

Trapper Questionnaire

**Statewide Annual Report
1992-1993**

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

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TRAPPER QUESTIONNAIRE STATEWIDE REPORT 1992-93

The trapper questionnaire report currently includes information contributed by interior, southcentral, and southeastern Alaska trappers. Our mailing list for the 1992-93 season included 956 trappers. We received information back from 509 individuals (53%). Of these, 110 were from Southeast, 226 from Southcentral, and 173 from Interior Alaska. This report summarizes the information provided by these trappers. Responses to questions asked by your local area biologist are not covered here. Please contact your area biologist for information regarding questions specific to your area. Comments that were written on questionnaires are presented at the end of this report. Names of individuals and references to specific traplines are not included.

A PROFILE OF ALASKA'S TRAPPERS

Trappers provided information that helped us learn about how experienced our trappers are, how they run their traplines, and how much effort they put into catching fur in their area.

Did you trap in 1992-93?

Sixty-seven percent of the trappers said they trapped during the 1992-93 season. This is slightly down from the 1991-92 and 1990-91 seasons when 73% and 71% of the trappers said they had trapped.

How many total years of trapping experience do you have?

On the average, trappers have been catching fur for just over two decades (21 years). The newest trappers have been trapping for only one year, while several individuals said they had trapped for a lifetime (we know that some individuals trap into their 70's, so I am estimating that a "lifetime" of trapping is equivalent to about 75 years). During the two previous seasons, the number of years of trapping experience also averaged close to 20 years and ranged from 1 year to a lifetime.

How many years have you trapped in Alaska?

Most of our trappers had gained some trapping experience elsewhere before trapping in Alaska. The average number of years of trapping experience in Alaska was 17 years, vs. 21 years of total experience. The amount of experience varied from 1 year to a lifetime. This information is similar to previous years' data.

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

Trappers generally used snowmachines (39%) or highway vehicles (27%) to get to their trapping area. Some trappers used boats (11%) and airplanes (11%). Very few trappers used dogteams (5%), walked (4%), used 3-4 wheelers (2%), or used skis/snowshoes (1%).

What transportation did you use to run your trapline?

Most trappers ran their traplines with snowmachines (57%). Some trappers walked their lines (16%) or used boats (9%). Very few trappers used skis/snowshoes (6%), dogteams (5%), highway vehicles (3%), 3-4 wheelers (2%), or airplanes (2%).

How long was your main trapline in 1992-93?

Traplines averaged 36 miles long, and trapline length varied from less than 1 mile to over 400 miles. Fifty-four percent of the trappers had lines less than 25 miles long, 28% of the traplines were 25-50 miles, 12% were 51-100 miles, 5% were 101-200 miles, and 1% were greater than 200 miles. The average length of a trapper's main line has not changed much in the past two years. However, in comparison with last season, this season there was a slight increase in the percentage of trappers with lines less than 25 miles long and a decrease in the percentage of trappers with lines 25-50 and 51-100 miles long. The percentage of trappers that had lines from 101-200 miles and greater than 200 miles was very similar to last season.

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

On the average, trappers have worked the same area for a little over a decade (12 years), ranging from 1 year to a lifetime. This information also is similar to previous years' data.

What was the approximate number of sets you averaged on your line in 1992-93?

Most trappers put out relatively few sets. Thirty-three percent of the trappers made less than 25 sets, and 27% made 25-50 sets. Twenty percent of the trappers used 51-100 sets and 11% used 101-200 sets. Very few trappers made 201-300 sets (4%) or more than 300 sets (5%). This is almost the same response that we had for the 1991-92 season.

What were the most important species you were trying to catch in 1992-93?

Marten, wolf, and/or lynx were the primary target species for most trappers. Fox, mink, wolverine, beaver, and otter were the next most commonly listed priority species. Some trappers said they were mostly after coyotes, a few included muskrats, and several

trappers said they had no priority.

How many weeks did you trap during the 1992-93 season?

On the average, trappers ran their traplines for about 9 weeks, ranging from 1 to 27 weeks. Most trappers ran their lines for a 1-4 week period (26%), a 5-8 week period (26%), or a 9-12 week period (24%). Fourteen percent trapped for 13-16 weeks, 6% trapped for 17-20 weeks, and 3% trapped for 21-24 weeks. Two trappers trapped for greater than 25 weeks.

Was your trapping effort during the 1992-93 season less, the same, or more than the last season you trapped?

Most trappers (57%) indicated that their trapping effort was less than the last season they trapped. Twenty-seven percent indicated that their trapping effort was the same, and 16% said their trapping effort was more.

If you did change your trapping effort for the 1992-93 season, did you change your effort to a different species; did you trap in a new area; and/or did you increase or decrease the following: the length of your trapline, the number of sets on your line, and/or the number of weeks you trapped?

Of those trappers that changed their effort for the 1992-93 season, 30% focused their trapping efforts on another species, 26% trapped in a new area, 58% changed the length of their traplines (most decreased the length), 70% changed the number of sets on their lines (most decreased the number), and 61% changed the number of weeks they trapped (most decreased the number).

If you increased your trapping effort, did the increase result in a higher catch?

Only 16% of the trappers increased their effort. Of those, 74% indicated that their efforts resulted in a higher catch.

What were trapping conditions like on your trapline?

About an equal number of trappers said that trapline conditions were poor (32%) as those that said conditions were fair (35%) and good (33%).

Did last year's fur prices or the 1992-93 pre-season advertised prices affect your trapping effort this season?

Approximately 60% of the trappers responded that neither last years fur prices nor the pre-season advertised prices affected their trapping effort this season.

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

Most trappers (77%) said that the presence of other trappers was not affecting their trapping effort.

ALASKA'S FURBEARER POPULATIONS - WHAT'S HAPPENING

Most trappers have a pretty good understanding of how the fur population is doing in their area. We asked trappers to help us assess statewide furbearer abundance and indicate whether populations are going up, down, or staying the same.

Many things help trappers decide if fur populations along their line are scarce, common, or abundant. Similarly, other signs can help the trapper determine whether or not the number of animals are fewer, the same, or more this season than they were last season. Unusually cold or warm temperatures, the amount of snow, the amount of trapline actively used, the experience of the trapper, and actual changes in the numbers of animals are among the many things affecting a trapper's judgement as to the abundance of and trends in furbearer populations on the trapline.

In spite of the difficulties, the fact remains that trappers spend a lot of time observing furbearers and their sign. This is a valuable pool of information that helps us manage the state's resources. On the other hand, many biologists get a broader perspective by gathering information over large geographic areas while doing aerial surveys, talking to many trappers, or by reviewing information such as is provided from this trapper questionnaire. By working together and combining information from all sources, both wildlife biologists and trappers can gain a better understanding of the status of furbearer populations throughout the state.

Tables 1-3 summarize what trappers told us about the relative abundance of and trends in furbearer populations over a large area of the state. Table 1 exhibits index values of the relative abundance of and trends in furbearer populations in Interior Alaska. The Interior was divided into four descriptive areas: the Lower Tanana River Basin (LTB) - Game Management Units (GMUs) 20ABCDF and 25C; the Upper Tanana River Basin, Charlie and Fortymile River (UTB) - GMUs 12 and 20E; the Middle Yukon and Koyukuk (MYK) - GMUs 21BCD, 24, and some of 23; and the Upper Yukon River Basin (UYB) - GMUs 25ABD and 26BC. Table 2 exhibits index values for Southcentral Alaska, which was divided into seven descriptive areas: the Copper River and Upper Susitna River Basin (CUS) - GMUs 11 and 13; the Lower Susitna Basin (LSB) - GMUs 14 and 16; Prince William Sound and North Gulf Coast (PWS) - GMU 6; the Kenai Peninsula (KEP) - GMUs 7 and 15; the Kodiak Archipelago (KOI) - GMU 8; the Alaska Peninsula (AKP) -

GMUs 9 and 10; and Bristol Bay (BRB) - GMU 17 and some of 19. Table 3 exhibits index values for Southeastern Alaska, which was divided into four areas: GMUs 1A and 2 (1A2); GMUs 1B and 3 (1B3); GMUs 1C, 1D, and 5 (1CD5) and GMU 4 (U4).

If the numbers in the tables do not seem to make much sense to you, look at the bottom of the table where you will find a word that corresponds to a range of index values. If you are comfortable with numbers, the index values provide a somewhat finer indication of abundance or trend than does the word designation. Both the abundance and trend indicators have limitations and are based on assumptions that may not be true. They do, however, provide tools for us to make general comparisons between areas over time. Additional research is needed to improve on the value of these indices.

The relative abundance numerical index presented in the tables is based upon work done on snowshoe hares in Alberta, Canada by Lloyd Keith and his student Christopher Brand. They compared the results of responses to a trapper questionnaire with their estimates of snowshoe hare densities based on their own field work and found there was a good relationship between these two measures. Based on this work, 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 then 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. The index ranges from 0% to 100%. Index values of 0% through 19% were interpreted as indicating hares were scarce, values from 20% through 50% indicated hares were at intermediate levels (=common), and values greater than 50% indicated that hares were abundant.

We do not know if the same ranges of percentages are appropriate for snowshoe hares in Alaska or for any other Alaskan species. Testing such a relationship remains to be done. Also, because of the large size of Alaska, it would be necessary to test out the method in many places and over many years. This testing would be costly and time consuming. However, even untested, the index provides a way to generally compare the trapper questionnaire results from different areas of the state over time.

The relative trend numerical index shows if trappers felt animals were fewer, the same, or more numerous than they were the previous year. This index is slightly different than the relative abundance index. Again, each response was assigned a numerical value: 1=fewer, 2=same, and 3=more. The trend index then was derived by calculating the average of the values for a given area. The trend index value can range from 1 through 3.

Because we do not have another independent measure of trend to compare with as was done in the Alberta snowshoe hare study for the relative abundance index, it is necessary to select arbitrary ranges of values to represent the average opinion of trappers in a geographic area. For purposes of this report, an index value of 1 through 1.66 represents

fewer, values from 1.67 through 2.33 represent the same, and values of 2.34 through 3 represent more.

Species Relative Abundance and Trend Summary of Tables 1-3

Interior

Beaver were generally reported as abundant, with numbers the same as in the 1991-92 season. Coyotes were mostly reported as common, with numbers the same as in 1991-92. Lynx were reported as common throughout the Interior areas, with numbers the same as in 1991-92. Snowshoe hare were mostly reported as scarce, with numbers fewer than in 1991-92. Marten were reported as scarce in the LTB and UTB areas, abundant in the MYK area, and common in the UYB area. Marten numbers were reported to be fewer than in 1991-92, except in the MYK area, where numbers were the same as in 1991-92. Mink were mostly reported as scarce, with numbers the same as in 1991-92. Red fox were mostly reported as common, with numbers fewer than or the same as in 1991-92. River otter also were generally reported as common, with numbers the same as in 1991-92. Wolves were reported as common to abundant, with numbers mostly the same as in 1991-92. Wolverines were reported as scarce to common, with numbers the same as in 1991-92.

