almost 5 times the 1995 lynx harvest and the 1999–2000 lynx harvest was the 3rd consecutive year of high harvests. Based on early results during the winter of 2000–2001, it appears we will have another high harvest this winter. Trappers are reporting good numbers of lynx, but the number of kittens in some catches appears to be lower.

For the past several years, the Department of Fish and Game has purchased lynx carcasses from trappers within the road-connected units of the Interior. Biologists use those carcasses to develop indicators of lynx population health. We pull teeth from each carcass to determine age, we examine the reproductive tract of females to determine pregnancy rates and litter size, and we weigh internal fat deposits as a measure of animal condition. When we find a high proportion of kittens, we know that the lynx population is capable of growing. During the increasing phase of the lynx cycle, as many as 30% of the animals in the winter population are kittens. During the low of the cycle, less than 10% are kittens, and kitten survival is poor. We also look at the reproductive tract of adult females and know how many kittens she produced the previous summer. During times when food is abundant and the population is growing, most of the adult females are pregnant and they have litters of up to 6 kittens, but during times when snowshoe hares are scarce, pregnancy rates and litter sizes are low.

Biologists purchased 453 carcasses from trappers in the Interior during winter 1999–2000. From that sample we could tell that productivity of the lynx population remained high; 20% of the sample were kittens and 78% of the adult females (2 years and older) were pregnant. Although

recent harvests have been high, we will soon see a dramatic decline in lynx numbers. There were some indications that snowshoe hare numbers were beginning to decline in the eastern portion of the Tanana Valley during the winter of 1999–2000, and early reports from trappers in the autumn of 2000 suggest hares are indeed declining. Of course lynx are almost entirely dependent upon snowshoe hares as a food source, so we may see a substantial drop in lynx numbers and harvest beginning in 2001.

Before the lynx population declines, the department wants to give trappers every opportunity to take advantage of this peak in the lynx cycle. Accordingly, we have established a long season for lynx throughout the Interior during the winter of 2000–2001. The season opens November 1, 2000 and extends until February 28, 2001. In the road-connected areas of the Interior, that is the longest lynx season trappers have enjoyed since 1985.

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mark_mcnay@fishgame.state.ak.us**

ARCTIC/WESTERN REGION

Roger Seavoy, Area Biologist, Bethel

Kate Persons, Area Biologist, Nome

Jim Dau, Area Biologist, Kotzebue

Geoff Carroll, Area Biologist, Barrow

This report will give summary statistics for the fur harvests during the 1999–2000 trapping season and some additional observations from the area biologists in Bethel, Nome, Kotzebue and Barrow. If you have additional information or more observations to share, you are encouraged to contact your local area biologists (telephone numbers and emails are listed at the end of the reports).

Unit 18 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta

Furbearers in Unit 18 are abundant throughout their habitats. Red fox and beaver populations are higher than ideal. Otter and mink populations are high. 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 high as we entered this trapping season but should soon begin the downward trend in their cycle.

Wolf populations have increased and expanded due to the successes we have had allowing moose populations to increase on the Yukon and due to the continued winter use of Unit 18 by a portion of the Mulchatna caribou herd. Reported wolf harvests are ten times higher than the average of a decade ago. Wolverine numbers have also increased.

One furbearer species that is not abundant in the unit is muskrat, but we still have adequate numbers. Coyotes are 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. This being the case, it is clear that the fur resource in Unit 18 is severely underutilized.

Furbearers are still important for local uses. All furbearers and 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. Lynx and arctic ground squirrels are also eaten. As such, furbearers are still an important part of the economy of Unit 18.

**For more information about GMU 18, contact Roger Seavoy at 1-800-425-2979
roger_seavoy@fishgame.state.ak.us**

Unit 22 Seward Peninsula

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. Relatively few trappers operate in Unit 22. The reported harvest of furbearers in Unit 22 during the 1999–2000 trapping season was 40 beaver, 27 lynx, 4 river otter, 28 wolverine, and 61 wolves. These are minimum harvest estimates; many of the furs taken are used locally and not presented for sealing, so harvest data is incomplete.

Wolf densities are highest in Units 22A and eastern 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 probably a result of the large number of Western Arctic herd caribou that have wintered on the central Seward Peninsula since 1996. Previously, wolves were present primarily during the winter months and there were few resident wolf packs. The 1999–2000 reported harvest of 61 wolves was the highest ever reported in the unit, and 34 hunter/trappers sealed wolves, more than ever before. As in previous years, most wolves were harvested in Units 22A and 22B, but harvest also increased in Units 22D and 22E.

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 have no reports from Unit 22E, but beaver numbers are believed to be increasing in the Serpentine River drainage. Complaints about beaver continue, particularly in the Nome area. 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. However, a hunting season for beaver has not been established in Unit 22.

Otter numbers may be declining in parts of the unit. Hunter/trappers who responded to our trapper surveys indicate otters in Units 22A, 22B, 22C and 22D varied from scarce to common with stable numbers. Harvest of otters declined in 1999–2000 and the previous year survey respondents indicated otters were common or abundant. We have no information about otters in

Unit 22E. Red fox were generally thought to be common and stable throughout the unit. Wolverines were reported to be common or abundant throughout the unit and numbers were probably stable or increasing. Lynx, which had been scarce unitwide since the mid-1980s, 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 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. Respondents also noted ptarmigan numbers were abundant and stable throughout the unit.

Our staff is grateful to the hunter/trappers who take the time to fill out the annual trapper questionnaires. The information you provide gives us a much better and more timely 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. Thank you for your help!

**For more information about GMU 22, contact Kate Persons at 1-800-560-2271
kate_persons@fishgame.state.ak.us**

Unit 23 Kotzebue Sound and Western Brooks Range [Goodhope River to Cape Lisburne].

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 extend their range throughout Unit 23. New lodges have been observed near Kivalina village. Only a small percentage of new lodges are in habitat suitable for overwinter survival. Kobuk River drainage residents report beaver populations at "medium" levels and stable or increasing. The Selawik beaver population completely utilized all suitable habitat.

Lynx - Lynx numbers remained low in most portions of Unit 23. However, lynx were abundant in the Selawik drainage where snowshoe hares and ptarmigan occurred at high levels.

Mink and Marten - Trappers in the Kobuk report locally abundant populations of mink and marten. As in past years most marten trapping occurs in the upper Kobuk drainage. Local residents report both species appear stable throughout the unit.

Red Fox – Foxes were common throughout Unit 23, but overall numbers were lower than in previous years. Four foxes killed near villages in Unit 23 were tested for rabies and 2 were rabid.

River Otter - River otters were abundant in the Noatak, Selawik, and Kobuk drainages. Trappers report these populations were stable.

Wolf - Most wolves taken in Unit 23 were shot by local residents using snow machines for transportation. Nonlocal hunters took few wolves and accessed hunting areas by airplane.

Compliance with sealing requirements by local residents was generally low and, as a result, actual harvest levels are unknown. A community-based harvest assessment program conducted in 6 villages in Units 22 and 23 (excluding Nome and Kotzebue) during this reporting period indicated villages typically took 13–17 wolves. This suggests subsistence hunters took approximately 150 wolves in Unit 23 during the 1999–2000 regulatory year. Wolves are reportedly more abundant on the Seward Peninsula than they have been since the early 1980s. This may be a result of the recent presence of caribou in the area. Wolf density was probably highest in the eastern portion of Unit 23.

Wolverine - Based on opportunistic sightings by staff and resident trappers, wolverine populations varied throughout Unit 23. Numbers remained high in portions of the upper Kobuk and Noatak. According to some trappers, high harvests in the lower portions of these drainages have significantly reduced their abundance. Few local residents comply with sealing requirements so a unitwide estimate of harvest is unknown. A community-based harvest assessment program conducted during this reporting period indicated individual villages take 1–5 wolverines annually; however, harvests within an individual village may exceed 20 wolverines in some years. The National Park Service completed the 6th year of a wolverine carcass collection program and continued a wolverine research study in the upper Noatak River drainage. No progress or annual report is available at this time.

**For more information about GMU 23, contact Jim Dau at 1-800-478-3420
jim_dau@fishgame.state.ak.us**

Unit 26A Western North Slope

In Unit 26A the reported wolf harvest was relatively low. Eight wolves were reported harvested (4 males, 1 female, and 3 unknown sex). Most were ground shot using snow machines for transportation. The number of wolves in Unit 26A is relatively low. A wolf census in 1998 in the foothills of Unit 26A indicated the wolf density had dropped to 1.6 wolves/1000 km² from a high of 4.2 wolves/1000 km² in 1992. The number of wolves harvested and reported is highly dependent on whether a few key individuals are trapping and sealing their furs.

