

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH AND GAME**



**1990-91**

**TRAPPER QUESTIONNAIRE**

**STATEWIDE REPORT**

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## 1990-91 TRAPPER QUESTIONNAIRE STATEWIDE REPORT

The geographic coverage of the trapper questionnaire program was expanded to include southeastern Alaska this season. Consequently, this report now covers interior, southcentral, and southeastern Alaska.

As of last count, we have 1,029 trappers on our mailing list. We received 398 replies, a response of about 39%. Most trappers responding to the trapper questionnaire said they would like to continue being a participant in the program, but a few don't want to bother. Of the 398 trappers who responded, 84% said they would like to continue participating.

This report summarizes the results of the responding trappers. All trappers did not respond to all of the questions or fill in all the appropriate spaces in the abundance/trend table. Therefore, percentages given are based on the number of trappers who responded to each question.

The report summarizes the response to the questions asked of all trappers sent questionnaires throughout the entire geographic area covered as mentioned above. Responses to questions asked by your local area biologist in addition to the 10 statewide questions are not covered by this report.

If you chose to write comments on the back of the questionnaire, these are included in this report. The comments are presented with a minimum of editing. I have eliminated the names of individuals and references to specific traplines. Answers to questions asked are inserted as editorial comments following the question.

### A PROFILE OF RESPONDING TRAPPERS

This section of the report summarizes trappers' responses to the 8 questions that were designed to give us some idea of the level of experience, methods used to reach and run traplines, and a rough estimate of the effort spent trapping.

#### **Did you trap in 1990-91?**

Of the 398 trappers who responded, 71% said they trapped during the 1990-91 season. This is 5% less than the percent who said they trapped the previous year. In 1989-90, 76% of the trappers said they trapped. Declining fur prices could have contributed to this drop in percentage of trappers actually trapping.

#### **How many total years trapping experience do you have?**

Of the trappers who returned questionnaires, only 70% answered this question. The mean number of years experience for these

trappers was 20.7. This is nearly identical to the 21.2 mean number of years experience reported by trappers the previous year. The range of experience in 1990-91 was the same as it was the previous season: 1-65 years.

**How many years have you trapped in Alaska?**

The same number of trappers responded to this question as responded to the previous one. The mean number of years of trapping experience in Alaska was 17.2, identical to the mean number of years experience reported the previous season. Also, the range in years was the same as well, 1-65.

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

With the inclusion of trappers reporting from southeast Alaska, there was a shift in the proportion of trappers using certain types of transportation to reach their main trapping area. The most commonly used method was still the snowmachine, which was used by 40% of the 273 trappers who responded to this question.

Next most common was highway vehicle at 27%. The third most common method was the airplane (12%). This is a drop from the previous season (17%). The method that increased quite a bit was use of a boat (10%) compared to the 4% the previous year who said they used a boat. I'm sure this increase is simply do to the inclusion of southeast trappers in the survey rather than representing a change in the method used by trappers to reach their trapping area.

The percentage of trappers using the remaining methods of transportation to get to their areas were: dogteam (5%); skis/snowshoes (4%); 3-4 wheeler (3%).

**What transportation did you use to run your trapline?**

The snowmachine was the most common way of running a trapline (61%) by responding trappers. That is down 10% from the previous year. This could be due to the addition to the survey area of trappers from southeast Alaska where snowmachines are less commonly used to run lines. The next most common method was walking (8%) followed by use of a boat (7%) which was tied with using skis or snowshoes (7%). The least commonly used methods of transportation were: dogteam (6%); highway vehicle (4%); airplane (3%); and 3-4 wheeler (3%).

**How many miles long was your main trapline in 1990-91?**

There were 275 trappers who responded to this question, 100 more than the previous year. These trappers reported running a total of 10,522.7 miles of trapline. The mean length of line was 38.3 miles and the range was 0.2-220. These numbers are much different than they were for the 1989-90 trapping season when the

mean length of trapline was 51.2 miles and the range was 2-400 miles.

There are a number of factors that could account for this big change. First, the addition of southeast trappers might increase the number of shorter lines represented in the survey. Second, reduced fur prices may have caused some trappers to reduce the length of line they ran. And third, the heavy snows in parts of Alaska made running a long line very difficult or impossible in some areas.

**How many years have you been trapping there (in the same place)?**

The mean length of time trappers trapped the same area they did in 1989-90 was 12 years. The median value (50% of answers less, 50% answers more) was 10 years. Again, this is the same as last year. The greatest number of trappers (27) said they trapped the same area for 2 years. The next greatest number (24) said they trapped the same area for 15 years. Answers ranged from 1 to 65 years trapping the same area.

**The approximate number of sets I averaged on my line this season was:**

Compared with the previous season (1989-90), 277 trappers reported making fewer sets during 1990-91. Most trappers (38.3%) made less than 25 sets, whereas last season most trappers (32.0%) said they made 25-50 sets. During 1990-91 somewhat fewer trappers (24.2%) made 25-50 sets.

While 24% of the trappers said they made 51-100 sets in 1989-90, only 15.2% of the trappers in 1990-91 said they made that many sets. The only category that stayed the same was category 4 (101-200 sets). In both seasons, about 12% of the trappers responding indicated they made this many sets. A drop in the number of sets made was reported for category 5 (201-300 sets) and category 6 (more than 300 sets) in 1990-91 compared with the previous season.

RELATIVE ABUNDANCES AND TRENDS OF FURBEARER POPULATIONS

The following summary of the relative abundances and trends in the populations of furbearer species are drawn from the information provided by trappers who took the time to fill out all or portions of the fur abundance table included in the trapper questionnaire. There are many variables that can influence the way trappers decide if the evidence along their trapline indicates that a species is scarce, common or abundant. Similarly, these same variables can affect a judgement as to 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, amount of snow, the amount of trapline actively used, the experience of the trapper along with actual changes in the numbers of animals are among the variables affecting a trapper's perception of the abundance of and trends in furbearer populations on the trapper's line.

In spite of the difficulties these variables present in interpreting how well or poorly furbearer populations may be doing, the fact remains that trappers spend more time on the ground making observations than most of the biologists responsible for managing the resources. On the other hand, most biologists get a chance to gather information over large geographic areas while doing aerial surveys, talking to many trappers or by reviewing the information from trapper questionnaires. 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 relative abundance and trends in furbearer populations over a large area of the state. If the numbers in the tables don't 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 indicators have limitations and are based on assumptions that may not be true. We need to do additional research 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. The index assigns numerical values to the responses of scarce, common or abundant that trappers mark on their questionnaires. 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% as indicating hares at intermediate levels (=common), and values greater than 50% indicating hares were abundant.