Southcentral

Beaver were reported as common to abundant throughout the southcentral areas, with numbers generally the same as in 1991-92. Coyotes were reported as common to abundant in areas where they occur. Coyote numbers were the same as in 1991-92, except in the AKP and BRB areas, where numbers were reported to be higher in 1992-93. Lynx were reported as scarce to common where they occur, except in the BRB area, where they were reported to be abundant. Lynx numbers were the same as in 1991-92, except in the LSB and BRB areas, where their numbers were reported to be higher in 1992-93. Snowshoe hare were reported as scarce to common, and in most areas, hare numbers were fewer than or the same as in 1991-92. Marten also were reported as scarce to common, with numbers fewer than or the same as in 1991-92. Mink were mostly reported as common, with numbers the same as in 1991-92. River otter were reported as common to abundant, with numbers mostly the same as in 1991-92. Wolves were reported as scarce to common, except in the BRB area, where they were reported as abundant. Wolf numbers were reported to be the same as in 1991-92 or higher. Wolverines also were reported as scarce to common, with numbers generally the same as in 1991-92.

Southeast

Beaver were reported as common to abundant, with numbers the same as in 1991-92. Marten were mostly reported as common, with numbers fewer than in 1991-92. Mink and river otter were reported as common to abundant, with numbers mostly the same as in 1991-92. Wolves were reported as common to abundant in areas where they occur, with numbers higher than in 1991-92. Wolverines were reported as scarce to common where they occur, with numbers the same as in 1991-92.

ALASKA'S FURBEARER HARVEST

Of the 16 furbearer species trapped in Alaska, five require sealing statewide: beaver, lynx, river otter, wolf, and wolverine. In addition, marten are required to be sealed in Game Management Units (GMU's) 1-5, 7, 13E, and 14-16 (refer to Figure 1 for GMU delineations). Harvest estimates for these species are determined from sealing records. Currently, we do not have a reliable method to estimate harvests of the remaining furbearer species. Table 4 presents a summary of furbearer harvest estimates, based on sealing records, from 1990-91 through 1992-93. Over the three year period, a statewide average of about 5,300 beavers, 1,550 lynx, 1,300 river otters, 1,100 wolves, and 500 wolverines were sealed annually. For all these species, the reported harvest during 1991-92 was higher than during either 1990-91 or 1992-93. In general, beaver harvests were greatest in Regions II, III, and V; lynx harvests were greatest in Region III; river otter harvests were greatest in Regions I, II, and V; wolf harvests were greatest in Region III; and wolverine harvests were greatest in Regions II and III (refer to Figure 2 for regional delineations).

COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING FURS

We also have records of commercial transactions involving furs. Individuals who engage in fur dealing and who purchase, or acquire through consignment or barter, raw skins of furbearers must report the transactions on department Fur Acquisition forms. Each transaction report shows the species, number of each species, and location in which the furs were trapped. A summary (based on fur acquisition reports) of the numbers of raw furs purchased, or acquired through consignment or barter, by Alaska's fur dealers in 1992-93 is presented in Table 5. The most common raw skins purchased or acquired by fur dealers in 1992-93 were mink (10,413), marten (3,411), and beaver (1,022). Considerably fewer fox (444), lynx (303), river otter (280), and wolf (204) pelts were purchased or acquired. The average Alaskan raw fur prices paid by two country buyers

in Fairbanks from 1990-91 through 1993-94 are as follows:

	1990-91 (\$)	1991-92 (\$)	1992-93 (\$)	1993-94 (\$)
Beaver	22.50	17.50	17.50	26.00
Fox	17.50	17.50	17.50	17.50
Lynx	50-250.00	60-150.00	70.00	85.00
Marten	55.00	50.00	35.00	40-45.00
Mink (wild)	19.00	15-18.00	15.50	17.00
Rat	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25
River Otter	30.00	35.00	35.00	60.00
Weasel	1.25	1.25	1.75	1.75
Wolverine	235.00	235.00	235.00	235.00
Wolf	275.00	275.00	275.00	235.00

Raw Fur Export reports are filled out when an individual sends raw furs outside of Alaska. The same information is collected for these reports as for the acquisition reports. Table 6 provides a summary of the reported numbers of raw furs exported from Alaska in 1992-93. By far the most common raw furs exported from Alaska by trappers/hunters in 1992-93 were marten (2,422), followed by mink (618) and beaver (439). The most common raw furs exported by fur dealers in 1992-93 were mink (10,508), marten (4,463), muskrat (4,418), beaver (3,091) and fox (2,477). It is interesting that for some species (e.g., beaver and fox) fur dealers exported a considerably higher number of raw furs than they acquired that same year. We would welcome any insights you may have as to why this occurs. It may be that some fur dealers were exporting furs they had kept from previous years.

The Fur Acquisition and Raw Fur Export reports are not actual records of furbearer numbers harvested in a given regulatory year. Both reports may include furs taken in previous years, and many trappers keep their furs for tanning and use at home. In addition, some individuals may not fill out the required forms. These transaction reports, therefore, are not very useful for reflecting harvest levels.

Table 1. Indices of relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations in Interior Alaska, 1992-93.

	<u>Relative Abundance Index (%)</u>				<u>Trend Index</u>			
	<u>Descriptive Area</u>				<u>Descriptive Area</u>			
	LTB	UTB	MYK	UYB	LTB	UTB	MYK	UYB
Furbearers:								
Arctic Fox	NP	NP	NP	10	NP	NP	NP	1.50
Beaver	53	44	59	65	1.97	2.36	1.75	2.29
Coyote	31	31	25	12	2.10	2.20	1.50	2.00
Lynx	34	42	32	30	2.21	2.10	1.89	1.72
Marten	17	19	55	41	1.43	1.45	2.10	1.61
Mink	17	15	32	15	1.68	1.88	1.75	1.67
Muskrat	26	27	0	39	2.13	2.23	1.78	1.92
Red Fox	38	33	55	45	1.51	1.41	1.88	1.71
Red Squirrel	73	80	78	64	2.05	2.48	2.25	1.91
River Otter	19	23	45	31	1.85	2.07	1.88	1.92
Weasel	32	31	44	47	1.74	1.85	1.78	1.92
Wolf	44	46	64	52	2.20	2.17	2.20	2.38
Wolverine	14	18	35	30	1.68	2.00	1.75	2.13
Prey:								
Hare	09	10	33	15	1.42	1.37	1.89	1.38
Grouse	12	06	28	20	1.50	1.42	1.56	1.46
Ptarmigan	08	08	19	26	1.49	1.50	1.89	1.62
Mice/Rodents	61	46	67	42	2.18	2.05	2.13	1.77

Abundance: Index Values
 Scarce = 0 through 19
 Common = 20 through 50
 Abundant = Greater than 50
 NP = Not Present

Trend: Index Values
 Fewer = 1 through 1.66
 Same = 1.67 through 2.33
 More = Greater than 2.33
 NP = Not Present

Interior Descriptive Areas:
 LTB = Lower Tanana R. Basin
 UTB = Upper Tanana R. Basin,
 Charlie and Fortymile R.
 MYK = Middle Yukon and Koyukuk
 UYB = Upper Yukon R. Basin

Table 2. Indices of relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations in Southcentral Alaska, 1992-93.

	<u>Relative Abundance Index (%)</u>							<u>Trend Index</u>						
	<u>Descriptive Area</u>							<u>Descriptive Area</u>						
	CUS	LSB	PWS	KEP	KOI	AKP	BRB	CUS	LSB	PWS	KEP	KOI	AKP	BRB
Furbearers:														
Beaver	44	66	20	45	50	88	67	2.05	2.26	1.50	2.14	1.86	2.23	2.00
Coyote	42	60	44	58	NP	29	75	1.98	2.16	1.71	2.00	NP	2.36	2.50
Lynx	37	15	12	29	NP	25	62	2.31	2.61	2.25	2.20	NP	2.14	2.50
Marten	30	37	07	14	25	33	50	1.61	2.18	1.33	1.60	2.00	2.00	2.00
Mink	29	45	28	50	-	64	25	1.90	2.16	1.71	1.91	-	2.17	2.00
Muskrat	20	47	0	33	25	36	0	2.00	2.21	1.50	1.75	2.50	1.83	1.00
Red Fox	46	45	0	25	85	68	50	1.98	2.00	1.50	1.50	2.78	1.82	2.33
Red Squirrel	75	62	25	88	60	50	50	2.27	2.05	1.00	2.25	3.00	2.13	2.00
River Otter	30	45	38	42	68	61	50	1.97	2.17	1.71	2.00	2.50	2.13	1.75
Weasel	42	47	17	46	50	40	33	2.00	1.75	1.50	2.00	1.50	2.00	2.00
Wolf	44	25	17	35	NP	38	62	2.13	2.38	2.25	1.89	NP	2.27	2.60
Wolverine	11	20	17	19	NP	35	38	1.74	2.16	2.00	2.00	NP	2.00	1.60
Prey:														
Hare	19	15	30	20	43	37	50	1.43	1.74	2.00	2.11	3.00	1.60	1.67
Grouse	20	35	12	38	NP	27	50	1.73	1.75	1.50	2.00	NP	1.75	2.00
Ptarmigan	32	40	30	29	08	53	60	1.98	1.80	1.67	2.00	-	1.45	2.17
Mice/rodents	72	64	42	65	43	57	83	2.31	2.05	1.33	2.00	2.00	2.09	2.33

Abundance: Index Values
 Scarce = 0 through 19
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 Abundant = Greater than 50
 NP = Not Present

Trend: Index Values
 Fewer = 1 through 1.66
 Same = 1.67 through 2.33
 More = Greater than 2.33
 NP = Not Present

Southcentral Descriptive Areas:
 CUS = Copper R. and Upper Susitna R. Basin
 LSB = Lower Susitna Basin
 PWS = Prince William Sd. & N. Gulf Coast
 KEP = Kenai Peninsula
 KOI = Kodiak Archipelago
 AKP = Alaska Peninsula
 BRB = Bristol Bay Area

Table 3. Indices of relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations in Southeastern Alaska, 1992-93.