Eighteen wolverines were sealed (10 males, 7 females, 1 unknown). Snow machines were used for transportation and all wolverines were ground shot. This is the second largest number of wolverines we have sealed during a year (21 were harvested last year). Wolverine population and more trapping pressure probably are the causes of such high sealing numbers.

It is difficult to maintain fur sealers in most North Slope villages, 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.

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

**For more information about GMU 26A, contact Geoff Carroll at 1-907-852-3464
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Trapper Comments

How Did Trapping Conditions Affect Your Trapping Effort?

Southeast

- Marten were plentiful and so were mink in my area. Wolves avoided the area I was trapping, but I could hear them a few miles from where I was living.
- It was a pretty decent winter. Could have maybe had a little more snow.
- Less snow accumulation below 500' elevation made for easier access than the '98-'99 season. This allowed me to trap areas more inland (up valleys rather than beaches).
- Pretty stormy, could not put out as much gear as I planned.
- They didn't.
- I have to trap by shift and it was so windy last year that I could not check traps for a week at a time throughout the season.
- High water reduced effort.
- Didn't start trapping until hard freeze made walking over beaver ponds possible. Minimal amount of snow made walking easy.
- Mild weather made it easy to extend my trapline.
- Not much snow in lower elevations made it hard to run trapline. Rivers did not freeze well.
- No adverse affect.
- Severe weather caused me to stop trapping earlier than last year and the prices for furs being lower than last year.
- Trapping conditions were good and my catch improved.
- Was frozen up for about six weeks.
- Below-freezing weather froze tidal pool wolf sets.
- Not much affect.
- They affect my effort. It was a normal year.
- Warm season effected quality of prime fur.
- The snow wasn't very deep, so the walking was fairly easy. I could read the animal tracks better.
- Good weather and less snow helped otter trapping but hurt the wolf trapping.
- No problem.
- If roads were bad, couldn't get to traps.
- At times, thin ice in certain bays made it hard to check.
- Excessive rain, high run-off, followed by cold temps inactivated all water sets.
- Not at all.
- The fact that these liberal b____s (city assembly) put a half mile limit on the Juneau road system made it harder to get to sites and limited the number of areas young kids were able to go with me.
- Cold spell at end of January froze in my conibears for beaver and decreased beaver activity (no open water).
- Not enough snow?
- Had to pull traps after heavy snow.
- No effect. Constraint was the time I had to trap given other responsibilities.
- Nope.
- I pulled out of one of my best places when snow got too deep.
- None
- Caught more animals
- If you mean weather related, it really doesn't affect it.
- Little snow during the early part of the season made it hard to find the places the marten were concentrated in.

- Trapping was much better than usual but would have been even better if it weren't for weather being unusually wet and warm.
- I trap recreationally and have not changed my effort due to lower prices.
- Weather cooperated. Few trappers.
- Lots of rain early on made it kind of miserable.
- I set a few traps to play with and caught so many I set more, but had only half of what I normally set.
- There was very little snow. It didn't decrease my effort, but I feel that it decreased my catch.

Southcentral/Southwest

- Type of snow made for earlier fur damage.
- I had to walk first going off because there was no snow for snow machining.
- Too much snow to trap for beaver, hard to find beaver houses.
- Snow deep and powdery.
- Bad weather.
- Soft snow and weather conditions made it difficult to get out.
- Extreme cold - we usually trap two months.
- From a rough trail condition to too much snow, rain, wind (weather had all rules). Trapped for at least three weeks. Gave up, retrieved all traps and decided that was enough.
- Back in 1975 or 74 the fur prices were down. Never trapped since.
- Snow conditions affected trap choice. Snare vs. leghold vs. conibear. Early freeze-up also hindered other trapping.
- Too warm - rain - quit early.
- -15 F to -30 F temperatures and blizzards when it warmed up kept me inside much of the season.
- Too much snow, kept on getting stuck in the snow.
- We had mostly bad weather ending up with too much snow.
- Too much snow this year.
- Too much snow.
- Super deep snow early in season and all season deep snow. Hard to run longline, tough on snowmachine - run shortline.
- Too many severe Chinooks with rain (opened up rivers). Poor ice conditions to start with (heavy, early snow, no cold). Very windy this winter.
- Weather shortened season due to other commitments.
- Not very much.
- Deep, wet snow for weeks hampered access.
- Poor weather to put out trapline.
- Time available was main affect on effort. Conditions only required long period of time needed to check traps.
- More than usual. The changing weather conditions made it difficult to trap.
- Wet snow made it hard to get very far out of town for marten. Frozen ponds, lakes made for good beaver.
- Early in season conditions were excellent. Heavy snows late caused a shortening of my line.
- No snow/lake froze late. Warmed up early.
- A lot of snow as usual.
- Deep snow all at once hindered my trapping, rendering some sets useless. Then of course the rain and snow mixture curing the lynx season cost me a few cats.
- Were lots of fox & otter, had successful season.
- Poor weather makes it hard to access areas.
- Too much snow too fast for too long.
- Same weather as usual.
- Milder weather.
- Chinooks in January brought most sets to a halt.
- Lots of snow covered sets, daily sometimes. Very cold sometimes, trapping was good though.
- Not that much.
- Poor conditions never allowed me to get a line established.

- Too much snow.
- The river did not freeze until late, therefore we couldn't set our traps until we could get across the river, then it snowed so we could get around on Snogo.
- Abnormal snow load burying snares.
- Not at all.
- Way too much snow and wind.
- Bad weather made it tough to see the trail.
- Deep snow drifts – covered traps and snares. Freezing rain – freezes traps down. High wind – uncovers traps and snares.
- When the extremely heavy snows fell in late December, we were put out of business. Much of our gear was buried under 4 – 6 feet of snow.
- Very little snow at the beginning of the season. Access was good with such low snowfall. Heavy snow at the end of the season seemed to affect the reliability of legholds.
- Deep snow January – February (130 inches). Buried snares and traps for large animals.
- Weather conditions/snow conditions were poor. Increased competition on the Matanuska.
- Didn't affect trapping effort
- First half of season, the weather and snow conditions remained constant. The last half of season, I experienced two large (two to four feet) snowfalls; followed by Chinooks, which put everything out of order for rest of my season.
- Adverse weather, lower catch, high snowmachine traffic, lower catch.
- Mild enough to make pleasant conditions.
- I took the six fox. I take them. Pulled everything. I took a wolf and two coyotes and also two otters. I got them in Wasilla Lake.
- Winter storms kick my butt. Wind blown trails made for tough going.
- Deep snowfall buried my line a couple of times.
- Poor rain and snow.
- None
- Mid season-heavy snowfalls
- Too much snow at times then warm weather. Snow didn't set up until the end of February.
- Low snow until Christmas. Couldn't get into certain areas.
- No snow in Eureka for a couple of months. Perfect for legholds.
- Large and sudden snowfalls made checking/retrieving traps challenging.
- Chinooks flooded trapline and put most of traps out of commission.
- Season for target species in this area is short and early lending to sometimes little snow at the beginning and this year the December thaw and rain/snow fouled sets faster than I could keep up with. I had a small window to set out a line.
- Conditions did not change effort.
- Low snow cover limited November, December access.
- Deep snows with rain from mid December through January 6 made keeping sets dug out and working difficult.
- Not enough snow in November. Hard to reach line. Too much brush on marten line. December three feet of snow. Traps buried then rain. Trap buried for weeks. Could not haul bait station until late. Then frozen crust allowed animal to walk around traps and snare. Crust on snow made it hard for good set during freeze and thaw.
- Could not reach some trapping area because of lack of snow early in season.
- We had a lot of snow in late Sept. and then rain on top of it in Oct. The sheet of ice that resulted drove the moose and fox to lower levels. Rain again in Dec. didn't help.
- We had to wait until river froze over in Dec. to start. We dug out and remade our 50 or so sets three times. The last snowfall about Feb. 7 or 8 caused us to "throw in the towel." In 5 ft. of snow with poor base strength made it too much like work. It wasn't fun anymore.
- Numerous and severe Chinooks with rain. Poor ice conditions due to early heavy snow and no cold. Very windy winter.
- The early warm spell melted a lot of snow and iced up most of my area.
- No affect on effort, but may have impacted success.
- Warm winter—river froze late. Most of trapping is on the river.
- Warmer weather seemed to produce higher marten catch for less effort—compared to a "normal" season.