We do not know if the same ranges of percentages are appropriate for Alaskan snowshoe hares, let alone other species. Testing such a relationship in Alaska 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 years. This testing would be costly and time consuming. However, even untested the index

provides a way to compare the trapper questionnaire results from different areas of the state.

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. The trend index was calculated by assigning a 1 if the box for fewer was checked, 2 if the box for same was checked, and 3 if the box for more was checked. The responses from all trappers in a geographic area were then summed for each species and this sum divided by the number of trappers who responded from the area (=the mean). Values can range from 1 through 3.

Since we don't 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.

**Arctic Fox** do not occur throughout most of the geographic range covered by this report. This species occurs on some islands in the Aleutian chain, a few islands off the Alaska Peninsula and from western Bristol Bay northward along the coast to the Canadian border. A few Arctic fox make their way south to the south side of the Brooks Range in some years so a few trappers in the northern Interior catch a few (Table 1).

**Beaver** were reported as abundant in 6 of the 14 geographic areas, as common in 5 areas and scarce in 2 areas. Trappers in 10 of the 14 geographic areas felt beaver numbers remained the same as they were in 1989-90. In 4 areas, beaver numbers were reported as fewer than last season.

**Coyotes** were reported as abundant in 1 area, common in 5 areas and scarce in 2 areas. Coyotes are not present on the islands of the Kodiak Archipelago and most of southeast Alaska. Compared with the previous year, coyotes were reported as more abundant in 1990-91 in 1 southcentral area. Their numbers were reported as about the same as they were the previous year in 7 areas. Trappers felt coyotes declined in numbers in 3 areas.

**Lynx** were not reported as abundant in any geographic area. In 5 areas, 2 in southcentral and 3 in interior, trappers felt lynx were common. However, in 6 other areas trappers still considered lynx to be scarce. Lynx do not occur on the islands of the Kodiak Archipelago or most of southeast Alaska. In 2 areas in the interior, trappers reported lynx to be more abundant than in the previous season. In the remaining areas where lynx occur, trappers reported numbers were about the same or fewer than in the previous year. Based on an examination of our sealing records we know that lynx harvests indicate that lynx numbers do

not peak during the same season in all geographic areas where they occur. The fluctuations in lynx populations are not synchronous throughout Alaska.

**Marten** were reported as abundant in only 1 of the 14 geographic areas. Marten were considered common in 12 areas and scarce in 2 areas, both in southcentral Alaska. Some trappers in interior Alaska have reported observing a decline in marten populations when lynx became abundant. An analysis of fur dealer and fur export records for a few game management units in the interior, hint that harvests reflect this phenomenon. We need more data to determine if this happens in all areas where the two species occur. Information from trapper questionnaires could help in the evaluation of this possible relationship.

**Mink** were reported abundant in 2 southcentral and 2 southeast areas. They were reported common in 7 other areas and scarce in 3 areas. Trappers in 9 geographic areas generally agreed that mink numbers were about the same in 1990-91 as they were in the previous season. Trappers felt mink were fewer in 5 areas.

**Muskrats** were reported common in 6 areas and scarce in 7 areas. "Rats" were reported as increasing in one area, about the same in 3 areas and fewer than last season in 9 areas.

**Red Fox** were reported abundant in 6 of the 14 areas and common in 5 areas. Only one area reported them as scarce. One area in the interior reported more fox this season than last and in 8 areas the numbers were considered the same. Fox were reported as fewer in 3 areas.

**Red Squirrels** were reported abundant in 8 of the 14 areas and common in the 5 remaining areas. Trappers in 12 areas reported no change in the numbers of red squirrels compared with their numbers in the previous seasons. Only 2 areas, both in southeast, reported fewer squirrels.

**River Otter** were reported abundant in 2 coastal southcentral areas and common in the remaining 12 areas. Numbers of otters were reported as more than the previous season in one southcentral area, the same as the previous season in 9 areas and fewer in 4 areas.

**Weasels** were reported to be abundant in 7 areas and common in the remaining 7 areas. Trappers reported there were more weasels than the previous year in one area, about the same in 6 areas, and fewer in the remaining 7 areas.

**Wolves** were reported abundant only in one area. Trappers considered wolves common in 10 areas and scarce in one area. No wolves occur in 2 areas. In all but 3 areas trappers reported wolf numbers to be the same as in the previous season. Two areas reported fewer wolves.



**Wolverines** were not reported as abundant in any area. Trappers in 6 areas reported wolverines as common and in 6 areas as scarce. The areas reporting a scarcity of wolverines included one in southeast, 2 in southcentral and 3 in interior Alaska. One area in southcentral reported more wolverine this season than last. Wolverine numbers were about the same as last season in 4 areas and fewer in 7 areas.

**Snowshoe Hares** were reported abundant in 2 of the 14 areas, common in 6 areas and scarce in 5 areas. This a drop in the number of areas reporting hares as abundant compared to last year. No area reported more hares this year than last year and 5 areas reported fewer hares.

**Grouse** were reported common in 10 areas and scarce in 3 areas. The numbers of grouse were fewer than last year in 9 areas and the same in 4 areas. No area reported more grouse this year than last.

**Ptarmigan** were reported abundant in 2 areas. Trappers in 8 areas considered this species to be common and in 2 areas, scarce. Compared with the previous season, trappers in one area reported the numbers of ptarmigan were more than last year. In 3 areas trappers reported fewer ptarmigan. In the remaining areas, the numbers were about the same.

**Mice/Rodents** were reported as being abundant in 8 areas and common in the remaining 6 areas. Trappers reported the numbers of mice/rodents to be the same as in the previous season in all but 4 areas.

To all of you who responded to the questionnaire, thanks for the information. If you didn't respond but received a copy of this report, we sure would like to have you join the group of responding trappers even if you didn't trap this year but have trapped in the past or might in the future. If you have suggestions for improving the trapper questionnaire or this report, please contact your local area biologist and pass along your ideas.

Fur auction sales were better this year than last. I hope this indicates a trend for improved fur prices.

Herb Melchior  
Wildlife Biologist

Table 1. Indices of relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations in Interior Alaska.