	<u>Relative Abundance Index (%)</u>				<u>Trend Index</u>			
	<u>Descriptive Area</u>				<u>Descriptive Area</u>			
	1A2	1B3	1CD5	U4	1A2	1B3	1CD5	U4
Furbearers:								
Beaver	39	62	43	50	2.07	2.00	2.00	2.00
Coyote	-	0	25	NP	-	2.00	2.00	NP
Lynx	NP	NP	17	NP	NP	NP	2.71	NP
Marten	30	62	25	23	1.41	2.00	1.13	1.42
Mink	57	75	41	40	2.18	2.00	1.56	1.71
Muskrat	0	0	0	NP	3.00	2.00	1.67	NP
Red Fox	NP	NP	12	NP	NP	NP	1.00	NP
Red Squirrel	45	67	64	70	2.00	2.00	1.75	2.33
River Otter	48	62	50	55	2.06	2.67	1.83	2.00
Weasel	29	67	69	20	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Wolf	62	75	38	NP	2.47	2.67	2.50	NP
Wolverine	25	0	17	NP	2.00	2.00	2.00	NP
Prey:								
Hare	0	-	06	NP	-	-	1.00	NP
Grouse	27	17	39	33	2.14	2.00	2.00	2.00
Ptarmigan	19	0	19	10	1.67	2.00	1.50	1.33
Mice/Rodents	61	50	60	50	2.00	2.00	1.75	2.00

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Southeastern Descriptive Areas:
 1A2 = Units 1A and 2
 1B3 = Units 1B and 3
 1CD5 = Units 1C, 1D, and 5
 U4 = Unit 4

Table 4. Reported furbearer harvest totals in Alaska.

SPECIES	REGION	REPORTED HARVEST 1990-91	REPORTED HARVEST 1991-92	REPORTED HARVEST 1992-93
BEAVER	I	228	413	114
	II	2049	2418	1505
	III	2127	1929	955
	V	1173	2391	611
	Total Statewide	5577	7151	3185
LYNX	I	-	9	-
	II	179	277	264
	III	1088	1778	1034
	V	6	10	25
	Total Statewide	1273	2074	1323
RIVER OTTER	I	293	345	304
	II	466	592	446
	III	106	118	79
	V	335	430	353
	Total Statewide	1200	1485	1182
WOLF	I	125	196	181
	II	249	296	218
	III	617	545	496
	V	98	125	148
	Total Statewide	1089	1162	1043
WOLVERINE	I	33	18	10
	II	222	246	149
	III	197	258	139
	V	76	69	83
	Total Statewide	528	591	381
MARTEN*	I	2160	4315	1297
	II	56	87	190
	Total	2216	4402	1487

*Marten sealing is required in Region I and II (GMU's 1-5, 7, 13E, 14-16) only

Table 5. Reported numbers of raw furs purchased, or acquired through consignment or barter, by fur dealers in Alaska, 1992-93.

REGION TAKEN IN	SPECIES											
	Beaver	Coyote	Fox	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Otter	Squirrel	Weasel	Wolf	Wolverine
I	2	1	3	-	105	24	3	10	-	-	-	-
II	16	11	10	7	108	45	11	16	-	4	6	1
III	279	13	73	246	3,022	141	33	30	531	19	141	27
V	253	-	236	6	80	4,211	13	87	-	-	25	1
UNKNOWN	472	2	122	44	96	5,992	48	137	-	2	32	3
TOTAL	1,022	27	444	303	3,411	10,413	108	280	531	25	204	32

Table 6. Reported numbers of raw furs exported from Alaska by trappers/hunters and fur dealers, 1992-93.

EXPORT BY TRAPPERS/HUNTERS:

REGION TAKEN IN	SPECIES											
	Beaver	Coyote	Fox	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Otter	Squirrel	Weasel	Wolf	Wolverine
I	24	1	-	2	761	258	-	157	22	36	14	5
II	178	48	142	55	190	156	143	75	2	17	19	18
III	182	22	100	102	901	46	139	15	64	35	34	19
V	7	-	18	1	299	21	-	7	-	-	11	1
UNKNOWN	48	18	54	31	271	137	13	16	-	10	12	4
TOTAL	439	89	314	191	2,422	618	295	270	88	98	90	47

14

EXPORT BY FUR DEALERS:

	SPECIES											
	Beaver	Coyote	Fox	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Otter	Squirrel	Weasel	Wolf	Wolverine
	3,091	175	2,477	556	4,463	10,508	4,418	719	817	185	529	217

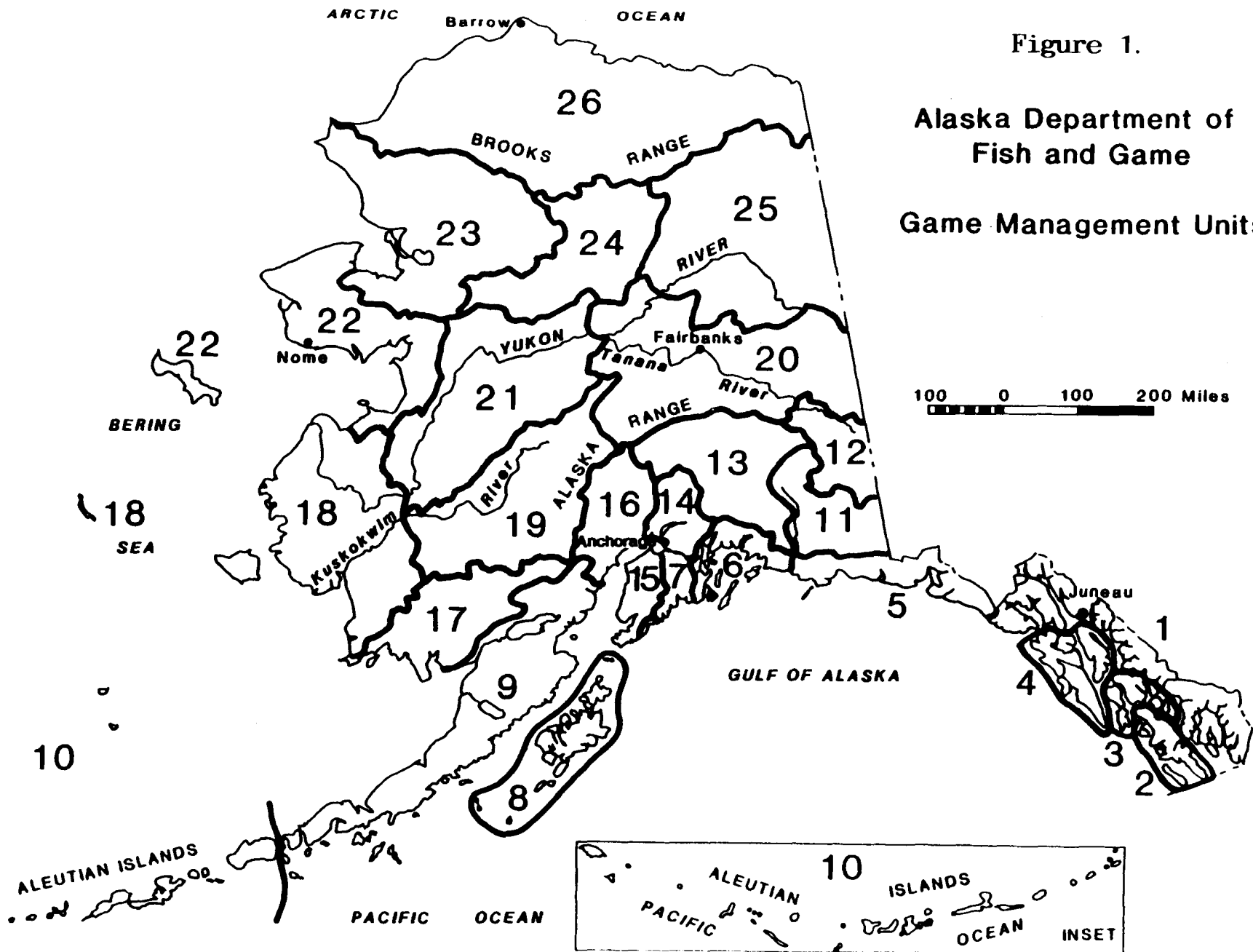


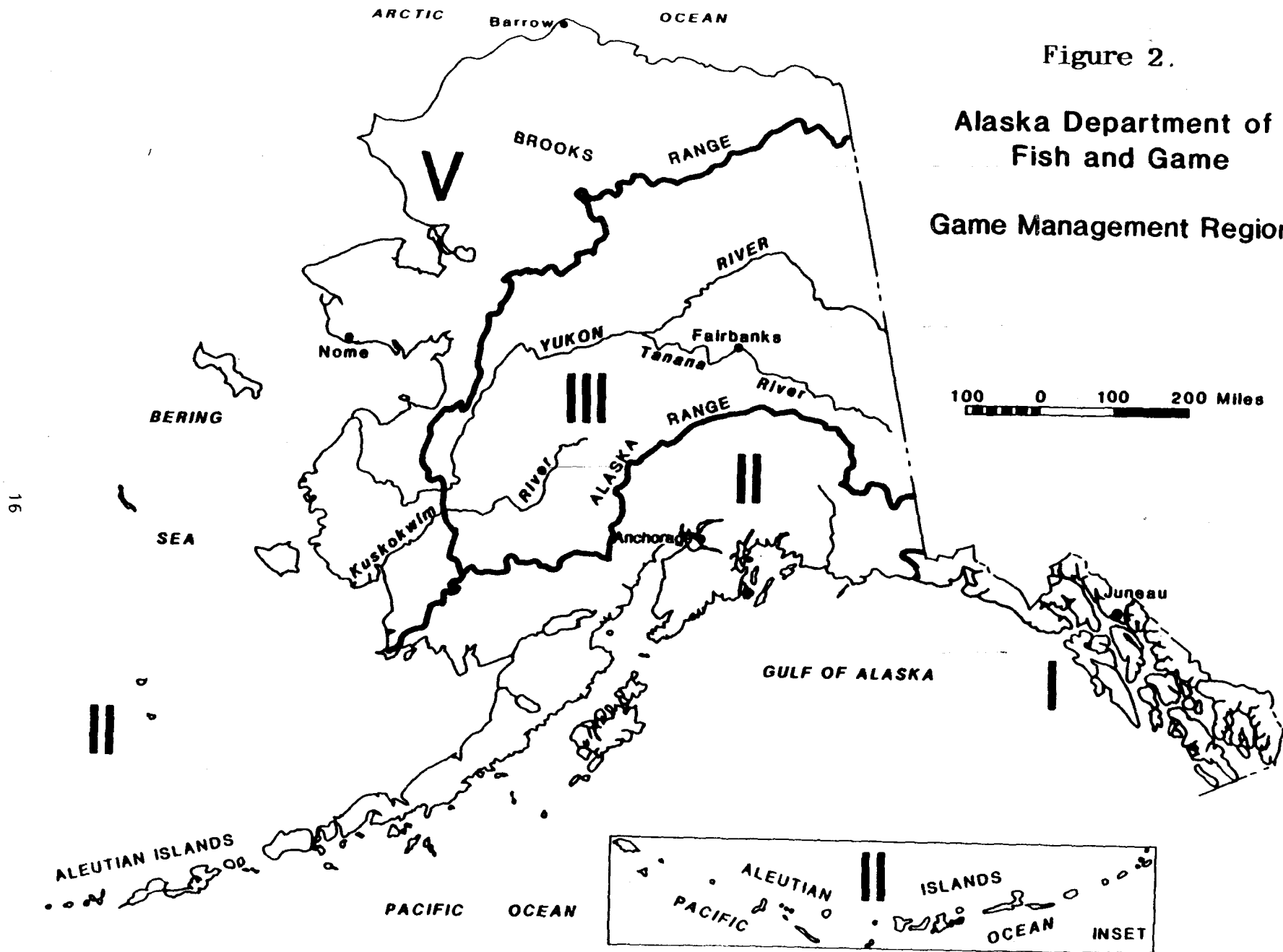
Figure 1.