- A warm 52 degree week the end of December made all traps frozen in.
- Have not been able to trap certain sections of swamp/muskeg area because of lack of snow to travel.
- Normal conditions and effort.
- Didn't
- Couple of warm spells with traps freezing down.
- Normal
- Poor snow and rain and warmer in December and January.
- Winter storms kick my a___. Windblown trails made for tough going.
- NA
- Rain and warm weather made for lots of resetting. Little marten sign caused me to quit early.
- Didn't
- No affect on my effort
- Periodic snow throughout the winter made it difficult to keep sets working.
- Good snow at the start. Huge Chinook took all the snow just before Christmas. Snowed 2 feet. Another Chinook took it down to 6 inches and slowly built up from there. Lost some traps due to flooding.
- Kept me from crossing the Copper River earlier than normal. It didn't freeze very early.
- Greatly—made first sets in 4 inches of snow then got 33 inches at once. This went on most of the season. Spent more time digging out than trapping.
- Lack of sufficient snow shortened line and decreased interest.
- Stopped trapping after rain.
- Deep snow.
- I had to work like heck to keep things going.
- Usual conditions and effort.
- Better snow allowed snowmachine use earlier. Ice allowed better beaver sets.
- Didn't put in that much effort. I trap with and for my kids this season.
- Too warm-rain-quit early.
- Too much snow.
- Bad weather made it tough to see the trail.

Interior

- Got too much snow in high country – made breaking trail too hard for the price of fur.
- Weather and snow conditions were pretty good, but had a real warm condition in December that caused problems, but overall was good. The wolves traveled or changed their usual hunting areas and migration routes differently this season. They moved to one area away from mine and didn't come back until the very end of the season. Usually from previous seasons they traveled back and forth every week or so.
- It had little effect on my effort. I trapped just as hard as I always do. The only thing that slowed me down for a couple of weeks was the deep snow.
- Two thaws and a heavy snow dump coincided with wolves coming through my area – no sets working at right times. These weather conditions also held catch of other species down.
- It snowed very little in February, making hiding traps difficult. The temperatures were mild for a Delta winter.
- Chinook winds in December and January kept ground sets ineffective, but pole sets were still working.
- The early warm spell melted a lot of snow and ice-up most of my area.
- Long cold stretches got us caught-up on repairs. Good snow cover easy on spine.
- Lots of snow this year, hard to find my trails after a wind.
- Trapping went good.
- Big increase in lynx numbers allowed me to run far fewer traps and catch twice as much fur.
- A lot of heavy snow conditions. It took us three different weekends to completely reopen the line.
- First half of season only one inch of snow kept tearing up equipment. Last half, snow, snow and more snow every day. Kept trying to keep two trails open, but kept losing ground. Just couldn't even get to other trails for fear of losing what I had. Wore out snow shoes, dogs and myself, but wouldn't dream of doing anything else. Overflow so bad, let beaver rest.
- No effect, trapping conditions were okay most of the season and did not hamper my effort.

- No effect on effort.
- Deep snow, bitter cold hampered logistics.
- Average to same as past years.
- Heavy January snow made hill travel impossible.
- Late snowfall.
- Conditions were normal for where I trap. I was mostly cutting in new trails to add onto my existing trapline. This was my off year. Next year I will hit it again – the whole line.
- Snow, wind, cold dampens anyone's spirit for trapping when prices continue to stagger, making a useless spin on the line killing good fur for paltry pay.
- Too much snow with high winds.
- Heavy snow and overflow made it hard to keep any sets working.
- Perfect.
- Warm weather early kept freezing traps down and would miss several animals. Deep snow late with high winds made trapping difficult.
- Shortened lines due to heavy snow.
- Did not.
- Low snow made travel rough till Christmas. Deep snow in late January through mid-February reduced my catch. Trails were tough to break. High winds made wolf trapping conditions poor.
- Heavy snowfall made access difficult because although trapline was only three miles long, it was 85 miles to get there.
- Lack of snow made trapping difficult.
- No good this year – only caught two beaver.
- Conditions were very good – could have used a little more snow at the beginning and not so much all at once at the middle of the season.
- Snow and buried traps made it poor.
- Not much snow, so was difficult to get around till January.
- Too rough and snowmachine broke down.
- Only six inches of snow till January, couldn't run Snowgo. Too cold in early January, and too warm with too much snow in late January. Too much unfrozen overflow in February.
- Cold weather – no trail – no market (low fur prices).
- Not much snow early on, but it was okay after New Year's.
- Lack of snow early reduced effort. Mid Jan-Feb conditions were very good for marten.
- Good ice early on allowed me to start in November.
- Allowed less effort.
- Too much snow too fast – traps not working and lost sets.
- Lot of snowfall, low prices.
- Decreased effort due to snow fall being heavy.
- No problem, good snow conditions. Only problem was on the creeks – thin ice.
- Too much snow and it snowed the traps over quite often.
- River usually not frozen till first week in December. This year, 50 degrees above Dec. 22nd opened up river. Did not get a trap till Jan. 22nd!
- Only one heavy snowfall. My sets were not hidden as readily by light snowfall.
- Large amount of snow prevented access to entire line.
- Heavy and blowing snow in Dec. and Jan. stopped me from continuing in an extensive area. Early crusting made trails less appealing for animals to follow.
- Good snow cover early helped trails. Warm temp – easy to get out.
- Conditions were good.
- Too much snow – up to four feet.
- Reduced it.
- Not at all.
- A lot of my area burned last summer. So spent much time cutting trails. Critters avoided the burn areas.
- Kept me interested.
- Lack of snow until mid-December made it impossible to get main lines.
- It didn't snow much around my area in February and March, so sets stayed working.

- They did not.
- Deep snow in late December followed by cold temperatures slowed me down through January.
- Not enough snow till Christmas, then way too much and cold.
- Set out less line because of trail conditions and because of low fur prices.
- Too much cold weather this year.
- Early season had very little snow, making it hard to travel!
- They didn't.
- Hot, cold, lots of frozen traps, missed catches.
- Big snows in January, but kept going.
- Deep 4-5' snow, good going at first, then thaw, no first snow for entire period.
- Fur prices, price of gasoline.
- Too little snow early in season.
- No affect except for prices.
- Poor weather conditions limited opportunity. Poor fur prices limited effort.
- Conditions limited my efforts.
- Didn't get out as much line as I would have liked to.
- No snow early winter made it hard to effectively set good wolf sets. The outgoing country was rough tussocks, bumps, and high banks.
- Too much snow.
- Little snow early on made travel difficult. Also wolves did not tend to travel on my trails as it was easy to go anywhere.
- Not much snow early made for very rough trails—hence traveling was slower and more difficult—so I wasn't able to hot foot it.

Arctic/Western

- Windy weather and very hard drifts. Lots of foxes and wolverines. Very few wolf.
- Windy and foggy. Dry season north of the foothills. Hardly any snow.
- I got out early, then weather slowed me down in December and January. February and March were good.
- Lack of snow until January and then cold made traveling tough.
- We got a good amount of snow and tracking was very good.
- Lack of time biggest factor.
- Early winter. No snow. After January it was ok.
- Lack of snow until December hindered my transportation to good mink and otter areas.
- No snow at the beginning of the season.
- Soft snow made it hard to travel. But the snow coming so late this year didn't get the early start like I wanted.
- At first we didn't have enough snow and when it came, it got hard and wind-blown.
- The weather was too ward for furbearing animals.
- I did not put much effort into hunting and did not set any traps.
- Lack of snow early made it difficult to travel.
- Very late start due to lack of snow cover.
- Late snowfall in Nome resulted in very thick ice conditions for beaver trapping, which I discontinued after a few weeks. On the other hand, it made trapping the willows easier due to less drift.
- Weather -40 degrees to three feet of snow in two weeks to two weeks of deep overflow.
- Too cold for a long spell.
- Little snow at first prohibited tracking and snowmachining.
- Only hunted in good weather.
- One month of -30 to -50 degrees, then a month of low pressures resulting in six inches of snow a week or more. Then one month of freezing weather resulting in uncovered sets.
- Late snowfall conditions. Extreme cold temperatures.
- Only have one trap out.
- Lack of snow until January 2000.
- Too much snow blowing.

- Conditions did not affect my effort as my take was opportunistic and I mostly just observed the wildlife.
- Rough snow conditions.
- Conditions were not a factor this year.

Did other trappers in your area affect your trapping effort?

Southeast

- ◆ For the first time in several decades someone too some traps – mostly 330s.
- ◆ More trappers - in order to not over-harvest, I had to cut back.
- ◆ They stole my fur and traps so I gave up in disgust!
- ◆ Someone dismantled three of my marten sets and set some traps near them.
- ◆ I avoided some areas because of other trapping activity.
- ◆ The other trapper in Tokeen Bay is a beach trapper and he said I could trap in his area but I have declined so far. But the marten is getting scarcer in my area so I might take him up on it.
- ◆ For a change, no snares, traps, fur stolen. Probably too much snow, even for thieves.
- ◆ Very seldom saw other signs of competition.
- ◆ Put out 4 snares for beaver and 6 snares for wolf. Checked snares next day and 3 beaver and 1 wolf stolen from snares. Pulled the rest and quit.
- ◆ Only some Fish & Game guy who rigged up a camera which looked like some sort of 007 gizmo!
- ◆ I started late because I was still fishing and my partner had got the cream of the crop by the time I started.
- ◆ Many new trappers in the area I trap this year.
- ◆ No good trapper in Alaska that I saw.
- ◆ I trap fairly close to Sitka so there is a lot of competition. Thievery of traps/furs by both competing trappers and/or deer hunters is a chronic problem.
- ◆ I stayed away from areas I knew were established marten/otter lines.