	Relative Abundance Area				Trend Areas			
	LTB	UTB	MYK	UYB	LTB	UTB	MYK	UYB
Furbearers:								
Arctic Fox	NP	NP	0	17	NP	NP	1.75	2.00
Beaver	65	13	59	46	1.80	2.20	1.88	1.82
Coyote	15	10	0	0	1.46	2.10	1.33	1.80
Lynx	37	41	18	23	2.38	2.76	1.86	2.13
Marten	32	59	31	43	1.37	1.64	1.50	1.60
Mink	44	21	20	17	1.79	1.92	1.40	1.50
Muskrat	19	28	8	0	1.48	1.89	1.46	1.73
Red Fox	68	65	37	58	2.44	2.25	1.80	2.17
Red Squirrel	77	46	42	73	1.77	1.79	1.85	1.73
River Otter	37	25	36	21	1.77	1.80	1.71	1.50
Weasel	47	31	25	55	1.59	1.85	1.43	2.00
Wolf	38	37	43	32	2.00	2.05	2.00	1.71
Wolverine	8	17	29	13	1.62	1.89	1.43	1.27
Prey:								
Hare	56	56	27	50	2.13	2.06	2.07	2.17
Grouse	34	44	50	35	1.50	1.28	1.53	1.54
Ptarmigan	34	41	41	35	1.68	1.65	1.69	1.77
Mice/Rodents	51	53	43	67	1.90	1.72	1.50	1.92

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

Trend:  
 Fewer = 1 through 1.66  
 Same = 1.67 through 2.33  
 More = 2.34 through  
 NP = Not Present

Interior:  
 LTB = Lower Tanana R. Basin  
 UTB = Lower 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.

	Relative Abundance Area							Trend Areas						
	CUS	LSB	PWS	KEP	KOI	AKP	BRB	CUS	LSB	PWS	KEP	KOI	AKP	BRB
<b>Furbearers:</b>														
Beaver	37	50	50	58	60	64	59	1.67	1.65	1.90	1.38	2.20	2.05	1.60
Coyote	44	48	55	45	NP	21	0	1.88	2.14	1.82	1.90	NP	2.25	2.67
Lynx	24	7	13	31	NP	12	0	2.14	2.20	1.25	1.63	NP	2.00	1.50
Marten	31	18	40	17	33	25	25	1.63	1.93	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.83	2.50
Mink	44	40	55	22	0	53	13	1.92	1.47	1.55	1.89	0	1.75	1.80
Muskrat	23	43	36	13	0	38	17	1.53	1.60	1.57	1.25	1.67	2.38	1.50
Red Fox	56	31	10	25	69	76	33	2.04	1.67	1.60	1.00	1.75	1.81	2.00
Red Squirr	73	62	33	72	33	57	50	1.91	1.69	2.00	1.67	2.33	2.14	---
River Otter	26	43	50	33	63	53	50	1.71	1.92	1.56	1.78	1.38	1.68	2.43
Weasel	58	41	55	69	58	46	25	1.80	1.50	1.60	1.50	1.83	2.00	2.00
Wolf	27	29	50	20	NP	22	0	1.64	2.11	2.14	1.50	NP	1.94	2.00
Wolverine	15	27	25	10	NP	36	50	1.56	2.13	1.50	1.00	NP	1.86	2.40
<b>Prey:</b>														
Hare	42	18	25	13	14	44	38	2.00	1.47	2.13	1.50	1.14	1.78	2.00
Grouse	30	43	11	50	NP	25	13	1.53	1.80	1.44	1.50	NP	1.50	2.00
Ptarmigan	31	38	28	7	13	61	67	1.70	1.81	1.89	1.14	1.00	2.22	2.63
Mice/Rodents	49	47	40	63	30	59	75	1.61	1.73	1.90	1.25	1.80	1.88	2.00

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

Trend:  
 Fewer = 1 through 1.66  
 Same = 1.67 through 2.33  
 More = 2.34 through  
 NP = Not Present

Southcentral:  
 CUS = Copper R. and Upper  
 Susitna R. Basin  
 LSB = Lower Susitna Basin  
 PWS = Prince William Sound  
 and coastline  
 KEP = Kenai Penninsula  
 KOI = Kodiak Archipelago  
 AKP = Alaska Peninsula  
 BRB = Bristol Bay Area

Table 3. Indices of relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations in Southeastern Alaska.

	Relative Abundance Area			Trend Areas		
	1A5	1B3	U4	1A5	1B3	U4
<b>Furbearers:</b>						
Beaver	36	50	0	2.00	1.83	0
Coyote	28	NP	NP	1.33	NP	NP
Lynx	0	NP	NP	1.25	NP	NP
Marten	44	40	31	1.76	2.00	2.13
Mink	74	72	44	1.71	2.00	1.89
Muskrat	25	0	NP	1.50	0	NP
Red Fox	25	NP	NP	1.50	NP	NP
Red Squirrel	94	50	100	1.56	1.25	2.33
River Otter	36	38	36	1.50	1.88	2.00
Weasel	59	42	83	1.64	1.50	2.67
Wolf	38	63	NP	1.13	2.13	NP
Wolverine	4	42	NP	1.00	1.83	NP
<b>Prey:</b>						
Hare	15	0	NP	1.00	1.00	NP
Grouse	21	50	0	1.42	1.80	2.00
Ptarmigan	23	0	0	1.62	1.40	1.50
Mice/Rodents	65	63	50	1.38	2.20	2.00

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

Trend:  
 Fewer = 1 through 1.66  
 Same = 1.67 through 2.33  
 More = 2.34 through  
 NP = Not Present

Southeastern:  
 1A5 = Units 1A and 5  
 1B3 = Units 1B and 3  
 U4 = Unit 4

## TRAPPER'S COMMENTS

### INTERIOR AREAS

\* I have a friend that gets your report. I haven't trapped for 5 years. Not enough fur here.

\* Sorry, but I can't be a lot of help this year. I did take a few martin but deep snow made trapping my lines almost impossible.

\* Snow up over my \*\*\*! Unethical military users. Would like to see marten and lynx population census. Add 2 weeks to lynx season (don't start any earlier). It is a sign of old age when you can't remember how many years you've trapped. Thanks.

\* Grunting thru neck deep snow and heavy rainfall caused my fuzz to freeze to the "ground", wind also did not help much either. Big beaver have no balls. Thus no castorage to help pay for the rest of the beaver. Don't want ADF&G to mess around with the balance of nature. Due to dramatic increase in cats this last season in 20C it's high time they throwed some length in the season. Worrys me to tears, haven't slept a wink since for fear of havin one of them nightmares of trap chains jinglin on my grave.

\* Overharvest when prices are high. Underharvest when prices are low. Try to get more trapper input. Lynx season should be made longer and have limit put on when at low and building parts of cycle.

\* All areas for lynx season should be November 1-February 28.

\* Abundance of wolves being very hard on beaver population. More marten study - but get the h\*\*\* out of the air and on the ground. Beaver season to start later and end later. Lynx season longer.