Alaska Department of
Fish and Game
Game Management Units

Figure 2.

Alaska Department of
Fish and Game

Game Management Regions



**A SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO
LOWER TANANA RIVER BASIN AREA SPECIFIC QUESTIONS
BY
TOBY BOUDREAU, FAIRBANKS ASSISTANT AREA BIOLOGIST**

Question 1 : We would like to know more about coyotes in interior Alaska. Please tell us what you know about them in your area.

In Subunit 20A, trappers indicated seeing more coyotes and sign in specific areas including along the Parks Highway, the railroad tracks, and the Nenana and Tanana Rivers. Coyotes are reportedly becoming more common on the Tanana Flats and have been seen into the foothills of the Alaska Range. All of these reports suggest an expanding coyote population. However, trappers are not catching many coyotes on their traplines. In Subunit 20B, trappers are now starting to see coyote sign and have picked up a few on their lines. Trappers indicate there is more coyote sign in the southern parts of the subunit compared to the northern section, and more in the eastern half than in the western half. In Subunit 20C, trappers are seeing an increasing amount of sign along the Tanana River. Trappers further south in the subunit (toward the mountains) indicate that coyotes are still rare. Trappers in Subunit 20F have noted an increase in the coyote population.

I conclude from your input that coyotes are definitely increasing in numbers in the Interior. Coyotes appear to be using the river system as a movement corridor. In the past, species that are colonizing new areas have exhibited similar patterns. Expansion of their range has been enhanced by human-created carrion along both the roadways and the railroad. Spawned out salmon also seem to be a major component of the diet in late autumn and early winter. We expect the coyote population to increase in the Interior. It will be interesting to see how they impact other furbearer populations. Please notify me if you believe that coyotes are causing other furbearer populations to decline in your area.

Question 2 : Some people have been concerned about the wolverine population in the Interior. Do you share this concern and why?

More than half (14/25) of the trappers who responded to this question reported that they didn't think wolverine population numbers have changed in their areas. They also indicated that wolverines have always existed at low densities on their traplines. The other 11 trappers who responded thought they were seeing less sign and catching fewer in their areas every year. Some trappers attributed the apparent decline to the increased expansion of snowmachine traffic and overall increased human use.

Based on your input, it appears as if wolverines are stable in most remote areas. However, the wolverine harvest is higher in those areas where the trapping pressure is higher. Therefore, trappers are seeing less sign simply because wolverines are being harvested as they move into those high pressure areas. Wolverines exist at low densities and have very large homeranges. Therefore, even a moderate harvest could significantly impact local populations.

Question 3 : We are reviewing the "Tracking Harvest Strategy" that we use to manage lynx. Do you like the system and why?

Eighty percent (20/25) of the trappers thought that it is a good idea to adjust the season length in relationship to the lynx population cycle. Trappers indicated that although it is not a perfect system, it does have many good points. Twenty percent (5/25) of the trappers indicated that they did not like the system. This was mainly because they trapped in areas where the changes in season length were out of sequence with actual population cycles. For example, the season length may have been shortened to 1 month in the year the lynx population peaked in a small area.

My impression from your comments is that the tracking strategy is working on the large scale, but perhaps falls short in small areas. Overall, most trappers approve of the system.

Question 4 : What furbearer problem would you like the Department to work on?

Most trappers suggested that we focus on wolves. Trappers were interested in seeing more wolf control, more research on wolves, more wolf trapper education, more wolf trapping incentives, and development of snares that will hold a wolf but won't hold a moose. The second most popular suggestion was to conduct more basic research on furbearers. No particular species was emphasized. Other suggestions where to create a registered trapline system, increase public perception of trapping, and increase the scope of basic trapper education throughout the state.

I appreciate all your suggestions. We are trying to direct our efforts towards some of these ideas. A portion of the wolf control project in Subunit 20A involves research on the population dynamics of wolves. We also are testing different types of break-away snares as part of the wolf control effort. Results of these projects will be reported to the public. The department is trying to organize and increase the scope of trapper education, including wolf trapping classes. We are trying to increase public perception of trapping through events like "Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Day" held each fall at our office in Fairbanks.

**A SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO
UPPER TANANA RIVER BASIN AREA SPECIFIC QUESTIONS
BY
CRAIG GARDNER, TOK AREA BIOLOGIST**

Question 1 : Do you feel that wolverines should be given greater protection (i.e., shorter season, reduced bag limit) based on their abundance and trend on your trapline?

Only 3 of the 17 respondents to this question supported greater restrictions on wolverine trapping. The majority of the trappers felt that wolverine numbers were stable to increasing along their trapline and changes in trapping regulations were not necessary. Based on observations made incidentally to other surveys and on the number of kits in the harvest, I agree with the trappers that the wolverine populations in Subunit 20E and Unit 12 appear to be stable to slowly increasing. Therefore, I do not anticipate any regulatory changes that will affect wolverine trapping, however, I will be closely watching the effects of the newly adopted March trapping season for wolves on the wolverine harvest.

Question 2 : The lynx population is declining throughout most of Unit 12 and Subunit 20E. I will be shortening the season next year. When would you like the season to occur if it was 2 months long?

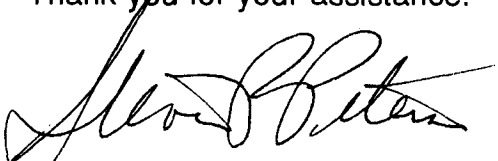
Eleven (55%) of the 20 respondents preferred a December/January lynx trapping season, while 9 (45%) preferred a January/February season. This question was asked due to the present trend of the area's lynx populations and the need to shorten and change the timing of the trapping season to track that trend.

The current lynx management theory, referred to as the lynx population tracking harvest strategy, hypothesizes that if lynx harvests are reduced during the decline and cyclic low, that up to 40% more lynx could be harvested during the complete cycle. Also, if harvests are restricted during the low, local lynx populations would not be jeopardized. Also, during the population cycle decline and low, harvest timing can have an affect on the ability of the lynx population to recover.

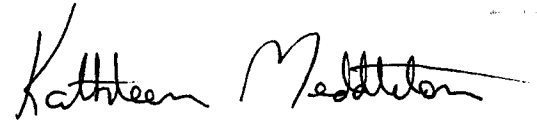
In brief, the harvest strategy suggests that during the decline, harvests should be low and limited to the early part of the season. Harvest during the cyclic low and during early population recovery should be even lower or even eliminated. Seasons should be short and held later during the winter to reduce kitten mortality. Based on the current trend of the area's lynx population, I suspect that season timing will remain around December for the next year or two. After that, the season may be delayed to January or possibly February. Season length will depend on current trapping pressure, pelt prices, and amount of refugia areas.

To all of you who contributed to this report, thank you for the information you provided. If you would like to participate, but are not on our mailing list, please let your area biologist know and we will send you next year's questionnaire. In addition, if you have suggestions for improving the trapper questionnaire or the report, please pass them on to your area biologist.

Thank you for your assistance.



Steve Peterson
Statewide Furbearer Coordinator



Kathleen Meddleton
Assistant Furbearer Coordinator

TRAPPER COMMENTS

INTERIOR REGION

- * Coyotes took over this year. Fox moved way off my line and I had a hard time catching coyotes. No wolf or wolverines to speak of.

Ask all the questions that you think will add good information to your data base. If I (the trapper) will answer you honestly, you (fish and game) will be able to develop and apply good game management practices and keep the green peacers back, bunny lovers are wrong. Good game management is what will and is working for game populations and people as users of renewable resources.

- * The beaver season is ridiculously short in 20D. All winter long I drive past many beaver houses that I can't trap until February 1. Because of this late season, I have no market for the meat since the dog races are pretty much over and the fur buyer is out of town by the time I have enough castor to sell. I am the only real beaver trapper in the Delta Area and would not trap many more beaver than I am now with an earlier season; I would, however, be able to utilize all the beaver instead of wasting it.

- * We need to take care of the wolf population. We need a bounty or Fish and Game to hire the local trappers in these particular areas to trap wolf. Pay on per wolf basis. Work something out.

- * Health problems this year so no serious trapping - 2 beaver this spring. Have seen more lynx, also less marten. More coyotes - few more rabbits too.

- * Spent a lot of time cutting new trail and extending my line. Did not trap a lot of my area because of little sign. The wolves did not hang around long. There seemed to be a lot of young ones in the pack that was here. I think wolves killed a lot of caribou this year. Hard to trap on caribou trails. Somehow, we have got to thin the wolves out. Need a program that will provide to remove a certain percent each year. Trappers have not been able to keep them down. To heck with the tourists! The ones who really want to come to Alaska will come regardless of wolf control or anything else! I pulled everything but wolf traps first part of February.

I appreciate getting the questionnaire and trapping information. Thanks.

- * I trap mostly now for the exercise, the joy of being out in the wilderness and the opportunity to teach a young trapper who has been trapping with me for a couple of years now. I have tried to regulate my marten trapping each year by trapping according to the abundance or scarcity of the population of them, but each year gets worse. Some say they run on cycles like rabbits, some say they migrate. I

don't know. Same with lynx.

How about a section in the Questionnaire to keep trappers informed of facts or even theory concerning some of these things. Let us know what you are discovering or what you are thinking about re: these problems. It costs me more each year to keep my snow machine going than I make trapping but it's really worth it.

Too many lynx. At beginning of season, lots of grouse and hares, at end hardly any left.

- * Unless one traps above the treeline in Area 20D, it is difficult to catch wolverine with a end of February closure. Wolverine rarely wander below the treeline (except in small river drainages) until 10 February. From 10 February to 31 March, they spend a lot of time at lower elevations.

There are plenty of wolves in 20D, and based on my late season RECCE's, I will be trapping the next year in a different 20D location were I have about 20 years experience catching wolves.

- * My son who is 14 years old is an avid trapper. He actually catches more furbearers than I. I would appreciate it if you could mail him a "Trapper Questionnaire" as he would enjoy providing input for your summary. Thank you.
Editor's Note: Please notify your local area biologist if your son does not receive the 1993-94 questionnaire.