Southcentral/Southwest

- ◆ Zero respect by new trappers in areas I have traditionally trapped. Lousy trapping techniques they are using are educating furbearers.
- ◆ It seemed that other trappers caught lynx before season opened, so I didn't make many lynx sets once it opened.
- ◆ First year in eight years that I had no traps stolen.
- ◆ I didn't go into several spots and lengthen my line because of other trappers nearby.
- ◆ Removing snares from trails.
- ◆ Snowmobiles run wolves out of area.
- ◆ I have traps and/or fur stolen every year. I just consider it part of doing business in this day and age. (Not stolen by other trappers as far as I know.)
- ◆ Cross over on traditional sets.
- ◆ Did not see any other trappers.
- ◆ Most have new snowmachines and chase most of the animals away around village "50 miles" or more. They run animals down and call it hunting.
- ◆ Someone got to the beaver lodges that I was planning on trapping before I did. This reduced my beaver trapping for the season.
- ◆ I had three traps stolen and two lynx during the season. Another young trapper kept running (at least going over) my line each week. Another trapper asked me to leave his area and I did that week. I was in the area before him, but he explained that he had trapped the area for three years.
- ◆ I don't think it was a trapper. I think it was someone against trapping. They stole about two dozen snares out of one set that was on state land.
- ◆ More trappers working the same area. Made fewer sets to give space between us.
- ◆ Other mink trapper made a big dent in season total.
- ◆ Hunters made it hard on moose by chasing them around in late season and also rode my trapline looking for moose. During these times predators seem to move on until quieter times when snowmachines leave area.
- ◆ My alternate line north of the Matanuska River was worked by another trapper so I did not set on him.

- ◆ I have traps and fur stolen every winter, but have resigned myself to the fact it is just part of doing business these days. I don't believe that other trappers are the thieves, though, for the most part.
- ◆ Team of three others trapping in my usual territory—as they did in 98-99.
- ◆ No, but the recreational and snow machine wolf hunters I don't care to see out there.
- ◆ Some problems with snowmobiles on trapline—running over traps and snares.
- ◆ They have lines established in the best areas so I work between them in the less productive areas till they give up their area.
- ◆ I try not to tick people off by trapping near them.
- ◆ 14A Most accessible beaver houses on the road were set day of opening season.

Interior

- ◆ I'm new to the area and try to avoid established traplines.
- ◆ None closer than 35 air miles.
- ◆ Snowmachines made several weekend ventures further up the Innoko this year in their endeavor to chase down and shoot wolves.
- ◆ Other "claimed" traplines forced me to travel farther.
- ◆ Trappers in this area respect one another's lines, normally.
- ◆ If I don't trap the area, the other guys move in and trap where they are not suppose to.
- ◆ My trapping partner hasn't trapped in years, but I always leave the closest and best part untrapped so he can have a place to go.
- ◆ No, but tourist mushing pressured us to pull some traps early.
- ◆ Some extra trouble keeping them out of my first line.
- ◆ I have to spend time putting up signs and token sets on marginal boundary areas of trapline that should be spent in more productive areas.
- ◆ Not other trappers so much as a major gold exploration and increased population driving on the majority of our trapline, very disturbing with loss of lifestyle, monetary, thefts of cabin supplies will feel this for many more years.
- ◆ Other trappers are quick to try to take over my line if I don't use all of it every year.
- ◆ Too many shoot trappers using snow machines on the Dalton Highway north of Atiqun Gap. This should be banned. I have no problem with snow machines used on a trapline, but these people are chasing the wolf and wolverine down with the machines and the animal does not have a chance to escape.
- ◆ The old story – too many newcomers and no respect for the "lifers." Basically state land disposals in the surrounding area have really s_____d the pre-pipeline long-time residents.
- ◆ Area residents claiming to trap areas that weren't really being used caused me to go farther from town.
- ◆ Hardly any other trapping effort because of low prices.
- ◆ Everybody here to their own trapline.
- ◆ Some pilot truck driver drug a moose carcass out on my line and was making sets, but thanks to the local Fish & Game trooper and his help, matters were solved.
- ◆ Too many people right around Eagle trying to catch the few marten.
- ◆ Some trappers went over one of our lines and decided that they were going to trap there instead of us.
- ◆ Some other trapper in the area came and took over one of our lines and told us that they were going to trap there this year.
- ◆ I had some people trap next to me where nobody usually went, causing the animals to travel different. Then in another area some people kept trying to deter me from trapping there. I think they don't like trappers.
- ◆ Nobody else even close to where I trap.
- ◆ Hunters did.

Arctic/Western

- ◆ Another trapper uses the trail I broke to trap marten.
- ◆ The local residents of Golovin and White Mountain shot many wolves during the week. Therefore, there were fewer to shoot on the weekends. The only time I can go hunting.
- ◆ The only other trapper in my area was my four year old boy who did real well—three rabbits, two squirrels, one marten, and one beaver.

Do you have any comments to ADF&G?

Southeast

- For the first time in my life I didn't have the desire to trap. For 30 years I had trapped with the old timer and "his three girl friends and three trap lines." This fall on Nov. 9, 1999, while he and I were duck hunting, he peacefully left this world and went to the great beyond. When I came to pick him up, he was sitting with his shot gun across his lap, his dog at his side and a green head mallard where all could see. I hope wherever he is, mallards are plentiful, fur prices are high and the snow isn't ever too deep for him. I know we will all miss his humorous comments. Good-bye to you, Syd.
- My only comment is to express my heartfelt thanks to the staff here in Juneau. Even though you took my fisher from me last year, stuffed it and put it in some big shot's office, *NOTE: It is at the Juneau Mendenhall Glacier Visitor's Center*. (I understand the law). Really, all the people in your division are rational, professional game managers. I am impressed. It almost restores one's faith in government's ability to protect a public resource. Too bad politics have to play such a large role in other areas. Thanks for a job well done! Keep it up!
- Every year same comment: Close the wolf and wolverine season at the end of march – bears and "B" grade furs.
- Just learning. Will make more of an effort next year.
- How about a sealing agent for *Gustavus* trappers. I would like to thank you for the "Alaska Fur Handling Guide." I now use the through-the-mouth method for skinning my marten. It cut my skinning time in half. Thanks.
- I do not agree with the closing of the wolf season on P.O.W. Island and outlying islands! I have not seen or heard (I talked to the wildlife biologist in Ketchikan) a satisfactory or reasonable means for establishing a number or quota of wolves in GMU 2. I have never seen or heard more wolves than this year. The deer also seem to be on the upswing in this unit. The sea otter should be controlled in this unit! There are herds of 40-100 in Sea Otter Sound and they have taken care of the abalone, sea urchins and crab!
- Not really. You can't do anything about the prices, people messing with traps and other gripes.
- There are a lot of wolves on Revilla Island, Cravina Island and Cleveland Peninsula. I cut a lot of different tracks and found a lot of ate up deer. We don't need any restrictions placed on trapping here!
- Is the CBJ restriction on trapping within half mile of roads a new regulation or has it just not been printed in the trapping regs in the past? I feel that it is overly restrictive, especially given the other local prohibitions on trapping within a quarter mile of salt water and most trails. This doesn't leave any readily accessible location for recreational trappers who are just starting out.
- In 1994 I trapped with someone and lost my a___. Broke even, but learned never to take a partner. Traveled 100 miles a day for 27 days, caught 70 marten, three lynx, made \$3,000 on marten, never seen the lynx. Broke ties with partner, never trapped since. Hope to in future. I would enjoy tanning my own hides with chromium sulfite crystals, but cannot seem to find a location or distributor. Would you call me at 784-3570. I'd like to do a moose hide so even if I had to order a 50 gallon drum, I surely would.
- We need an earlier season on mink and marten, it makes no sense to trap wolverine and wolf Nov. 10 and wait till December for mink and marten. These three weeks have no effect on quality of skins, but the weather in Southeast becomes extreme to the point of limiting harvest. Possibly further down the coast this isn't so relative.
- Work affected trapping effort this past year. Was out of town for majority of season.
- Still learning. I'm trying different areas and sets in an effort to learn. Focused on marten (I chose a bad area though) and beaver (good area, but started too early for open water conibear sets).