\* There were more wolves and wolf kills than we've ever seen before. We are concerned about the effects of anti-fur people on the fur market. We had very deep snow conditions and ran less line than usual to keep the trails open. The marten catch was way down until early January, when we began to get less snow and could keep the traps active. We had much more rain and hot weather, which also incapacitated traps and made travel difficult. Also more overflow than ever before due to warm weather and heavy snowfall. We trap in the addition to Denali Park and have been happy with dealing with the Park, no problems there except that getting a permit to build a new cabin has taken 5 years and still hasn't come to pass. You said trappers were confused about what vehicle they use to reach their trapline and

29% of them didn't respond to the question. Maybe they were not confused, but in a situation similar to ours. We don't have to go anywhere to reach our trapline. It started at our front door. Someone mentioned fleas on marten. Our marten in the Minchumina area do have fleas but are not heavily infested with them. The only wolf reg I am interested in seeing changed is the one requiring tagging within 30 days. We caught 2 wolves and both got tagged late because we didn't come in off the trapline soon enough.

\* The early snows heavy early on stopped me on some hills I climb. Ice didn't freeze on creeks as well either. Also, low fur prices. At the present time I don't really have any problems in my area. Would like to see education of non-trappers. Also should institute for hunting. Lynx season: No! They are just starting to come back in my area pretty well and I like seeing their sign. Leave the season the same. Why don't you mention flying squirrels in your survey? Every year I pick up 2 or 3 of them in this one area. Lynx are coming back in my area finally. I saw over a dozen different tracks this year. There were more fox but the price you could get for them they weren't worth trapping. Thank you for your time and effort putting together this survey.. You all are doing a great job at the department. Keep up the good work.

\* Poor reputation for local trappers. Educate the general public on how trapping has been used as a successful management tool. Promote trapping. Am in favor of wise wolf management in all regions. If some areas need restrictions, then enforce them. Lynx season: Not informed enough to answer. Since lynx are cyclic, care has to be taken so certain populations are not overstressed. From my own limited experience, it seems that most trappers would rather reduce their effort on their own, rather than be "ordered" to do so.

\* Conditions and trapping were good. Lynx season December 1 to February 28.

\* Keep up the good work!

\* Fur prices are dropping for all fur. Stop the tagging program. Lynx season should be longer but fur prices are way down so no one wants to trap lynx.

\* Deep snow put me out of commission for 3 weeks. Not really a good area, I recreation trap where I have a remote cabin. Reduce wolves where people can utilize more moose and caribou. Liberalize aerial hunting. Wolves are a resource that should be better utilized. Few lynx in my area, seem to be some increase in some areas of Tanana Valley, from talking to other trappers.

\* Competition for food by other furbearers and birds of prey etc. Statewide registration of traplines similar to limited entry on salmon fishing. Change land and shoot on wolves, I

caught 1 wolf out of a pack of 8. Next time through there were on 2. Trappers didn't do it. Airplanes did. Lynx season should be longer. Populations are up in both my areas. When the rabbits die off so will the lynx. Let us trap them. the marten population in my area is way down so I only trapped them for 6 weeks. I concentrated on other furbearers. Marten is Alaska's fur money crop and each trapper is responsible for managing his or her own area. Trapping was Alaska's first industry even before the Russians got here. The State should help the trapper by promoting fur nationwide.

\* DEEP snow, high winds made for the most work I've ever put into the line with the least fur to show for it. Keeping trails open and traps working was a problem. Last year it was wolves. Way too many to do the moose population any good. Especially with the deep snow. They didn't bother my line any. But I'm gearing up for probable problems this winter. During abundant years aerial harvest of any kind should be permitted with a possible limit of 8 or 10. During lean years, aerial hunting could be closed. I feel December 1-January 15 is adequate to harvest surplus lynx on my line.

\* Not as much competition in my area this year. I didn't put any effort into lynx or fox sets because of prices but trapped more beaver and marten. Open up the lower Chena River drainage to beaver trapping. Lynx season should be made longer.

\* Did not trap. Lynx trapping season should be adjusted annually according to lynx populations.

\* Had a good season, fewer marten and poor prices compared to previous years. Fox were very abundant and eating marten out of traps. I think they the fox were probably catching some of the marten. Keep the season as they are. Keep lynx same for our area.

\* Unless severe, extreme overtrapping is consistent, I don't believe trapping affects furbearer populations as much as prey populations. I don't see any problems that aren't normal predator-prey cycles. Permit and monitor every airplane hunter to eliminate those who are unscrupulous, then use the honest airplane hunters to control wolf where ever needed. Lynx keep the same for 1 more year, then longer if populations continue to increase. Excellent conditions for entire season (thru January 15 when I p?). Lots of canines and considerable numbers of cats moving through (took 6). Wolves were rather bold this year - took one about 3-400 yards from home.

\* Too many new comers \*\*\*\*ing up to old gentlemen's agreement on who claims what area. Limit new comers. Lynx remain the same. F&G needs to raise the seasonal bag limit in the Manley Hot Springs area on beaver from 25 to 50 - they are over populating the are, i.e. there's one in every little pothole now - I counted 7 live houses in about 4 river miles last fall. Fox

levels are very high around here too! I picked up 25 last year 1990/91 as compared to about 10 in 1989. We need some legal for defending our traplines from the massive influx of pilgrims around here they have no respect for the old established trappers and their lines. this is a very big problem now. They don't understand how to harvest and conflicts on my line have cost me some of my marten seed. Trapping like commercial fishing needs limited entry in order to preserve stocks - I support a movement in direction - trapper should have been licensed to trap in Alaska for at least 10 years to qualify.

\* Fur prices - snow. Leave lynx season alone. Speaking for my area long I think the trapping regulations are about as good as they could be - no more rules - registration or politics. Moose season could be a little later so it would be easier to keep the meat.

\* No increase in animals. To many people trapping this area. Lynx should stay the same.

\* The fur market is so depressed I decided it was a good year to rest the lines.

\* Too many lynx cats. I have no use for Fish and Game. My life's been trapping and fishing. We still do ok and I love those animals out there too - sorry to be so late with this paper, but I don't come in to town so much anymore.

\* Guess you all know that there are more trappers and hunters today. The states is selling all kind of hunt-fish traplines. It's easy to know what we Indians don't kill off our land. Most of us only take what we need. And after all we live here all our lives. We never did have any problem until this country become states, and that's for sure. The feds didn't bother us at all they know we were here all our lives and lived off the land. Meat-fish-fur you didn't leave much room. Guess I'll have put this in the Alaska Sports Book. Look what's happened to the lynx. White man use plane and 4-wheel drive. They're the ones that clean up our country!