The influx of lynx, I noticed, were all large adults - no kittens.

- * Thank you for the questionnaire/report. Keep it up. Think of more questions to add to your data base that pertain to the wildlife.
- * We need to have some kind of wolf control.
- * Conditions not seen in past years. Early sleet storm left about 8 in. of semi-ice on tundra. Snow was covered with mice tracks early in season. Almost no marten, fox, or mink tracks at end of season. Lynx in very poor condition. Only one alive in traps. In past years, almost all alive in traps.

More owls. Hares are back to low numbers. Almost no grouse. No moose calf tracks.

- * Please try to understand the trappers, I mean the people that really trap and love it, not would-be trapper and change some of the regs. so that the trapper can do his job as far as wolves go. The trapper can get the wolves with the right help

from ADF&G but only if F&G understands what help the trapper needs. The wrong help will only make matters worse. We need reg trap lines and trapping must be looked at as a business or profession and the state must understand the value of it. ADF&G has lost all trust from the public and the trapper and final and most important must change the way it does business and regain the trust of the public or all is lost.

* Listen more to trappers. Do not get involved in departmental wolf killing and trapping.

* Did very little trapping. Took my children out more to trap with them. Very enjoyable even though catch was slight. Thanks for your great efforts.

I like the questionnaire the way it is. I would even be willing to pay postage as I feel this is an important way to help the biologists understand more about each area.

* Moving the furbearer program and positions to Juneau makes absolutely no sense. It belongs in Fairbanks for the sake of the public you claim to serve. It is like having your halibut biologist stationed in Ft. Yukon. Thanks for asking.

* In general, my season was pretty disappointing. I spent quite a bit of time improving trails and put out more sets than ever before, but the marten just weren't very interested in my bait. Then the prices went south in December. I eventually decided to hold all fur for personal use.

* Keep city urban hunters and trappers out of the bush resident's back yard. We are sick of them. Wolf control is needed, to heck with what the tree huggers have to say.

* Would like to see registered traplines. Also would like to see trappers getting first chance at trapping over abundance of furbearers.

* Get rid of bureaucracy in Fish and Game Departments. Let the biologists who can do some good do the managing and send the chiefs on vacations that are permanent.

* Fur price for all animals is way down. So I choose not to trap at all. Will see what next year's prices will be. Fur animals on my line seem to be as good or better in numbers than I have seen in the past. I am thinking that it sure seems to help the area to leave it alone for a year.

* Sure glad to have taken this year off. My neighbor out on the river had real bad luck and gave up early.

- * With fur prices so low, it is not economical to trap at the present time. I cannot justify to myself taking furbearers for such low prices, better let them breed up and hope for better market.
- * Get the public on our side - accepting a need to harvest - educate them to understand how proper trapping will not hurt the environment and sometimes helps. Spend some of our money on adds in outdoor magazines - fund videos - quote statistics - provide address, phone number for more information - perhaps get trappers willing to answer mail and deal with such issues to tell our side to open minded people. Visit classrooms in school and give lectures. Get the public to trust our biologists and decisions. Try to stop blackmail and terrorism on the wolf issue.

Regarding the questionnaire and report, you do a good job already and it is appreciated and I would like to help.

Perhaps you could advise us of future potential policy change such as Lynx on the way down - or don't be surprised if seasons get shortened or last years deep snow appears to have hurt game populations - it might be a good idea for trappers in Units to rest their lines if possible. Or lets hit the wolves hard next year trapping, that sort of thing. Perhaps call it an advice section that would help you and game and trappers too. Have more than one opinion if controversial from more than one source.

- * Shorten marten season.
- * Long traplines set by snow-go, dog sled, and by airplane are impossible to check often. Animals caught by leg hold traps on such lines may spend weeks in those unchecked traps before being dispatched. That is not right.
- * Should be able to sell bear hides for profit with fur prices so low. Very hard to make a living, snaring should be legal for fall bears with a limit for species are so low, only trapped fox in November then pulled all fox sets and messed with other animals.
- * Same day airborne (not land and shoot) should be made legal for trappers. Best solution is to put wolves and wolverines in same 100 years from aircraft restriction as fox and lynx.
- * There are a lot of wolves in this area and I think they are putting too much pressure on big game, especially with the hard winters. We found a caribou they killed and abandoned without eating it.

Also, there seems to be a lot of bears around which makes the problem worse.

We had to shoot 2 bears that got over-aggressive last year. 2 black and 2 grizzly, both were reported to ADF&G. In the previous 30 years, we only shot 2 other problem bears (black). We caught more fat animals than usual this year. Marten, lynx, fox. Maybe the heavy snow makes it better for mice. But beaver had a hard year due to early freeze.

- * I have contributed to these surveys for 15 years and supported ADF&G strongly, until now. My interest as a trapper for staying on your mailing list now is to police the garbage you are writing about us. The wolf plan didn't help either.

Print the trappers's comments, not your personal critique of them. We don't need a mother. You might more than "suspect" what most trappers think unnecessary or impractical if you would shut up and listen, or give it a chance.

- * I think the state should do more to combat the anti fur sentiment. I know this is not a ADF&G problem, but I feel it is an important issue. If the state would promote fur harvest like it does tourism (or even a small percentage) maybe wolf summits wouldn't be necessary.
- * Fur prices so low wasn't worth a lot of effort. Plus let line rest until maybe prices return.
- * It would be nice to know that our fur species are being managed for the benefit of user groups and not for the "politically correct" crowd who seem to try and mismanage everything these days.
- * This questionnaire is a good idea but the end results can be deceiving I think. For cycles as you well know. Prey species were way down on my line so I went real easy on everything except wolves. I think the increase in those were caused by the presence of caribou. We didn't have a lot of wolves but more than usual. It was fun locking horns with such a wily critter. I feel that I manage my line as I am sure most trappers do. I keep extensive records and over the years it is interesting how things vary. Looking forward to a good life in the bush this winter. After all, that is what bush trapping is all about. It is a way of living, not a way to make one. To all trappers... watch your topknot and keep your powder dry - Adios!
- * Prices are poor so I don't trap this year. Just for marten. Kids, hats and me.
- * I did not trap much this year 92-93 as too much snow and lots of overflow for a person my age, but, there is always fall of 93 winter of 94. I will be out there again, get that fever end of October even after 55 years - out in the wilds - fur will come back next two years, as lakes filled up, brings muskrats, fish and lakes brings the mink, beaver move in, all 3 animals have fresh water and they will increase, they did before and they will again.

You need to stop airplane trappers land here and there, same way with hunting moose - and kill your 300 wolves or send about 20 professional trappers after them, those women that worry about wolves, that kill anything in their way, steal lynx from your traps, etc. should hear a young moose scream and holler as its mother is being slowly killed by wolves as I heard once by my trapping cabin, would change their minds pretty quick about this wolf business.

- * Having spent almost 40 years in the Tanner Flats, and seen moose population go up and down. I think it is time for some serious wolf control measures.
- * Too bad Hickel caved into the ecko freaks killing the ADF&G wolf hunt. Now we have idiots managing wildlife.
- * Fur prices were too low and the snow was deep. Lots of overflow on the lakes and some on the river.
- * There was hardly any sign of fur animals at the beginning of the season. Toward spring, things improved but not enough to get me moving. One rabbit track around my cabin where I used them for meat in other years.
- * I did not trap this year, prices low. We saw a lot of wolf sign as the porcupine herd (caribou) was in the area. Some people saw a lot of caribou kills, especially calves. I talked with one fellow who said a pack of about 50 wolves had cleaned out most of the sheep on some of the mountains about 200 miles from Ambler. Wolf decimation of young caribou and also sheep might have to be looked into, with fewer and fewer trappers going a long distance for wolves, as in the 40s and 70s.
- * Aerial wolf hunting is a must statewide. Too many wolves and too many people trying to stop aerial wolf hunting. Is it possible to aerial greenie hunt? If so, let the public know. But ADF&G is doing a good job through on wildlife.
- * Close grouse season in Unite 20D.
- * We would all benefit from an improved ethics program, aimed especially towards trappers in more settled areas. A greater amount of available information on population management and how to judge future population trends on each trappers line would improve long term yields. This information is available but requires a lot of digging to get it. Pamphlets or bulk printed matter put up by ADF&G could help bring more responsible and professional furbearer utilization, perhaps improving outside perceptions of Alaska Trappers as well.
- * I believe the lack of marten was due to last year's late spring and early winter. (I caught more older marten than usual) Also very abundant mice make it

unnecessary for marten to travel to make a living. I caught the local population but nothing moved in. I anticipate an excellent season in 93/94.

* Ignore all the hysteria to reinstate aerial wolf killing. Most of those shouting the loudest seem to be ignorant of the predator-prey relationship.

* It is a dirty shame how BLM just let the country burn sometimes. I have been crew boss for BLM for almost 40 years and I have seen a lot of animals burn up, lynx and marten climb trees when the fire is coming, I have seen a lot of dead marten and lynx under a burnt out tree. I have seen caribou get excited and run right into the flaming fire. Twice I have seen moose burn up. If you ever heard a bear or moose burn up in a wall of flame, you will never forget that scream. If a forest fire burns 10 square miles, it takes everything in that area.

During the summer, all these animals are having or have young once, they're not going to run away from their young ones, and just think how many eggs burn up and young birds. I have been cutting trapline trails all my life and most of it went up in flame. With the fur prices so low, I don't think I will cut it out again. I guess I will just sit home like the rest of the guys and try to get g.a. If you have any questions you would like to ask me, just feel free to ask.

* We need a bounty on wolves. They need to be cut back in numbers and fur prices just don't warrant a lot of effort. We need more incentive or the moose and caribou will suffer.

* Can't believe anyone setting less than 20 traps calling himself a trapper. Overall, furs remain the same - wolves are on the increase upper Porcupine - probably due to migrating caribou passing through.

* This year, I went up to my cabin, and I saw a lot of fur sign mostly lynx. But I didn't trap this year because fur prices are down and it wouldn't be worth it to break trail and trap, skin, dry the fur I caught, plus send it out to the fur buyers.

* Just keep the trapping seasons alive and well. That is the only way to keep our subsistence alive. The only way to keep our life style going up here in farthest north. Don't let the people of the state stop the trapping. Only I mean only Alaska will be the first to be trappers and hunters. I strongly want to fight the subsistence way and live. Thank you for your support and cooperation.

* There seem to be much less mice this year. I believe the flood we had, had a lot to do with it.

* Furbearers are doing fine in this area and in many instances are taking advantage of the deep snow/early winter casualties of migratory birds, and winter killed big

game (moose and caribou). Wolves adjusted range into caribou wintering to the west so we had fewer in this area. Hare population seems to have dropped slightly since last winter. Lynx roaming around more, but were in good condition.