- I believe the city assembly by doing what they did, i.e., passing a city ordinance prohibiting trapping within a half mile of any road in the city and borough of Juneau, is doing nothing more than trying to shut down trapping in an area known for its liberalism. This was done for liberals, by liberals, not sound game management. Wait till the exploding beaver population speaks for itself by flooding areas and blocking culverts, etc. This is happening already. This also limited the amount of time I was able to bring my young kids due to access and walking.
- I've let the younger generations take over and enjoy the fun and enjoyment. But will probably putter around for wolves, marten and otter in years to come. It's still great to just be out there.
- We must implement a wolf control program across the state of Alaska. In SE, the wolf population is growing steadily and our deer and moose populations are declining. Reinstate the aerial wolf control program!
- I'm pretty much a recreational trapper and usually have tidal set for wolf. This year I had two tidal sets for wolves and one conibear wolverine set. I've taken nine wolves in four years from this one set. Hopefully I'll expand some next year for otter, wolverine and marten.
- Our area biologist is one of the most knowledgeable and professional men ADFG ever employed. Sorry to see him retire this year! Hope the next one is as good. Good fishing, Ed.
- Beaver caught in GMU 3 during first week of season were not prime yet.
- I trapped with a friend. Together we took 38 marten. We trapped the Stikine River from Jan. 10 to Feb. 5, 2000. We trapped on Wrangell Island in December. We targeted marten and wolverine only and did not trap with a lot of effort. There was not much effort from other people.
- As I have said in the past few years, wolf population in my area has become a problem for me and my family's food supply. This year I did not harvest one single deer. During my one month of trapping, I heard the wolves howling not more than a mile away from my home. I never once saw one deer while trapping, and only occasionally came across deer tracks. I cannot believe that the wolf season was closed down on P.O.W. so early. We need better management on wolves in Southeast.
- It might be useful if you could provide a tally sheet early in the season to help us keep track of the exact number of each species caught. I am sure the numbers I put down are really close, but they may not be exact in a few cases. I also have notices that the animals I catch are healthier in areas where I trapped the previous year – less fleas, etc.
- Fur prices looked to be very low for this season. Also, another trapper is using my old area. These two factors made it so I did not trap this last season.
- I didn't trap this year because the fur prices being so low it wouldn't be worth my time. There seems to be a lot of furbearers in the area. The numbers seem to be good with the animals.
- I hope the prices for marten are a little bit higher than this season.
- I am receiving two reports; one from Sitka and one from Juneau. If the reports are approximately correct regarding value of Alaska fur harvests, the state is spending more on fur animal management than the industry is worth. Why are we spending so much on a dead or at least comatose industry?
- Keep the marten season open longer in Sitka and vicinity.
- What is going on with the fight against leg hold traps? I am almost all leg hold trapper and was curious.
- I saw raccoon tracks on Orr and Spanberg Island and I saw fisher tracks on Marble Island and I saw lots of sea otters in El Capitan Passage, Tenass Pass and Brockman Pass and Marble Passage.
- Didn't trap. Boat broke down and spent most of the season working on it.
- Thank you for the opportunity to comment and the information to read.
- Very little effort this year to catch mink. The price was too low. The marten had the best hides out of the last three years. The otters had great hides this year as well as the beaver. The wolf population was higher this year, but very little effort was put out due to trying to catch otters.

- The martin numbers were poor, but started late and in a new area, giving the old marten areas a rest. I suspect trapping pressure is up on Prince of Wales road systems.
- Annette Island Alaska. Beaver in almost all lakes on island. Lots of places I used to hunt are now underwater. Overabundance of wolves on island. Finding lots of wolf kills when hunting. Lots of grouse and mostly mice being killed off by cats. Think that is why the wolves are hitting the deer so hard. Have seen cats all around the whole island when hunting or walking. People throw cats at dump without killing them.
- Keep the otter season open longer. It becomes hard to swallow when you catch several otter out of season. Then do all the work and turn it in!
- I would like to see the beaver harvest date changed to November 1st instead of December 1st. In Unit 1A, the carcasses are what I use for wolf bait and the wolf season starts November 1st.
- December was too warm, when it did finally get cold for the furs to prime-up. The one month we have to trap here, was already closed. I still think should open up the trapping season mid-December area.
- Your questionnaire is a nice gesture, especially when you send copies to respondents. Why do researchers call them martens while everyone else call them marten? Marten were very abundant in GMU 4 1999-2000. With lots of adult males. That is typical following a severe winter which causes large numbers malnutrition deaths of deer, as occurred during the winter of 1998-99. No reason why there isn't a limited season on beaver in Unit 4 west of Chatham Straight.
- I don't see any reason for the short season on West Chichagof. I am the only trapper to work that area for years and the stocks are good. This seems to be more a political decision by the Forest Service rather than sound wildlife management.
- Marten numbers were up this year. Better weather made trapping easier. Many of the marten had a great deal of fat. Seem to be in good condition. Food supply is plentiful.
- Thanks to ADF&G for ethical and compassionate furbearer management. If possible, more ADF&G effort on furbearer research.
- I have trapped the south end of Chichagof Island for over 20 years. I normally set 100-200 traps for marten. This year I set 48 and caught 101 marten in 3 weeks! 67 of them in 7 days, my third best year ever. I heard somebody in Juneau was going to close all of Chichagof Island to marten trapping. I would like to know what hole he had his head in , or is that just what his computer told him to do?
- The game department should consider cougar as nongame and trapped and shot to keep them from populating SE. The restrictions should be taken off of wolves in SE. We have plenty of wolves and without a big bounty, wolves will never be endangered in SE unless they kill all of their food (deer).

Southcentral/Southwest

- Fur prices are low. It's hardly worth the effort. I'm 94 years old. I'm gonna trap next year! It's in my blood.
- A lot of wolves in this area. Seems like they're driving the caribou further away from this area during their migration.
- Did not trap due to bad price on furbearers. Too many brown bears.
- Had fun trapping just doesn't seem to be much fur in the area.
- Moose calf survival low due to increase in wolves.
- Trapping pressure about the same. On the road system it got a little crowded at times as it usually does. The biggest problem was the weather. We are used to the changing weather here, but this year it was so bad that we had to use an airboat to pull our land sets. Ice, snow, wind, freeze, thaw, snow...
- Please send the trapper questionnaire to _____. He is a younger trapper and getting this would make him feel like he is more part of the trapping lifestyle.

- Great trapper questionnaire report (98-99). Keep up the good work!
- Try help us trappers have more fur buyer here at Bristol Bay area.
- I didn't trap as much, not too low fur prices, but was spending more time building a new trapline where I'm building a cabin. Will always trap, but a shorter trapline.
- Too d__n much snow.
- Weather played a big part in the length of my season, impossible to hold down a full time job and fight the massive amount of snow we had in such a short time.
- Some regulations need to be changed. Where beaver and other are both present, season should begin and end together. If they do not, then individuals can trap beaver during otter season. If not checked by Fish & Wildlife Protection, then they can keep the beaver. If checked, they turn the beaver in to Fish & Wildlife Protection as an incidental catch. This also goes for beaver during otter season. If mink and marten are separate, then both should require sealing. This prevents targeting one species when the season is closed while saying you are trapping the other.
- Why did I get this questionnaire? Is it because of the Copper River water shed project!
- I am sure that politics has to be kept out of managing Fish & Game and furbearers, because it is impossible to manage renewable resources politically.
- The Copper River Delta receives far too much pressure for all available species except beaver. Fur limits on the delta should be reduced. Trappers commonly set traps too near to our area's main roads and within recreation use areas such as the Aliganik boat ramp and 22 mile boat ramp. These situations create hazards to people and pets. Responsible trappers never place sets in these types of areas. It's past time for state regs to make unethical trappers accountable.
- I am going to school outside of Alaska in the winters now, but I still support trapping by buying a trapping license every year.
- I would like to see it legal to shoot all furbearers during trapping season.
- As mentioned earlier, my comments on lynx are reflected by lack of any sign when season opened. Early in the season, lynx tracks were present. The lynx season maybe should open up north Nov. 10 to stop early. I also feel that beaver season could open up in Oct. around the 15th.
- Clean the wolves up or kill them.
- Please, put a limit on wolverine in GMU 7.
- Did not trap this season because of low fur prices. There appears to be lots of fox and land otter in my area where I live.
- Didn't have an opportunity this year because of work, but intend to this coming fall and winter.
- Extend otter season to Feb 20th! Extend ermine season to Feb 20th!
- It would appear there are lots of furbearers on Afognak as usual. My time was limited, but I still managed a few. The new snow on the ground usually tells me how numerous my target animals are.
- Yes, I saw a tremendous number of hare in the Knik River area. I also regularly saw 1 – 3 species of owl, Northern hawk, Great Horned, and Great Grey. I have seen a greater number of fox and coyote in all areas of 14A and 14B. Can we please register traplines in Southcentral to avoid over harvest and reduce theft, promote better conditions for all?
- Most years the method for my catch would be overwhelming snares, however, with above-normal snow load keeping snares effective on a limited amount of time proved too monumental. Individual trappers should know the limit of their capabilities to manage a trapline instead of attempting to hoard large areas. Give other people a chance to experience what we love and what is becoming a lost art in the Lower 48. It would be a shame for Alaska, a state that's known for boundless freedom, to fall to environmental factions with no biological knowledge just to oil a squeaking wheel.
- Did not participate with trapping this year – too much snow problems.