\* Price of fur - snow depth. Low numbers of furbearers. Would like more marten and lynx studies. Put a bounty on trapped wolves to encourage the trapper. Lynx longer 1991-92 as I think they are about to crash.

\* Too much snow and it was cold. Letting the land burn is the most important problem. Stop BLM from burning up all the small animals. Longer lynx season, because we have a lot more.

\* Biggest problem is the military. The department should put more emphasis on furbearer behavior. More wolf control in the foot hills of Alaska Range 20(A). Lynx longer, hares are dropping. We only have one more good lynx season left in this cycle.



\* Snow fall - machine breaks down. Would like to see registered traplines. End coyote season same time fox closes. Open beaver November 1 in Unit 20A. Lynx longer, numbers are way up.

\* Depth of snow - wind, rain, erratic temperatures made travel come to a standstill at times. Hard weather. Help educate the public on trapping-hunting so we are less of a scapegoat. Wolves: If there is ever any "thinning out" to do allow-help trappers to do it rather than tax payers money. Lynx: Length of time "acceptable" if populations reported low, but have toward spring. Fur worth more anyway. All trapping slows down end December-end of January, not much moves, too dark and cold. Fur "holes" up more.

\* Low fur prices and extreme deep snow and overflow conditions. Possible lice infestation in canines. Would like to see studies on lynx, wolf, mink, and otter. Limit aerial hunting on land and shoot to areas with large wolf population in which moose and caribou herds are under high pressure. Lynx: Yes, it should be longer since the cat cycle is up and trapping pressure overall is down.

\* Too many people with the "I got mine, shut the gate" attitude. Would like to see elimination of ban on using airplane for access for beaver trapping in Minto Flats. Lynx ok as is.

\* Prices and letting area rest. Problem with road trappers from vehicles only trapping roadside.

\* So much snow made trapping and travel tough plus I dinged my plane a little and had to get it fixed. No particular problems in my area. Would like to see research on humane trapping devices. Now that the lynx price is down I think the season could be liberalized. I would like the season extended in 21A through March. You could open it December 1 because they usually aren't primed up really good until then.

\* This is the first year I didn't trap in over 20 years. An emergency trip outside in November and the record breaking snowfall in the Interior encouraged me to give the marten a chance to regroup. Whenever you have to take snow removal equipment with you on the trapline it's time to stay in the shack, read old copies of "Fur, Fish & Game" and dream of things that might have been. Playboy might help too!

\* Deep snow - prices down - war in Gulf - Dean Wilson said there was not market. Also I was busy otherwise. Problem with other trappers moving in. Would like to see registered traplines. I think that if there is an area of too many wolf, then private pilots should be able to get permits, shoot from the air to thin them out. Lynx ok until there is more. On another subject, I think the Department should look at opening some of

the Wood River Control Area on the north end to motorized vehicles. This would take some pressure off some other overrun areas. This area has not been hunted since being closed. This is not proper management of the resource. This area is not being harvested while others are being overrun (example Yanert, Healy River, Rex Trail, Ferry, and west of Ferry across highway towards Teklanika River (new area). Plus the state mistake to make so much of this area into homesteads. Leaving no place to hunt.

\* Deep snow. Too many snowmachine riders. Too many skiers. Just too many people! Lynx: no change for 20B. Looking forward to a good 91/92 season on my new trapline in the Alaska Range. Keep up the good work.

\* I trapped a new area, but the area was hit hard by wildfire so I spent most of my time reopening my trail. Too early to tell but I will have a firsthand look at the effects of wildfire on the fur animal, from fire to recovery. ADF&G just manage furbearers for the benefit of the animal and not pressure groups. I see no reason to change any wolf regulations for now, possibly if the demand for beaver increases, that season should be shortened. I believe the lynx trapping season should be left as is, for now, in the area I trap. Sorry I'm so late, but I commercial fish during June and July so I get behind with my mail.

\* More snow - harder work. Problem is pressure. Put beaver season back to spring - to protect my line I have to watch fall beaver which are not valuable in the market.

\* Too many trappers, poor price of fur. Area is overtrapped, except beaver. No use in telling ADF&G anything, they know it all.

\* Fewer numbers of marten and snowy conditions contributed mainly to my decreased effort. Too many trappers are struggling to catch the marten. Lynx no change.

\* It has been fairly stable for year! However, the encroachment of more people, activity and loss of habitat to humans is starting to be a problem. Continue research studies and questionnaire. I enjoy sharing this information with you folks and enjoy hearing what other trappers have to say.

\* Snowed under repeatedly. Would like to see marten-beaver area relationship. Don't allow any type of aerial hunting. Lynx season: December 1 to January 31. Hope you are enjoying the absence of snow and get to do something interesting this summer. I'm afraid that I can't be of help this spring or in the future.

\* I spent alot of time extending my trapline. Problem of coyotes. Would like an indepth wolverine study. Wolves are scarce in my particular area and I would like the season to stay the same, end of March. Lynx are increasing by leaps and bounds.

Definitely a longer season. Had more snow this last season than in last 10 years. Fur population looks real good, coyotes are very abundant and the lynx are really coming back with lots of kitten tracks. Wolves are real scarce.

Real deep snow, snow machines couldn't keep up. Lynx are few and wolves have dropped off. Register traplines before prices go up! No marten or fox trapping after February 1, because fur quality goes down and buyers stop buying. Lynx season should stay the same. Weekend trappers disappeared when fur prices went down. That should allow to comeback.

\* Deep snow, thin ice and overflow, do the deep snow weekend warrior stayed on trapline trails, not good. Too many weekend warriors. In my area although resident population of humans has not increased, weekenders are building alot of cabins, disturbing fur populations. None in my area have had to much problems with mismanaged projects. Although furbearing projects have been no problem generally fishing and hunting have been and when one species is affected it affects the whole. Though I personally don't care for airplane wolf hunting I would not take someones right to do it, but in areas with heavy trapping pressure or regular trapping it should be avoided. I try to farm by line and it's hard enough keeping track with the weekend warrior and what fur they take. Someone dropping in from the sky is impossible to keep track of. I try to respect other peoples trapline and their borders. Airplanes have no borders. At this time no change if population keeps increasing Alaska at a later date maybe necessary.

\* I would like to see you allow wolves to be shot from airplanes.

\* Lack of a market, low prices. Lynx longer season.

\* Deep snow. Tularemia and lack of wildfires are problem. Lynx longer, December 1 to February 28.