- I just hope that ADF&G would quit tagging wolves and quit following them like they owned them. Also, no more hunting wolves and wolverine from the air or by airplane in Units 24 and 21.
- I think the caribou took some of the wolf pressure off Bonanza Creek moose. Wolf traffic was down around my main cabin area compared to past years. However, I would have to say wolf numbers are the same or higher than last year overall. I would like to see the state buy wolf carcasses or skulls so as to create more incentive for wolf trappers. Also, low interest loans to buy wolf snares and traps; mostly, the traps are the biggest financial hurdle for any serious wolf trapper.
- The NWAB out of Kotzebue is attempting to take over fish and game matters under the guise it is a health and welfare issue - this should not be allowed - the state should decide seasons - limits - areas of use not the NWAB.
- Please get with the Commissioner and try to tell him that we have the furs here in Alaska that should be harvested and that there shouldn't be any importation of furs from any foreign country just because they have a bad economy. We the rural people have a tough time too. We should take care of our own.

You should have a history/trend of the most demand for type of fur for the past three years so we could think of what might come.

- If you want cooperation and information from the people in your area have a word with the feds. I will bet the bust of the wolf hunters in Huslia hasn't made your job any easier. People are not going to cooperate with you if they feel the government is just out to bust them.
- I didn't trap a whole lot last year because fur prices were so low. I also feel there is something wrong with the lynx population. They seem to be getting fewer and fewer in numbers, and the rabbits won't come back. Seems like we have a lot of owls, killing the rabbits. I have a hard time trapping when fox are bringing \$5 - 10\$.
- It is absurd to shut the caribou season and not kill off wolves and bear for a few years. We depend (my family) upon hunting, trapping and fishing and the tourist money is out spent locally. Complete lack of trust in federal and state government for selling out to outside urban dwellers.
Need 1 - bounty on wolf/grizzly/brown bear; 2 - Aerial wolf hunt;
3 - and /or kill pups in den this spring

- * Please go to a system whereby we can register our traplines. I only trap as a recreation -but there are so many people moving in that it is almost a fight to keep people off of my line. There never has been any real trouble but there are more and more people that don't possess good trapping ethics.
- * Lengthening the time we can use traps for wolves should help balance the wolf ungulate populations. I think using traps in March would be effective.
- * Please note, my trapping effort was severely reduced this season due to a back injury. Next year is a big year.
- * Keep up the good work on your trapper questionnaire. Also if the FWT prices don't come up, I for one will quit trapping. Let more forest fires burn where there is no threat to life or property. Don't be afraid to shorten seasons if there is a need.
- * Reinstate land and shoot same day airborne for wolves. Trappers license required. Gives more reason to go flying.

Questionnaire looks good just like this. Very nice. It is short and doesn't take much time to answer. Asks all the right questions. Good job.

- * I don't trap for money, I trap for fun. Like a lot of people I know, I believe that there should be some type of regulation to allow a trapper access to the hundreds of square miles of public land that is presently controlled by a handful of people. I believe that by just ignoring the problem your office is doing a disservice to trapping and to the residents of this community.
- * Increase the budget for Upper Tanana Valley (Tok) Office - provide a law enforcement officer for Tok/.40 mile.

Maybe include some average price information on questionnaire/report. Also information on new trapping methods for future (leghold trap). Brief market report for next year's price outlook.

Editor's Note: 1) The average Alaskan raw fur prices paid by two country buyers in Fairbanks are listed in the text of this year's report. 2) Please see the section on the European Economic Community's Ban in the enclosed 1993-94 Trapper Questionnaire. 3) When we send the questionnaire and report to trappers in April, we do not know what the fur market is going to be like the following season. A lot depends on the sale of fur products during the upcoming Christmas/New Year holiday season, changes in the general economy, and the supply of ranched furs at that time.

- * I hope to shoot some muskrats. I would also like to see the feasibility of having a longer spring beaver season where we could shoot beaver. In the past, I have

shot many different species but not lots of each species. It is an important method of take.

I did not change my trapping because of price but I decreased everything because of a lot less marten than normal. Actually, most of my time was spent trying to catch beaver while I was out cutting wood along the creek. It was not a business venture (like it normally is).

- * Layoff on the aerial wolf hunting. Let the trappers take care of any excess. Do more to educate on wolf trapping, it would be nice if the state could somehow come up with wolf traps to loan. Expensive and who wants to invest in something we may not be able to use after the EEC Ban in '95. Fish and Game could come out with a video on wolf sharing exclusively. I don't think you will have to change seasons or bag limits much. The price of fur is going to drive a lot of so called trappers out of the business.

I like reading the comments and I liked the way Fish and Game responded to some of them this time. We need to hear more about this EEC ban in '95 and how the state is going to handle/interpret it.

Editor's Note: Please see the section on the European Economic Community's Ban in the 1993-94 Trapper Questionnaire.

- * I would like to see a shooting season for beaver, maybe 2 or 3 each spring. Wolves still need some form of control in 20E for better big game pops. Maybe a higher carcass purchase price.
- * I don't want to see registered trap lines. I don't think it is right on public land. Too many of the people who want to register lines have been "letting them lay" for years. All of us who trap have to be honest about what country we actually use. We don't own it just because we went through it once. Also I think there should be a regulation requiring any wolf snare to be placed well off any public use road or trail.
- * Very few rabbits and no lynx up on the river. Wolf good.
- * I think that ADF&G needs to set up some sort of guideline to help a trapper protect their line from newcomers. New people think they can just go cutting across somebody's area. If you know where everybody is, it might help learn about furbearers across the valley, high and low cycles. ADF&G needs to release some studies and information they are doing. Tell us about your study results.
Editor's Note: Please contact your local Area Biologist and ask him/her if there is a progress or research report available on the particular study you are interested in.

- * In reference to my trapping in S.E. Alaska, I wish there was some way to convince the forest service that trappers could provide income for regulated rates in their cabins, otherwise being idle during the winter. I will probably write to a representative.
- * Quite a few of lynx in the country. Price is too low. Overrun with lynx especially Yukon River and Porcupine areas. I could of caught several hundred if I went after them. They're not worth much and expenses is too much. Gasoline and all is expensive. Nobody buys lynx. Other animals very scare; no rabbits in country. Quite a few muskrats, no one catches them. Can't sell rats. Moose and bears are plenty. Lots of ducks and geese; more than I have seen in 25 - 30 years. I did not really go after fur this season, too much cold weather and deep snow. Lots of wolf around.

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

- * I do believe that they should put fences around the cities and keep them folks in - they choose to live there - keep them out of the woods.
- As an ex-military road trapper, I avoid trappers trail heads, and only take a few animals in any one area. I never steal another trapper's traps or animals. I am checked by Fish and Game as much as anyone and I turn in game violators. I enjoy trapping and the outdoors as much as anyone else. I would hope that other resident trappers would accept and tolerate us weekend road trappers.
- * I am getting many snow machines coming through my place having an affect on marten trapping.
- * The only comment I have is that the line that we run is not a good fur area. Most of the marten and lynx just pass through to wherever they winter. We see more tracks before and after the season. This year we had a lot of mice, and the marten were not interested in going into the sets, they would look at them but that was it. One marten we did get, and after skinning it, I looked in his belly and he had from 4 - 6 mice in him. This year was a bad year because we did not work at it. The 93-94 season is going to be different if we are going to try to double the line size.
- I didn't trap hard at all. I worked most of the season. I just ran a little line just to go out. Hope the fur prices go up.
- * Sorry about the last reply, thought I already sent this in. See you this fall. P.S. Lots of bears this summer.

You are doing a good job in spite of all the activist and user groups and politics.

- * The volcanic ash made it very hard to get around so I can't give a very good report. I think this year will show. My run is around 21 miles.
- * Although not trapped in these areas because they are closed, I saw the most lynx sign that I can ever remember. Prey species were low in these areas except for an increase in red and ground squirrels. Also a ground squirrel population was at their highest level in the year during the fall of 92 in Unit 13.
- * Quit letting the fanatical animal worshipper intimidate you in game management. The type of tourist that would change their plans about coming to Alaska because of wolf management is not wanted or needed here anyway.

Perhaps you could give a report on what you are doing to combat outside interests attempts at controlling our game management.

- * My trapping this last year was shortened by an auto accident which I had in January. Yes, I filled this questionnaire out and sent it in once already.
- * Lengthen marten season in 13E another month.
- * Marten population increased, should be a longer season in II. High production trapping by planes should be curbed or reduced somehow.
- * I live 1/4 mile from a Red Salmon slough. In 89-90-91 there were maybe 1,000 salmon spawning each year. In 1992, there was about two dozen spawning. I talked to other people in the area. The fish were way down. This lack of fish greatly affects the number of predators in the area.
- * Last year we saw lynx sign for the first time down the river drainage, and later caught one. This year we saw lynx sign real regularly again in the same general area. I saw a lynx for the first time ever in Unit 6, this is the first time I have ever heard of one being down in this area, I've never seen lynx tracks in Unit 6. I've trapped down the drainage and surrounding area for years. I saw the least amount of marten sign ever, they were flat scarce in our area. Coyotes seem to be more and more abundant the last few years. Maybe you should legalize bait and shooting with trapping license or even spotlighting coyotes with trapping license, and only during trapping season. Hand out trapping "code of ethics" when issuing licenses.

Send questionnaire a little sooner or meet later than April 15 to allow more time to have this filled out and send back to you.

- * The bear and wolves take a heavy toll on moose and caribou in the spring. I fly regular for pleasure, look over the area. All seasons, spring, summer, fall and

winter, it is sad to see the loss of life (moose and caribou). Last hunting season I saw less than half the number of caribou than normal on Monhan Flat.

The late season on caribou on the Denali was a slaughter. I think too many were taken. I spot trap from my plane. I saw 3 different packs of wolf. Let us land and shoot and keep the wolves in check.