- If too many large critters are dying by snares, then maybe breakaway snares need to be mandatory, if set more than one foot off the ground. Read one comment about not trusting ADFG! We've got to have faith in someone and they're our best bet against the anti's. They know what is going on, both physically and biologically. How? This questionnaire for one! I'm not necessarily pro government, but you guys are doing a good job with limited resources.
- The wolf population has increased a lot faster than any other animal in this unit. I think they should allow same-day airborne shooting of the wolf. The 300-foot from the plane is the way to go.
- As a land-bound trapper, I'm not in favor of any aerial or land and shoot for wolves. Possibly encourage more trappers with a bounty of sorts. More caribou equal more wolves. Lots of moose too!
- Wolves still seem to be on the increase in our unit. Need to put back same-day wolf hunting.
- Wolf and bear numbers are too high for the moose in the area. The state needs to do more to allow higher harvest of these animals. There seems to be no end to hunters and trappers who would like to take these big game animals and furbearers. The problem is that there are few hunters or trappers who are very productive in taking of these animals under the current regulations.
- A couple of the younger kids here in town were trapping foxes close to town. They caught some lady's dog. She was all mad – called Fish and Game and state troopers. The kids got talked to pretty hard. I thought they were going to get ticketed but didn't. And they couldn't trap anymore close to town. They have no way to get very far from town and the foxes are only in town. And besides that, we are supposed to have a leash law for dogs and no loose dogs. She should have been reprimanded, not the kids. Now they don't trap – too bad!
- Open marten season on October 20 like it used to be. Marten are extremely abundant and not much trapping pressure. The marten population will sooner or later crash with a loss of harvest.
- I hope to get back into limited trapping now that I have retired.
- Lynx sign and abundance increased dramatically during 1999-2000 season in Unit 13A. I am hopeful the ADF&G will keep their season very liberal for at least one more season following the time lag in hare populations. Hares are still very abundant, though abundance of hares was not distributed evenly over available habitat.
- I don't think there should be a limit of two wolverines in Unit 14B unless there is a good reason not apparent to me. There should be no limit.
- Marten seasons could be lengthened. Wolves need to be thinned down.
- I continue to use what I trap to educate my students. They are thrilled when I bring in furs, teeth, skulls, or other objects linked to Alaska's animals.
- Problem is too many people. Not enough wildlife. The country can only supply enough for a few not many.
- Being a long time resident of this area. 57 years Sutton. When I came in 1943, there was a lot of moose and wolves. Wolves probably killed a lot of moose, but there was no hunting pressure. Wolves are getting the blame now but it's the hunting pressure. We can not have a lot of moose in this area Sutton, like many years ago, as the traffic is so great now. We hunted wolves with airplanes and shot from the air which is the most efficient way to control them, and was voted out. Probably the most humane method.
- Control the wolves and coyotes by any means or there is not going to be any sheep left.
- Spent most of the trapping season in Arizona. That Viagra really works. A younger trapper is taking over my trapline.
- Let's keep the biologist in Fish and Game rather than Outside bunny-huggers. Continued efforts by Alaska Trapper's Association and others within Alaska are doing a good job of keeping those in the field updated on trapping concerns and fur disposition Outside. Fish and Game could benefit from these organizations in determining seasons, bag limits, etc. in Alaska. We still have too many liberal politicians trying to satisfy Outside interests rather than Alaska interests. Are the returns of questionnaires/percentages average/above average for this survey? Keep the surveys coming. Is your mailing list including all trappers with a permanent licenses?

- Price quote for October trapped blanket beaver \$25.00. The same beaver in March \$50.00 (source Alaska Raw Fur Co. fur price list). Now I can't understand why I would want to harvest this beaver in October. Maybe I'm the only one out here that is trying to make a profit.
- Trapping was pretty good but college classes precluded my running a serious trapline. The lynx and wolf especially seemed to be more abundant than most people realize.
- Why not allow trapping via "predator calling" on Ft. Richardson? With all the furbearers present, hunters could be limited to the use of shotgun for safety and keep season to a shorter timeframe, say December – February. The Army post did have actual trapping a few years back, but wasn't feasible because of training. Predator calling's the solution.
- With the apparent lack of trapping pressure in some areas, especially from road system, I feel that some seasons could be lengthened a month or so. This might allow someone with a busy schedule that still desires to trap some a larger window to schedule a trip to the trapline.
- Keep up the good work. Trapping means a lot to myself and my family.
- Didn't trap after January 1st due to family problems.
- It will not be the antis or bunny huggers who will stop trapping in Alaska. It will be the recreational snowmachiner. The disheartening effect of finding your traps sprung/missing, your one trail divided into many or just widened way out at your set, will slowly grind trapping effort to a halt.
- Bob Tobey's visit to SCCATA (Southcentral Chapter Alaska Trappers Association) meeting this year was greatly appreciated. I recommend you do so again next year. Same for Herman Griese. ADF&G biologists are suffering from a credibility gap caused by policy calls coming from the Governor and Commissioner. Through open and candid one on one conversation as we experienced that meeting, the gap will be closed.
- Keep on fighting to manage fish and game in Alaska and the Copper River area. I would like to help when needed.
- Why doesn't FWP adjudicate trapline disputes in favor of the party that can show evidence (proof) of established use rather than simply telling both they can trap where they want to but be sure to leave each other and their gear (sets) alone? Established trappers need some help with intruders. Instead, we are forced to give them our area to trap—if that is what they want to do.
- Thanks
- Need to have more effect in harvest of wolves. Lot more wolf sign and fewer moose along Copper River and the Copper basin as a whole.
- I decided to let my trapline rest this winter for various reasons.
- I did not trap this season because I had to work.
- Wolves killed four moose calves near my line. Two calves on Fish Lake within 100 yards of each other.
- I have taken a few years off to let the area I trap to replenish fur populations. I believe non-native residents should be able to harvest a limited number of sea otters, say 1-3 per licensed trapper per year. Sea otters have demolished the shellfish in Prince William Sound. It is very hard to obtain enough shellfish for subsistence use!
- Recreational snowmachiners are becoming an increasing problem. Their lack of respect for animals amazes me. They chase down every animal they come across in open country. Moose are chased out of wintering areas. Caribou are run for seemingly no reason except to see them go. Even snowmobilers who are conscientious inadvertently disrupt game populations just because of their sheer numbers. Most problems are occurring March/April when animals are the most vulnerable. Are recreational snowmobiles becoming consumptive users because of their disruption?
- With all the political and anti-use agendas, I am not sure how ADF&G keeps managing our resources. But you are doing a good job. My hat goes off to you.

- Most snow I've seen in 27 winters in this area. The actual time our (partner also) sets were actually active was greatly reduced. Many times wolves stepped right on a trap, but due to much snow, the traps didn't trip. Also because of the very deep snow, the moose used the snowmachine trails or any snowshoe trails to travel. They greatly disrupted many sets. The rabbit population still has not peaked here. Next year should be much better. I am seeing a lot of sign now. Lynx tracks are all over the area. We pulled traps earlier partly because of the moose having such a hard time moving through the snow. They just didn't want to move off the trail.
- Get the Greenies out of your ranks, or we are all doomed! I do not trust or give my true confidence to anyone in the department. The fact that I saw little sign of wolves does not mean I do not think they were there. Our paths simply did not cross.
- I was building our house this winter. Plan to hit the otters hard next winter. Trapped a couple fox for my kids. They helped! I am not raising any tree huggers!
- This is the second year in a row you did not include my comments in your annual report. The first time I thought it was just a mistake—but twice in a row, I call that selective editing. So forget sending me the questionnaire again as I will no longer be part of your type of management.
- Wolves still seem to be on the increase in our unit. Need to put back same-day wolf hunting.
- Did not participate with trapping this year. Too much snowmachine problems.