\* It seems to me that the more official things get, the more important information from unofficial sources seems to get or be unwanted. That's why I think that this trapper questionnaire is a very good idea. To gain knowledge from an otherwise, uneducated source. So many times most information like this goes, to what seem's like a tightening grip of more laws, more regulations to clamp down and control (gun control) regulate, regulate, regulate... STATE, FED, STATE, FED (NATIVE LAND). I believe that man was put on earth to take care of the animals and to take proper care of them. They have to be managed. To assure that proper levels are maitained to ensure an overall balanced fully funcitoning ecosystem. Alaska, I believe, is a very fragile system. One man's greed today has repercussions far into the future. We need more caring individuals than can't be corrupted by big money, if there is to be an Alaska tomorrow. The wolverine don't migrate across the Tanana Flats anymore since

the Rose, Bananza fires. In 1974, wolverine were abundant. 1991 all about gone. Seen tracks of one last year on Salchaket Slough. The deep snow pretty much confined me to a small area, seems more and more effort going into keeping GIs from ripping up and off my line. Seems one catches on and 5 or 6 are out the next weekend seeing what they can get... Supercubs shooting game and then they run out and try to find what they shoot (3 or 4 encounters mostly (red on white) (white on red) cubs. Afraid of getting shot by one.

\* Low fur prices.

\* Didn't trap this last season because a 500,000 acre forest fire cut through my line. And fur prices are too low.

\* I did not get started until December due to other work. But I trapped much harder after that to make up for lost time. Conditions were very good and fur was abundant.

\* Low fur price. The cold late last winter reduced the litter sizes of furbearers such as marten and fox. We noticed fewer young animals in our catch this winter down alot from the past years. Not wishing to deplete the populations we took fewer animals to be sure to leave enough stock for the future.

\* To much snow.

\* Weather wasn't to bad this last winter. Expanded my trail last season to get wolves as there is a huge increase in the wolf population in the Eastern Brooks Range. Soon there will be no sheep or caribou or moose to eat. I'll have to learn to eat lichens and willows, as the wolves will devour everything. There is even a family on the Sheenjek who have been starving for years because of the abundance of wolves in their area. We need aerial wolf hunting badly.

\* There is just as much furbearing animals now as there was before the fire. Quite a few moose. The wild fires don't have much effect on the animals. Furs are hardly no value. Trapping expense awful high. Gas and oil is awful high price.

\* Since aerial hunting and land and shoot hunting have been closed in units 25A and 26, I have witnessed a sharp increase in wolf populations. Packs used to run 6 to 8 in size. Now it is not unusual to see packs as large as 20 or more. There is no reason land and shoot should not be allowed in units 26 and 25A - the populations can certainly support a large harvest of these animals. Not to mention the moose, caribou, and sheep can use a relief from the pressure the wolves put on their populations.

\* Good sign for marten this year. Had problems with red fox stealing bait and martens, and fox were also chasing martens out off the line itself. After I trapped the foxes I started

catching martens again. Weather was often too cold for much fur movement.

\* Deepest snow ever, couldn't keep up with it. I spent 10 hours breaking 7 miles of trail that I broke 3 days earlier. Wet snow slowed me down. It was never powder so my trail was a pain to break. so I only got in about 54% of my line. Also got in a accident in January so line was pulled the last week of January so it ended bout 3 weeks early. Major amounts of snow. 6-10" a pop. Temperature was warm at certain times so the snow wasn't dry powder hard to break the trail. But a real good number of fox returned. Personal opinion: proper management by trappers without a question did this. We worked together. Marten population good-very good. Caught my biggest ever 27" (male of course). Wolves were present in fall not seen all winter. Moose fared well. Fall bear population was high. Grizzly very high. As of July 91, grizzly are even more. Spruce grouse seen a little more. Sharptails still down, ruffs forget it. Rodent pop increased. Weasels are all over. The beavers were not seen. The river lost about 50 yards of bank which washed out several lodges and close food sources. Saw one cat track. One sighted on foot system 20+ miles from my line. Mink really came inland about 3 of them. Alot for the area. One otter had 3 last year. Thank you for printing comments. Still think a discount on returned questionnaires would boost returns. Also thanks to all trappers who return the paper work. Our comments effects all of use. Have a good one.

\* Line should be open in March. I don't trap them in November anyway.

\* Quit trapping in December and moved to town to go to college. I had a good dog team and they know my trails, so getting started last year was the easiest start up yet. Plenty of marten early. They sold for about 25-30% less than last year though.

\* All my marten country buried last season - set all sets, but no furs. Will give it a try again this season.

\* Trapping is our only source of yearly income so the same effort is in effect each year in our trapping area - roughly 40 x 50 miles.

\* Our catch was about half of usual, because of weather and snow depth - always breaking trail.

\* We live on our line. It is the only income we have in winter. If we don't trap we don't make it. So we trap hard every year. We had a little more snow than usual so late in the season, wolves ran our trails and destroyed our sets. Our hard trails were too good traveling for them to pass up. For sure last season with higher snow and lower prices slowed trapping effort. From "Fur Age Weekly" we feel that trapping and fur

prices are going to look bad for the near term but look brighter for the long term. Comparing the prices of our fur at auction in February with those in April, it seems that fur prices are stabilizing. Thanks, keep up the good work.

More trail. I think wolf populations are alot lower than Fish and Game let people believe.

\* Equipment failure mostly. The surprise this year was that there seemed to be no increase in rabbits and little or no increase in lynx. Perhaps it is just a local thing. I was expecting a yearly increase to a 1992-1993 peak. Got a surprise. Have a good year.

\* Fur price, increased effort in Tok area, Tok River burn. I would vote yes for registered area based on past trapping history. A trapper would have to give up his rights to his area if he didn't trap it the 3rd year. This would allow him to let an area "sit" for 2 years to let the critters rebound.

\* Poor price of fur. Because of the approximately 40,000 caribou in the upper Tanana Valley, I could not keep my traps set. I caught about 20 caribou in wolf traps. Bulldogging caribou to get the trap off, I feel like a cowboy, not a trapper.

\* I had dependable transportation this year and the trail conditions were great! Is there a disease in lynx this year? Several have been found dead in town with no sign of being hit or shot.

\* Bad overflow - lower prices - lots of snow. Thanks for questionnaire once again. Conditions on the trapline were poor, lots of overflow and snow. Plus cold temperatures. Abundance of caribou made trail sets almost impossible. Marten population about the same, percentage of males dropped to 50%. Fox are still abundant and increasing maybe a little. Wolves and wolverine scarce on my line. The fewest wolf sign I've seen in 15 years trapping here, in spite of abundance of caribou and good number of moose. More lynx - caught several kittens in the 8 lb range. It is too bad trappers are so paranoid... some of its is justified is the trouble! I would answer any question on a questionnaire if it would help promote furbearer management. The trapline is economically important to many of us - it is not just a "hobby". Add the fur catch count again to questionnaire if it helps management.