- * How can we get results? Also, I would like to see results of an ADF&G survey where you identify and count tracks in a few scattered areas. Can you afford this? May identify (to you only) some very successful trappers and tally their opinions separately.
- * It was nice seeing so much lynx sign, although I understand that it was because of a rabbit crash in Canada. Because of a lemon snow machine I bought, I didn't get to trap my main line. So I just did a little 8 mile sky line behind the homestead here. It was nice to just take it easy and do a little hobby trapping for a change. It was interesting to see the K9s reaction to my ski trail, most wouldn't walk on it or cross it. When they did cross they would jump it. I do enjoy reading this report and participating in it. Thank you for your efforts in helping to maintain this natural resource.
- * The rabbits definitely crashed on the line last year but there were still plenty for feed. All of the lynx that I caught were very fat. I don't think that they are going to crash plus with the low prices not many trappers are going out of their way to catch them. I would like to see the season run from Dec. 1 - Feb. 28. I do a lot of my trapping along the rivers and the ice generally isn't good until at least the middle of December. I was unable to make it until after January 1. In the areas where there were high concentrations of lynx I saw very little marten sign but in other areas there were good numbers of marten. I would also like to see the season on them run through February. Wolverines numbers were very low on my line. The only reason I set any traps for them was because I had one raiding my marten sets. I wouldn't mind seeing you drop the limit. That way if I did have a problem with one, I could still legally catch it and hopefully not hurt the population. I hope this has been helpful to you.
- * The marten seemed to migrate elsewhere early in the season and resulted in low catch. Fox populations up. First time in 9 years, I can say there were some resident lynx. However, rabbits have been scarce and still are. Caribou were absent again this year for most of season. Increased use of trails by dog mushers, weekenders, etc. may be affecting wolf trapping efforts.
- * Beaver season should open early or close later. Throughout the winter, the ice becomes too thick to really trap for beaver.

Let us know the previous year's report of how many animals of each species were taken.

Editor's Note: Harvests estimates for species that are required to be sealed are included in this year's report.

- * Caught the park rangers from Chitna pulling some of traps. Had a lot of trouble with snow machines running over my trail sets. Its getting worse every year.
- * There were a lot more lynx on my line this year. They did not follow normal lynx patterns of previous years. They were not hungry and all that I caught had 1-1/2" to 3" of fat on their bellies. There were the fattest cats I have ever trapped. It mostly appeared that the lynx were just passing through. Wolf sign way down. Moose staying in trees more than creek bottoms.
- * Please don't put a limit on cats like you did wolverines cause I will probably be eliminated from trapping cats on BLM land because of subsistence. There is a lot of B.S. going on out there. Don't let politics interfere with your decision making process.
- * I feel you guys need to do something with wolves there are way too many. How about a \$100 bounty on their heads, it might give people more incentive to trap them.
- * Open wolf season earlier to allow for longer season.
- * When trapping wolves, its hard to keep wolverine, fox, coyote out of traps - so all season should end together so as not to make us trappers - outlawed for catching non target animals.

We have a lot of wolves in this area. They can be fun and profitable to trap with today's snowmachines and "honest to God" wolf traps - trappers can be very effective in controlling wolf populations. The state of Alaska can be a big help in controlling wolf populations by subsidizing wolf traps to trappers. By putting workable numbers of wolf traps in the right hands, wolf numbers can be controlled effectively.

- * I like the idea of tagging Marten. I think a limit is appropriate. Maybe 20 a year. I like the limit on wolverine too.
- * There seems to be a lot of concern in the department about reducing the wolverine harvest - during the 80's as lynx prices fell and marten prices came up most trappers switched from lynx to marten trapping. Therefore, the incidental catch of wolverine fell off. Few trappers have a wolverine line - in fact few wolverine are caught in sets specifically set for wolverine - most are taken in lynx, fox, general

sets.

- Poor fur prices are limiting current effort. Snowmobile harassment of fox and wolf is a major factor in Unit 13B - needs an attempt at contract.
- Noticed quite a few more lynx tracks.
- The 92-93 trapping season stretch a little slow due to the extremely heavy snows on my line. Setting me back a good two weeks. Due to the lack of marten sign, I made very few sets for them, most were caught incidently in lynx cubbies. I caught more lynx and saw more sign than I have ever seen in my area before even after trapping the area real hard the entire season. I had as much sign at the end of the season as I had in the beginning. I also was quite encouraged by the amount of wolverine sign I saw. Although I did shoot one, I didn't make any sets for them hoping it will speed up for those to come back. I hope they can survive the spring aerial hunting of wolves. I have also seen a dramatic increase in wolves in the last year, but still do not support aerial hunting to the extent that the ADF&G has proposed. I feel the Department could give the trapper the same advantage as the aerial hunter, giving us the month of April to trap wolves when their range is not as great. More legalized due to mating season. Use the same regulations that apply to other units that open earlier and close later for wolves (i.e. share size limits, jaw size minimum. I would like to take this opportunity to commend you on a job well done in general. The furbearer populations in many areas are pretty stable or are increasing largely in part to your management of these resources (i.e. lengthening and shortening seasons when appropriate). The only furbearer that I think there is a major problem with is the marten in Units 16A,13E and portions of 13A. I have noticed steady decline in the numbers caught and the amount of sign I am seeing in areas that are fantastic marten habitat. Again, I thank you and look forward to seeing the results next winter.
- There seems to be a lot of fox in Unit 13. The wolves are plentiful in Unit 13. They are eating a lot of young caribou. I would like the fall bear season open the same time as moose season in Unit 13.

I have been in the state for over 40 years. The hunting is coming to an end. I hope you can do something about it.

- * We had a nice balance of moose and wolves in the late 60's and early 70's till they stopped private people from shooting a few wolves from the air. I never did that but that worked.
- Reconsider marten season in 16-B. At least give the trapper a season
 1. When fur is good and prime
 2. Snow conditions allows travel
 3. Fish and Game can gather more information

- * Need to eliminate short marten season - population does not justify. Need more enforcement on aerial hunters in February, March, and April that take wolf, wolverine and bear. Sealing requirements (length after season) a pain for anyone living in remote areas, please do something to make it easier to comply.
- * You people have cut the season on marten back so much that it is not worth all the work a person has to go through. Please put the season back as it was, there are plenty of marten. Most of these so called trappers that answer this questionnaire are just weekend trappers.
- * The marten season in 16B was shortened in all of the 16B because there are too many trappers in the ten miles surrounding Skwentna. Those of us in the outlying areas with little pressure are paying for pressure in a minor and poor marten area. 16B is a big unit to close because of this.
- * The marten population has increased the past 2 winters and prices have dropped to a discouraging level. Has been less trapping in my area. Season should be returned to October 20 and extend to December 20. Travel conditions at that time of year discourage penetration by snowmachine trappers not living in the area.

Beaver are extremely abundant and with the low prices and hard work involved not many trappers trap beaver. Limit should be returned to 40. First time in 44 years I have not trapped beaver but it was mostly because I had to use the time to get logs in for a new house and the low prices. Local buyers did not seem to want marten or beaver.

The questionnaire and annual report are excellent. Don't know that you could any better.

- * Thanks for wolf population increase on Knik River. Also for listening to trappers ideas about fur management in areas 14A & 14C.
- * Thanks for 2nd increase in trapping license price in last 2 years. I am already depressed please don't dump any more problems on us.
- * How can trappers receive information on established predator Pits? 1. access. 2. Time frame for trapping opportunities.
- * I enjoy the little trapping I do in winter. It is a day off thing for me, I just like getting out. It is a challenge, competing with the weather.
- * Thanks for your efforts to manage and sustain wildlife populations. Is there any way that the harvest data gathered by biologists and others and the recommendations made by these people be utilized when the longevity of our

wildlife is at stake, and not just be ignored and wind up having politicians overriding sound recommendations? To do nothing more than what they feel is politically correct and to hell with right and wrong.

- * I am very pleased with the proposed wolf management plan. I say don't back down from the threat of boycott. Once they get an inch, they will take a mile. I am a strong supported of proper game management. I also agree with the moose hunting except the 10 day extension should be later in season.
 - * I think ADF&G is doing a good job of managing furbearers in the state. In the 36 years I have been in the state, furbearer populations have not experienced a decline. There are ups and downs throughout the years, but overall, the populations appear as great as I can remember in the 60's and 70's. Keep up the good work.
 - * I gave up trapping - the martens and wolverines have enough problems without me harassing them.
 - * My trapping efforts the past season were not very intense due mainly to the low fur prices. The area is much more potentially productive than my low harvest numbers would indicate. I also trapped with a partner so our combined take was basically double what I submitted in this questionnaire.
- I don't believe the shortened marten season is necessary in 14A. I saw as much sign as I did in the mid-1970's. We even trapped one right next to a well traveled road where I hadn't seen sign in years. Wolverine Unit 14 may be in trouble.
- * I have wanted to trap for many years and finally had the opportunity this year. Protection of our right to trap is imperative. It is hard work trapping - but it is enjoyable and fulfilling.
 - * Although I didn't trap this past season, I did do some fur hunting for coyotes and birds on snow machine. I saw lots of wolf sign, lynx are moving in, and I had several sightings of wolverines. I am planning on gearing up to take advantage of high wolf numbers that are preying on local sheep and moose as well as further east and north. It is my wish to see the state wolf control program of a bounty on them in given areas, as it will provide money to the people in areas of little opportunities and save the state money that can be used somewhere else, like schools and business development.
 - * Snowshoe hares are still common along the Susitna River and islands. They are spotty - elsewhere where there is good habitat they are plentiful. There were far more lynx tracks this year than any winter since 1984. Most of them showed up after the lynx season had closed. Therefore, I didn't catch any. I usually catch

coyotes in my fox sets, but not this winter.

- * To elaborate on the "short" winter season. In Unit 14B, where we trapped the previous year and did well - there was no snow for our machines until after the 1st week of December, making trapping effort for one week not worth it. Unit 16A, where I have a cabin, was not available to me before December 18th. Insult to injury was added when I noted more marten sign than I have seen since 1984. Whomever sold the department this bill of goods on a short marten season must have been influenced by a poor season in the small pocket he or they trap. To over respond and close a huge area such as all of units 24, 26 and 13E is your responsibility as a department. You should be ashamed of yourselves for management plans based on one or two persons grinding their own axes. Beaver remain abundant. Lots of young animals.
- * Push board to legalize sale of wolf, wolverine skulls of all wolf and wolverine not just those that are trapped. There is no reason to close seasons on coyote and wolf in Unit 7 on February 28. Extend through March. Extend beaver season in Unit 7 to April 30.
- * Quit trapping after marten season due to inability to sell furs. Poor market. Surprising number of marten this year.
- * I didn't trap much due to other events such as traveling to Fairbanks for the wolf summit and wolf trapping school etc. My son moved to Fairbanks and established a trapline where I spent a couple of weeks with him trapping. I did manage to trap 11 mink at the start of the season and a few coyotes, fox, muskrat, weasel, and beaver. Weather conditions were great. Fur was plentiful, but due to these other events and low fur prices I didn't make a major effort to trap. Sold my furs at the international fur auction and received fair prices. One weasel sold for \$7.50, had two last year selling for \$10.50 ea. Incidental muskrats caught in mink sets sold for 35 cents each. Fur prices were low, but I still enjoyed trapping and seeing the country etc.
- * Of the 8 coyotes I trapped, 5 had the mange and were not worth skinning. Problem sure seems to be getting worse every year here.
- * I like the tagging of marten and the limit on wolverine. Get rid of the airplane hunters and wolverine can multiply.
- * It looks like I will run a small trapline next winter for my kids to see and learn so I will go one more year with this.
- * Unless the fur market improves, the only trapping I will be doing in the future will be for our own use.