Interior

- I hope to trap forever on my trapline on Kanuti Flats like my father, his father and so on. Also my kids are teenagers now so they trap too. That's the only way we eat and have good warm hats and clothes. We never over-harvest our lines. I hope prices get better every year. Those anti-trappers can go back where they come from. They don't know how we've survived out here all these years. We can't just go down to the local grocery store and buy food like in cities. We live off our traplines and hunting grounds.
- Wolves very abundant in our area. I would like to see same day airborne/land and shoot wolf hunting re-opened in this area.
- Sure appreciate hunters and trappers among ADF&G employees.
- Low snow in my area, so slow start, then thawing resulted in low catch again. Plan to start early and with increased effort no matter what the weather is next November.
- I did not trap my main line. Was gone most of the winter. I first trapped on my home place and road into one of my timber sales for two weeks.
- I had the great pleasure of teaching my four-year-old grandson about trapping. The warm weather was not very helpful for trapping, but made it very easy for me to take good cold-weather care of youngster and do some good trap work too. Made the catch, then at home skinning first fox, the boy said, "Papa, that's stinky. Can I do that?" I think he will be a trapper! Caribou have increased in the last three years. Weather has always been toughest battle with constant wind down that creek and now with increased caribou traffic, trapping efforts are even more fun than ever. Thank you for your efforts on this questionnaire. Please keep me on your list.
- As I reach seven decades, I'm slowing down, trapping and otherwise. There were more fox in the Delta area than I've seen in my years of trapping. Hares are starting to decline and so is their winter feed, as indicated by the minor snowfall and the great quantity of young evergreen trees that they have killed.
- Everything seems okay. A bounty system on wolves would encourage trappers to put more effort into wolves. It's probably the cheapest method of control. But I don't envy your position of having environmentalists and a governor trying to hamstring your efforts.
- I appreciate all the effort put into this publication and encourage all trappers to complete an accurate questionnaire. I find this information interesting and informative, and it helps me see the overall health of trapping in our state! If we are to continue to enjoy this activity for work, fun and income, we need to continue to support and educate folks about trapping and to study our animal populations.

- Lots of wolves in my area. Caught and lost two. Maybe next time. Almost always have one or two of my sons with me. Fifteen-year-old lives to hunt, trap and fish. My other three love hunting. I believe it's good to show kids what it's like. I'm going to be showing a class of seventh and eighth graders about trapping this month in our school. I'm taking furs and different size traps in and showing them different sets and answering their questions. The teacher is interested and wants to show our side. We need to do this.
- Good year.
- This was an excellent season for trapping. Very enjoyable and profitable. I wish you would reinstate the \$45 wolf carcass fee. Fur prices are a little better, but still very low, especially lynx sold for the general market.
- It is sure disgusting to see the commissioner just "parrot" the governor's propaganda and come out in support of ballot box biology, against HJR56 (end wildlife initiatives) and for closing 500,000 acres to trapping just to keep the animal rights groups happy. Doesn't anybody have any professional ethics anymore?
- Don't endorse the best management practice. If the state adopts it, anti-fur people will use it to influence BOG members. It will be a stepping stone to taking our foothold traps away from us.
- I think the state of Alaska or NPS, whoever collars any furbearer should be responsible for paying full price of the fur of the animal they collared, to the trapper who harvested the damaged fur.
- This year I didn't hit the trapline as hard as the '98-'99 season. I alternate years and this year I concentrated on expanding my trapline. I had a very good year in '98-'99. Next year I'll have close to 150 miles of trapline. I took the majority of the wolves out of the jumbo pack and left four in there. They're back up to six now from what I saw. More wolverine sign and marten also. I think the lynx will be peaking next winter. With the additional miles added, I'll be into more beaver and marten. One message to Mr. Rue – listen to the biologists that are out doing their job! Between hunters, trappers and biologists compiling info on these animals, together we should be able to ensure healthy populations for future generations to enjoy. This includes non-consumptive users also! No buffer zone bonehead!! There's no need for this garbage.
- I would like to see the sealing requirement removed from beaver and lynx in 20c & 20b. Hare and lynx populations are making a slow but steady increase finally after 1971-1972 being last peaking the area.
- Lynx highs are great!
- Stop shoot trapping with snow machines on the Dalton Highway. I have no problem with shooting an animal from the road, but using snow machines to pursue an animal should be stopped. If you have a trapline north of the Brooks Range and shoot a wolf while checking your lines, this is fine, with a snowmobile or without. No snowmobiles for shoot trapping north of Atiqun Pass along the Dalton Highway.
- Fur prices were too low.
- There were two of us that caught this fur.
- The wolves were very scarce in my area this year, the normal packs were not present, but prior to the season in early fall they were. The caribou didn't come into the area this year, also the sheep were showing different feeding area patterns.
- I trapped ptarmigan only because I'm getting too old to trap other animals.
- Snow depth low/high, high temp/low temp, overflow, all these conditions curtailed my normal trapping efforts. This was the worst year I've had for not-user friendly climate conditions in unit 24.
- ✓ ➤ Too many wolves and costs too much to go out. Provide money to tribes for local predator management. ADF&G doesn't do any predator management, just us locals.
- Stay away from my trapline.
- Hares have definitely increased allowing more lynx to linger while migrating through the Brooks Range.

- Lynx were migrating into the central Brooks Range for the past three seasons. Lynx moved from the south up into the mountains turning northeast primarily. Lynx that were in the mountains were very thin, although hares were very plentiful. Newly-arrived lynx carried moderate fat. Wolves were plentiful with considerable movement across the lower foot hills in late February and March. The snow formed up and they could travel easily. Wolves had considerable conflict wounds in early winter and were generally thin. After the deep snow came, the wolves gained weight with easier hunting. We didn't have very many Western Arctic caribou come to this area. Wolverine seemed to come with the caribou last season. Wolverine numbers were normal for this area this season. Very high last season. Red squirrel numbers have declined dramatically due to poor spruce cone crop. Voles were very plentiful. I caught many young marten this season - survival seemed good on marten.
- ✓ ➤ Start a non-profit fund out here in Galena area for funding for snare material, manning traps, and gasoline. Also if USFWS/ADF&G could help spot wolf kills from air as during normal flying/business hours.
- Had to pull wolf traps - hunters on trails.
- Keep up the good work!
- Need wolf control.
- Thank you for your continued help to the keepers of our state.
- Trapping is a very healthy recreational activity for me. I involve kids whenever possible. Thanks for supporting it in every way.
- We need to come up with a way to trap or snare wolves when we have so many caribou running our trap lines.
- General public needs educated on value of hunting and trapping to wildlife populations. Predators need harvested as well as prey species. Government's protection of all predators is seriously flawed. Once available habitat is full, excess animals can and should be harvested.
- The Board of Game's newly adopted ¼ mile from the highway should work fine.
- Thanks again for allowing me to comment. It will be interesting to see the affects of the fire here. Lynx population is sure on the rise, but rabbit is dropping fast. So guess lynx will crash too. Lots of caribou around, and wolf kills! Made it nice for trapping. I sure enjoy trapping. One of the few ways to make a meager living in the woods these days.
- I feel Fish & Game should have traplines marked on a topo map in their office so new trappers are aware of areas not trapped or are trapped. This would stop a lot of hurt feelings among trappers.
- Prices too low. I didn't work last season, so no money to trap. Would still like to get the Trapper's Report.
- I was called to work in January, so I never trapped very long this year.
- Leg hold should also be I.D.
- Coyote season should end with marten and fox, etc. Trapper should be allowed to retain incidental catch of coyote while trapping or snaring wolves.
- Help! People ran over every wolf set I made this year. I had to go over 30 miles from the highway to get away from other people. I wasn't able to catch any wolves this year because of this. Why do people get permits to run heavy equipment down my trapline, yet they are not required to notify me before they do this? Traps and traplines get destroyed every year. These people know that I trap here, but they still fail to contact me. Can anything be done about this?
- I reviewed the report from 1999-2000, and the prices quoted for fur was not accurate at all on some species, especially lynx. I sold to buyers in both Anchorage and Fairbanks ad the highest I saw was \$60, top. This year started off good, but then dropped out. The first two months' price was \$70-\$80, then dropped to \$25-\$40. I'm still confused by why lynx is so low when it is a quality fur. Don't ban leg holds. Why is the trapper getting lower prices on sales, but the finished product price is going up and up?
- Did not trap this year - prices too low. Plan on trapping next year.