\* Other work and sickness at beginning of marten season. After lynx season was over I saw as many lynx tracks as ever and that was after catching 8 of them.

\* If you want someone to show trappers how to skin. I'll do it.

\* I stayed home to take care of the store.

- \* More time, less snow. Increase in lynx and wolf numbers.
- \* The Porcupine Fire (backfire ate up much of my line - the main fire wouldn't have caused nearly so much loss of line, country and traps. Fire trail construction with dozers also destroyed much line when they were "rehabbed"). Marten were scarce and lynx were not supposed to be worth much. Same with fox and coyote.
- \* Jobs.
- \* Bummer to see wolverine taken by aerial hunting. Wolves need to be maintained because of over population in many area's. Your report clearly shows where, but wolverine seem to be low everywhere, therefor should not be aerial hunted and maybe have a bag limit for trappers. This wouldn't include airplane trapping except same bag limit. Thanks for caring ADF&G - keep up the good work.
- \* If your hungry with no money and no social support, you put on your snowshoes and break out your trails no matter what! This seems to be one of your more sane questionnaires, and one I've felt compelled to respond to.
- \* Marten seen to be holding there own. Lynx are abundant where the rabbits are and wolves are doing good in my area. The abundance of caribou made trapping more difficult the last couple of years. Would sure be nice to see muskrat, fox, mink, and lynx prices take a big jump up. Let ADF&G manage furbearers, no animal right's (people?).
- \* The Taylor Highway blew closed earlier than usual. Pack of four wolves was in Unit 12 and six wolves were in 20E.
- \* Snow machine failures mostly.
- \* Poor prices. No changes in bag limits.
- \* To much snow. The prices of fur were down. No changes in bag limits.
- \* Some effort - full season - yet due to war threat to ruin market we quit trapping marten at Christmas and switched to beaver and wolf and fox. We also heldover 1/2 marten catch to sell in 1992. With only 300 beaver being taken in Unit 24 in 1990-91, there should be no limit, more beaver than that die of natural causes on the Horgatza River system per year because of under harvest. Over-restrictive limits are poor management or just mismanagement - with a second season now coming of very low water and some dry lakes - more die-offs will occur.
- \* I trap beaver to eat and for use for summer. I quit when I caught 9 beaver. Some people do the same as I do, very few,

because the hide is cheap. I sold 9 beavers for \$150.00. It doesn't matter how many we catch, we quit when we catch 9 or ten. Marten and mink and lynx and otter and muskrat all this is good for sewing.

\* Keep bag limit same.

\* Allow the sale of black bear parts and the use of many bait stations both spring and fall or just all year round. Also allow black bear trapping with snares and increase the annual bag limits of black bears in areas where abundant and the taking of sows and cubs. Black bears have proven to be a real threat to moose calf survival and the taking and sale of bear parts could be economic benefit to hunter and trappers and to the survival of moose calves.

\* Did not trap this year. Would not like a limit.

\* To much snow and I'm getting too old for the hard work.

\* No bag limit is what everyone wanted and only get what they are anyway.

\* Return to October opening on marten, when the season opened the 20th, the fur quality was good most years. Conditions are often better for setting out lines because of longer daylight and warmer weather. Open Wolf October 20. Wolves are more active early in the season and snares are more effective before there is too much snow. Wolves have become far more abundant the past couple years and seems to be true over most of this part of the state. Without aerial hunting I would expect them to continue to increase. I don't normally have many lynx in my area but they were noticeably more common last year. Due to deep snow, trail breaking was very difficult after the first of the year so I didn't expand the lines much with the returning daylight.

\* No price for beaver; trapped only for the meat and local use of skins minimum effort.

\* Snow and weather conditions prevented me from putting out as many traps as first planned. Took January off to work a steady job since trapping income was so low. Sure, no limit would be fine. Population seems to be pretty high. However, if you want the harvest increased, open up spring hunting. This has already been done in GMU 22 and 23. Also do away with tagging. It seems to be a waste of time and money at present due to high beaver population and low harvest. You can always reinstate tag requirement if population and/or harvest changes. Still feel marten should be open October 20. Give the guys depending on fur for a living, maximum opportunity. Hey, you folks wishing for registered traplines, what makes you so sure when it comes time to register that you'll get the line you're currently using? Do you honestly think a government agency could effectively handle



that type of program? Maybe registered traplines are just as unconstitutional as registered guide areas.

\* I trapped less of the marten line than I usually do, to allow them to build up. I feel that beaver should be on no limit in Units 21, 23, 24, 25. The sealing requirement should be dropped. Beaver are abundant in most parts of these units, and the sealing requirement is completely unnecessary and costly to administer. Catch information can be obtained from furbuyer reports and export permits. I also feel that the lynx season should be returned to the November 1-March 15 season instead of the November 1-February 28 present season. With lower lynx prices, many of the "carpet bagger trappers" have cleared out of the woods and trapping pressure is considerably less. Lynx numbers are increasing with the hare cycle, so the reduced season is unnecessary now. This winter we had wolves and lynx immigrating into the central Brooks Range from the south. The wolf population is expanding from the high winter kill season 89-90 and 90-91. The lynx are expanding out from the high hare populations in the Yukon and Tanana Valleys. I observed several lynx tracks moving up in to the mountains in late February through the end of March.

\* Took a year off to do another job. I will trap next year.

\* To much snow.

\* Late snow, questionable few prices, and later on heavy snows. Also physical injury. Bag limit - makes no difference one way or the other. People are not going to seriously trap beaver for \$20 a pelt. The present seasons and bag limits are fine except marten should have never been changed from October 20 to November 1. The fur is prime enough for the markets so why not?

\* Increase bag limits and legalize spring shooting.

\* Weather affected my trapping this winter, deep snow and cold. Bag limits are fine as they are in 21, beaver are abundant and presently are hardly trapped in the Nowitna area. In my area trapping conditions concerning fur populations leveled off in the past 4-5 years.

\* I did not trap last winter because I froze my feet. I might be able to next year.

\* Too much snow, bad trail conditions. Not much fur game, low fur prices. Did go with beaver during month of March. Keep limit some for beaver.

## SOUTHEAST AREAS

\* More interest and knowledge of the area. I don't have the calendar you sent me. Some how it got lost in the shuffle. Trapped from December 1 to January 10. Had an average of about 125 traps out.