- * The questionnaire should be mandatory so as to provide as much information as possible to justify the need for biologists to study game management trends.
- * The animal fur here in this area does not really turn out good most of the time. Living close to salt water. (near ocean)
- * The questionnaire is pretty good now.
- * You are doing a very good job. I have all the confidence in Fish and Game. Keep strong so you are not broken up politically. We would not have hunting, fishing or trapping without you. Conservative minded people are by the best outdoorsmen and hunters, fishers and trappers.
- * I think the questionnaire is a good way to keep track of furbearers.
- * Keep the game units in each section of the report, good to hear the trappers comment, concern, etc. to see either if there is an increase or decrease of furbearers in the state. Keep up the good work on questionnaire. Good to read.
- * I did not trap this year cause the prices were too low and we had a mild winter.

SOUTHEAST REGION

- * I quit trapping after two weeks as soon as my buyer told me mink would average 6 - 8 dollars after January 1. Of all the things the state wastes money on, perhaps they should put some money into a fur promotion program Nationwide. But that is silly, as this state can't even carry out a wolf control program for fear of what the tour groups will think and say. Perhaps we should return all our fish and game regulated management policies to Carnival Cruise Line's.
 - * I don't agree with closing off the trails and beaches in Juneau to trapping. One trail I hiked to get to my line, only had one hiker all winter. Why close down my sport?
 - * I fully support the direction and efforts you have been making for the benefit of trappers and trapping. Age and health preclude continuing this endeavor. Thanks for all your past assistance.
 - * After the last two years in late spring trying for wolves - April 30th, I believe that the season should close two weeks earlier to prevent any contact with bears; also the wolf pelt is liable to be of little value.
- You might consider keeping lynx February 15 open as late as the wolverine, April 30th. Last year saw a few lynx in January's surrounding area.

- * Just to let you know I appreciate your efforts.
- * I'm pretty much a recreational trapper. I collect animals for taxidermy only.
- * The questionnaire and report gives me lots of info. I think it is fine.
- * Never tagged. Like wolves, otters, deer, bear, marten and overharvest of salmon. Bottom line is, there should be a wildlife officer at every logging camp! and they should change the bag limits for camps only.

I am tired of competing with unemployed loggers from Oregon and Washington for limited resources which I hold dear and allow me a unique life style. Southeast is turning into another Puget Sound, and there is nothing we can do about it. Last year was the first year I did not set one single trap. Not even for a beaver to eat. But send these forms next year.

- * Since ADF&G operates in the political spectrum, a stronger effort should be made to educate the foreign Government and the U.S. anti-trapping consortium as it concerns the true place, action and needs of trapping in Alaska and indeed all northern latitudes of the earth.

"How will they dispose of a non-biodegradable fur coat when it wears out? "You cannot balance nature with economic regulations, only natural regulations."

This questionnaire seems inadequate since it has room for individual experienced input to enhance the past biological written assumptions.

- * We've seen low fur prices before, these are the times to relieve the pressure on certain species such as marten, etc. depending on specific trap line make-up and increase effort on say the wolf population if an increase is noted. I am a firm believer in predator control by public trapping, but the cost of traps in this respect has gone out of sight and I am afraid in our area of southern-southeast, the state is going to lose an important tool in predator management that has been enjoyed for many years at a cost solely by the trapper. The benefits enjoyed by many deer hunters here are going to show a turn-around not too many years distant.

Also, massive clear cut timber harvests, and planned harvest, have and are going to adversely effect the viability of my marten catches in the future, of this I have no doubt. The way I see it in this type of scenario, my personal trap line management of the last 15-16 years is in vain. It would seem that the trappers ability to feed his family is second, at best, in relation to other forest users. This is a shame considering our profession is second to none in Alaska for tradition and responsible resource management. We do not create an eye sore and many times we inadvertently create benefits to the hunting population and we are not in conflict

with other forest users other than those whose business it is to destroy habitat, in what I consider an unreasonable manner.

- * Never trapped because of fur prices.
- * I hope that the season for wolf trapping remains as is. This is my second season trapping wolves and April is when I do the best. Last season, I had 2 sets out and took 3 animals - all in mid-April. This year, I had 5 sets - 1 produced in March and 2 in mid-April for 3 animals again this year.
- * I think we need a doe season to thin it out a bit. I went on a hunting rip and counted 53 does and no bucks. Let's get it going!
- * Wolves seem to be very abundant - should be interesting to observe the deer response - we may have to curb hunting pressure.
- * The regulation for reporting export of marten USFW 3-177, needs to be put into the trapping regulation book along with the regulation for otter, wolf, lynx, etc. I have written letters all over for 2 years to no avail. What's so bad about including that?
I don't want any other trappers to go through what I did.
Editor's Note: The regulation you refer to is a federal regulation requiring individuals to fill out a #3-177 form if they plan to take wildlife (boned meat, birds, or trophies) out of Alaska through Canada. The purpose of form #3-177 is to show that meat, birds, or trophies were not taken in Canada. Because you cannot "seal" or tag groups of birds, "piles" of boned meat, or trophies, you have to be able to demonstrate where the items were declared as legally taken. State regulation books do not generally include federal regulations, however, we may make an exception in this instance, or at least let trappers know that other federal regulations may apply.
- * I doubt if I will trap next year but hope trapping stays around forever to give young people a chance to learn about nature. The way I did, we had a beautiful sable coat made from 47 marten taken on Prince of Wales. It is insured for \$15,000 and was a lot of fun doing. Keep up the good work.
- * I no longer live in S.E. but with the problems I had with bark eating bunny huggers molesting my trap lines and sets, this includes forest service personnel (timber brokers) during the 91-92 season and will not trap again until I can get to an area remote enough to avoid interferers and harassment. These narrow minded stupid types of individuals. I had a good season with 50 marten and a good catch of beaver, otter, but it took the enjoyment completely out of it to have to put up with that stuff.
- * I believe our Regional Wildlife biologist does a good job.

* I am primarily a land otter trapper, but due to the low price on them the last few years, refrained from trapping them. I still take interest and when out, I am always observant. I believe the otter stock is up to par in a large over-all area. This doesn't amount to much but just thought I'd throw it in.

* Marten are dying off due to logging.

* I do very little trapping; I buy my license to support trapping.

* Mink and Marten season not opened until December 15th to allow animals time to prime up in areas #1 & #2.

* I would like to see all trappers post signs clearly marking their trap areas, with a standard dimension size and year. This would I feel help reduce overharvest in some areas, by spreading out the pressure.

The wolves I took were poor at best. Heaviest was no more than 80 lbs.

* Stop trapping on Price of Wales Island for a few years. The trapping isn't good. Back in 1974 to 1979 approximately was good. It's terrible now. Martens, Beavers, Mink.

I trapped in 1990-91 and got 4 martens, 2 minks. I drove 20 miles one way to my traps, twice a week. Sometimes three times. Never got a marten or mink. We didn't trap for beaver. We use traps, no shooting.

You do a good job. I would like to see on POW a better deer season. Like cutting Aug. and Dec. off of the deer season. It's hot weather in Aug. and Dec. The Bucks are so run down, they just shouldn't be killed. Also 4 deer is too much. My husband and I can kill 8 deer. We can't eat that many. We get one deer a season, maybe two, but only sometimes. We killed one last year. We see lots of deer killed only the best parts taken.

* I didn't trap this season on account of the prices. I trap beaver and marten and think I would have done quite well on quantity due to the amount of sign and critters I observed when hunting, fishing and working in the woods. I am a timber faller and commute to work through my trapping grounds daily. Except for this season, I've trapped these grounds 3 consecutive years.

* Trapping on the Pen. will probably end soon for me, due to the interest of the forest service to completely clear cut the area. I don't think that is in the best interest of all concerned, including the animals.

- * Marten numbers were about normal for my area although quite a bit lower than last year which was an extremely high population. The wolf population seems to stay about the same each year. I really hate to see my area scheduled for logging. When a logging camp moves in an area, it is like having a small village suddenly appear in the middle of our trapline.
- * Did not trap but hope to this next winter. The prices are so low, not much profit in it. All areas I have been have the most animals I have ever seen. Lots of land otter and mink.
- * You could explore management techniques that have been successful in other states.
- * Cut out early wolf and wolverine season - all trapping commencing on the same date - closing on the same. Furs are prime by Nov. 10. Why only wolf and wolverine?

It is very unfortunate that we employ qualified people and pay them quite well for advice, then someone from the lower 48 protests the wolf hunt - politics prevail and our Governor backs-off. I'm sorry for you biologists, it must be very frustrating and degrading. If you people are right, you would best start standing up. I for one, back you and half of my income is from tourists. I dislike being political but that has become the issue. You ask our advice, evaluate, and decide - then are overruled by outside pressure. The next thing comes to mind if "pressure" makes policy, is "do we need you". Think about it.

- * Started trapping 3 weeks earlier this year in hopes of finding marten near beaches. No luck. No marten sign at all. Even at the deer gut piles, the birds cleaned them up and there were no furbearer tracks on the sight.
- * Marten need all growth forest near Haines in order to survive. As more clear cuts go in, there is -?- habitat available and more roads to the remaining areas although population has increased with more people trapping. If I operated a line like I used to, there would be few marten left. I used to take close to 50 marten. Now how many are taken, and how many people trap their same place?
- * I'm working full time and have not set traps since 1990-91 season. I do not expect to resume trapping in the near future.
- * I have not trapped the last two years because of losses to stealing my traps or just destroying them. Bunny huggers are thick in this and other areas of the state and show no respect for others right to hunt or trap. Before long, we will be scorned for taking a fish from the pristine waters of our state because someone in the Lower 48 may be unable to see it swimming in its natural beauty some time in the

future. Sounds stupid but you better get ready.

- * I do not feel inclined to help Fish and Game with anymore studies or questionnaires. Every time they study something, I get managed right out of it. King Salmon fishing, moose hunting, cut throat trout, ducks, goats, etc. etc.
- * Open the mainland shoreline to trapping north of Eagle River, limiting it to nonrecreational shoreline.
- * Why is beach area north of Eagle River closed to trapping? There are hardly any houses in this area.
- * High mortality of juvenile marten occurs in November prior to open trapping season of marten. These are very trapable animals which, by November 1, are in good shape - prime quality fur. Instead of wasting this excess in the population, these young animals should be trapped. I propose alternate year's trapping of some areas with an early start of the season (Oct. 20) and early stop of the season (Dec. 1). This should increase to trapper productivity and lessen the pressure on the breeding population.

Editor's Note:

If you have questions that I have not responded to, and you have not yet received a response from your local area biologist, please let your area biologist know that you would still like to hear from him/her.

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