- Fur prices are down. Also, the wolverine are being hit hard by snow machines in all areas. Wolves seem to be in great numbers, no shortage at all.
- Did not trap since 1986. Fur prices were too low for profit. Probably trap in the near future, but not seriously, just to teach my step-sons what it means to live off the land.
- The department should do a better job protecting our right to trap, i.e.; taking position against frivolous ballot initiative, informing public of heritage and importance of trapping and fight against any and all attempts to close or restrict areas of trapping that do not have biological or public safety concerns.
- Please persuade the members of the state game board to follow through with action on the control of wolf predators in GMU 19D.
- I tan my furs to make marten caps, sell my tanned wolves or give my furs to other people who never catch any.
- More control over wolves in area 21A & E. Another factor is the bear population on the Yukon Innoka River. Riding on the mail plane trips, bears are sited chasing and killing newborn moose calves. Still nothing is done to clean out the bear factor. Maybe no one eats as much bear as in times past.
- Furs are too cheap.
- Too many wolves killing all our moose. Open only one season for moose a year.
- I only caught what pelts I could use for making personal garments. I wasn't interested in trapping for the amount of money that was being offered for the pelts. But I enjoy trapping, so will trap every year even if the prices stay low. Will trap enough for hats, mittens and such.
- Season for red fox should be extended in Unit 21 till March 31. When targeting wolf using leghold traps, foxes are caught during March. Wolf traps nearly always break a fox's leg, making release impractical. Fur quality in March is as good for a Unit 21 fox as it is in Unit 19 where fox season is still open. Genetic fur problem still rampant in some Innoka packs of wolves, at least half of the wolves caught in some areas are not worth skinning.
- Changing season and set size will stop or decrease the snare problem.
- Too much d__n snow this winter. Open up a season on animal rights activists in Alaska and then the lower U.S. No closed season and no limit and any means of take.
- The leghold trap is the best trap ever made to date. Dead fall and conibears suck. Snares are very good for under-ice beaver. Good in some cases for wolf. But you cannot beat the leghold trap for most trapping. If they ban the leghold trap, we can kiss trapping goodbye and hunting will not be far behind. Don't let them do it.

Arctic/Western

- Very rough snow conditions with very windy weather. Hard to track animals. More caribou this year near Colville River. Fewer wolves this year than last year.
- I would like to see ADF&G work with North Slope Borough School District to come about with a trapper education program to the K-12 grade students.
- My job made it so I could not trap during the year.
- Too much seismic and industry activity. Noticed the displacement of resources north and west of the Colville River. I put over 600 miles on the snowmachine on each of my three trips over the winter. Not even worth setting a trap line because of the low fur prices. Too cheap.
- I have used access to the Internet to market my fur. For the first time in seven years began to sell my fur again. I keep beaver and otter for personal use. I tan myself and make hats and parkas. The lynx sold for \$75 (damaged kitten) – \$200 (large adults).
- Fur prices too cheap.
- Fur prices are too low a price. Trapping license too high.

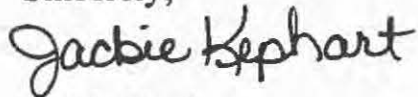
- Did not trap this season cause of low price of fur. But there's a lot of beaver, fox, hare, and more lynx this season. You guys do really good work with this report. Keep it up!
- Here in Unit 18 there has been a very high increase in the wolf population. Each week there are numerous sightings of pack of 2 to 20 wolves. There is also numerous dead moose kills both above and below Russian Mission on the Yukon and in islands where we usually hunt moose. Although there has been a considerable increase in the moose population, the packs of wolves will no doubt have a decreasing effect in their numbers. This isn't good because the wolves are competing with subsistence users and the more the wolves thrive, the greater the effect on us who live off moose as an important year-round staple for our families. I think there should be a wolf-kill done, but this will really cause a stir with all those animal rights activists who never seem to understand how it is to "live" out here in the bush. Hopefully fur buyers will put a big raise in the price for wolf pelts.
- Great Trapper Questionnaire Annual Report. There are a lot of wolves out there. Several people from our village witnessed two skinny wolf pups chasing and killing sled dog pups right inside the village. As well as resident wolves hanging out in places north of here that have no moose or caribou. Must be an awful lot to cause them to push out into such marginal habitat. Beaver are everywhere here as well, but are being trapped mainly for food. I know some instances where winter prime beaver hides are just being thrown out and only the meat being taken. They're not even worth the effort to stretch for some people. If prices don't go up pretty soon, I'm afraid we are going to lose a whole generation of would-be trappers. The "go-getters" that are the real good trappers have all gotten full-time jobs. I was the only guy that trapped and am considered foolish by some because of low fur prices. (More truth to that than I want to admit!)
- We have an explosion of wolves, and they are killing off all our moose. Please open airplane wolf hunting. Legal land and shoot. Check out hunters in Unit 18 after the September moose season closes. Have only one moose hunt per year.
- Too many beavers are damaging the creeks and rivers where fish go up to spawn.
- We have wolves coming into Mountain Village again this year. I managed to snare a large grey along the side of the road in town, and that seems to disperse the rest and they quit coming around. The year before last I caught a black one doing the same thing. They were both healthy animals and males. I didn't trap much this year. Lynx only. Caught about half a dozen. Didn't trap fox or beaver due to low price, although we have lots of them. Didn't notice any mange or rabies this year. Rabbits are nearing their high cycle (most I've seen in 15 years). Also noticed less questions on this year's report. I do hope you people realize that most all wolf and wolverine in this area are never tagged. So you can be sure they are severely undercounted. But you could just ask about any hunter or trapper in each village, and they could tell you exactly how many wolf and wolverine were caught. In fact, we can do a little experiment. I know of 5 wolves that were caught for sure in St. Marys and 3 wolverine caught in Mountain Village for sure. Let's see how many show up in the tagging count. Well I hope this helps at all. And by the way, thank you very much for the cool calendar last year. I sure liked it. If you have any more this year, it would be greatly appreciated.
- Season was too bad. No comments.
- Was too busy running dogs. No time for fur.
- The rabbits are just starting to inhabit the peninsula again. The beaver are really reproducing and inhabiting the peninsula. There are 5 lodges now compared to 3 last year (right along the sno-go portage trail, there could be a couple more). Also, the families are getting larger as their igloos are. Wolves and wolverines were pretty much absent from the Kelly River and Kugruaq River this year. Normally that's where wolverines congregate in the Spring. We saw a rise in moose numbers up there this year so maybe the wolves will increase.
- Lynx are coming back. Need to liberalize season and limit.
- I am very new to trapping, but I'm already looking forward to next season. I'm not very political, but I think you folks have our trapping interests in mind. I hope ballot box biology is kept in check. Because ADF&G should be able to do your job and not have your hands tied by a (sometimes) misguided public.
- No snow early on discouraged me from setting traps. January—extreme cold did the same. February—too many weather systems moving through. March—too warm.
- Was too cold for a long spell and was having snowmachine problems.

- I found it difficult to answer your questions since I shoot all of my furbearers. My outdoor activity is generally limited to taking a drive in my pickup with my 2-year-old son looking for furbearers who present themselves. I also go looking via snowmachine as time allows. I mainly buy a trapping license to legally hunt parka squirrels (which I give to elder Eskimo women) and for those rare moments of opportunity when one encounters multiple wolverines, wolves, otters, etc. in which the legal take would be limited by a standard hunting license. I do not "trap" for my livelihood or profit, only for pleasure. So I am not sure how valuable my survey answers are to your study. I keep all furs (except for parka squirrels) for my own use or to give as gifts to others.
- I would like to trap, but I lack experience and materials. However, just knowing that I still can whenever I want makes one happy. Hope we never lose our right to either subsistence or sell our furs. Thanks for including me in your questionnaire and looking forward to next year's.
- Other responsibilities kept me from trapping. Made several hunting trips from Nome after good snow arrived end of January. Foxes appear down. Less wolf seen by Nome residents. Wolverine the same. Trapping conditions were good by the end of February. Beaver still spreading. Definitely should end sealing in Unit 22. Rabbits are up all over Unit 22. Overall furbearers in Unit 22 are healthy. Ecosystem is self-regulating. Not enough people out and about to have much effect on furbearer populations.
- I'm not sure if this comment is addressed to ADF&G or if it's to the people (hunter/trappers) of Alaska. First, I'd like to say that everyone has done a good job fighting off the animal rights activists to ban the snaring of wolves last year. What I don't understand is why the people of the McGrath area are not utilizing their right to hunt/trap/snare wolves as opposed to complaining to the government to do something about it. I have nothing against the control of wolves with an airplane, but I think they should exercise their trapping privileges first before someone else has to control it by other means. It kind of takes everything away that we were fighting for. I could be stepping out of line here. But I'm still confused. Maybe someone can enlighten me. Other than that, I look forward to this survey. Keep up the good work.
- ✓ ➤ The price for furs are too low. Fuel for machines too high.
- I wasn't able to hunt due to reindeer operation, but notice more arctic hares this year, plus musk ox are on high increase. Moose populations seem to be the same as last year in 22E. Ptarmigan are plentiful.
- I usually just look at the animals.
- I think the wolf population is on the rise, because I have seen more wolf tracks this past winter than I ever have before.
- Hurry and open the 22B unit for muskox.

Author's Note

Thank you for your comments. We appreciate hearing from you, and I am sure other trappers enjoy reading about what is going on in areas outside their trapping grounds. If you have questions about your specific area, please let your local area biologists know that you would like to hear from them regarding your concerns. Responses for this questionnaire have increased; thank you for your participation. Better data assures better management of trapping in Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Kephart". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jackie Kephart

Trapper Questionnaire Coordinator

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game



Gerhard Kraus

June 2001