\* Was not working.

\* The area I trapped was closed due to apparent lack of animals which I feel was a reasonable assessment of the situation. As the road system in Hoonah was used by locals but also trappers from Juneau, Haines, and Skagway. I feel as the access grows to areas previously inaccessible by vehicle, trapping license should be sold for the area in which the person lives. Or else the stocks will be destroyed by too many people. One to two year residency for area licenses.

\* Waterway froze up early in November. Strong winds and deep soft snow drifts made transportation difficult. Stormy weather, outboard motor broke down.

\* In the past I trapped with a friend mostly for winter exercise. He kept and sold the furs. This year he trapped very little so I trapped very little.

\* I trapped south of Sitka and found the mink population to be quite high and marten population to be a bit slow but not too bad.

\* The same conditions every year. Yes, these conditions affected my trapping efforts. Traps were frozen open, and had to keep them working more.

\* The price of fur was down, so I trapped only those animals my wife wanted for her own use. I am commercial trolling in the winter now and don't have the time to trap very extensively. I think this survey is very good idea. Sorry it took so long to get it back - I've been out of town for awhile.

\* I worked harder at it to make more money. I believe trapping was a little better in the 90-91 season because of heavy snowfall before season.

\* Fur prices were too low for effort. I never sold my fur but have tanned them for personal use. Sirs: contrary to some biologist's writing, the marten is a migratory animal that lives in a loose community that travels continuously from one dense population of squirrels primarily to another as soon as the prey species thins out. No given area can be said to support so and so many marten since they do this rapid running for food. Here on Prince of Wales Island they run the beaches in the fall after wrens that nest heavy in the drift along all salt water. Later

in December around Christmas they migrate upland to the snow line where the squirrel feed piles of spruce cone shells are more apparent on the snow as they hunt by sight instead of smell.

\* This year the weather wasn't very good for the trapping I do. I'm a retired person and don't get out trapping like I used to.

\* I am 74 years old so I don't do much.

\* Because of my job I don't get to trap as much I would like. A majority of the trapping that I did this season was more past control oriented and there were not as many problems this year as last.

\* It snowed in November and stayed until March. This is unusual for my trapline. Usually it rains off every now and then. Also we had long freezing spells this year and that made it very hard to keep the sets working. I really wanted to get some wolves this year so I put alot of work into that. It paid off with 9 wolves.

\* Prices are down and weather harder. Not worth using up my resources for little or no return.

\* This is apparently for my son who has trapped once on a hunting trip and got \$1.89 per pelt for marten by the highly recommended Seattle Fur Exchange. If that won't break a kid's spirit, nothing will. He is now a college student so won't be in need of this questionnaire in the future I don't think.

\* Living out of town. Effort for 91-92 will be back to normal.

\* Weather was a problem all season long. Fur animals were there, traps kept getting wet and freezing.

\* I trapped during winter of 89-90. Concentration was for primarily beaver. My finding was that low fur prices hardly justified the killing of the animals. Mink and marten prices are also low. The reason why I did not trap last winter was because I went to Oregon to hunt elk, mule deer and pheasant last year. While I was down there I was talked into wintering out. In the meantime Wallowa County went to a draw hunt for deer and elk. I concluded that it was no long worth it down there in Oregon and came back.

\* The last season that I trapped seriously was 88-89. I trapped my marten and mink hard for the high prices and now I'm trying to let the populations build up but I can't keep new trappers from going on it and catching the breeding stock. I made two wolf sets this year and didn't catch any wolves. One guy that I know went in and took 12 mink, 2 otter, and 1 marten while I was gone. 1989-90 two guys took about 30 mink and some

otter and marten. It is getting more like the lower 48 all the time.

\* I trapped fulltime 1985-90. Now I work full time so I set only 1-330 conibear, total catch: 1 otter. Last year exactly 20% of my traps were conibears. Exactly 20% of my catch was in conibears. I use conibears exclusively for otter.

\* 90% of my mink line is quickkill, 100% of my otter line is steeljaw. I cannot believe that you had enough information to make the decision to close the Tennakee area last season, and announce it 2 days before the season, does somebody really study weasels? I couldn't believe it. Mink season should got to the end of February, not be the 15th as the pelts are still in fine shape and would not cut into the breeding biomass at all. Leghold traps are necessary for otter especially, and are not as cruel as people think. They can really tear up a mink alright but, I have never seen any damage on an otter ever.

\* I feel that to help the image of trappers a ban on leghold traps would be helpful. I am a recreational trapper and do not do it for money (I do not even sell pelts) but have no problem catching mink, marten, or otter with quickkill traps. I trapped Horse Island last season which was getting overrun with mink. I only trapped a couple of weeks so as not to hurt the population but to thin it out. I feel some if not alot of mink would have starved last winter because of the high number in such a small area. I feel that by trapping some, the otters had more to eat and a much easier winter. I've never found a live animal in my bodyhold traps.

\* I used more traps and covered several different lines; I used better (snow-proof) sets. Mink were hard to take early in the year as they ran mostly under the ice. Where did the marten go? Lake Creek mink seem to be conibear shy. Trapline calendar may be misleading as most sets were targeting more than one species of furbearer. I pulled my wolverine set after taking 2 non-target animals. The ermine population on Lake creek was very high (I saw 10 sets of tracks in 100' of trail). I caught quite a few in mink/marten sets - nearly all male ermine. I caught some furbearers on every line. Took only 1 non-furbearer out of 44 catches - but couldn't release it as it was dead - caught in a 110 conibear.

\* Sorry so late. Last questionnaire. Hope you can still use info. Thanks!

\* The price of fur and gas this season made me decide to not trap this year.

\* I did not trap the last two winters because of a need to rest the areas. Additional clear cuts and extra trapping pressure has made an impact in the Haines area. There are very few wolverine left in the upper Chilkat/Kehall area because of

upper valley over-trapping by a year-round resident of that area. The places that are not clear cut in the area of Chilkat Lake and the Takhin Valley are the only reasons we have a stable breeding population of furbearers at all. Also, the clear cuts are creating bear habitat while destroying winter moose habitat.. Look at the statistics and compare moose harvest levels with the advance of the logging industry. Especially when the Kehall was clear cut. We need an new forest management plan that takes this into account. Of primary importance is the Chilkat Lake/Takhin area and the upper Chilkat.

\* I saw more abundance of fur on the most part so I took the opportunity and trapped harder.

\* Just did it to get my son involved.

\* Working - no driver's license

\* Trap thieves. I can see no logical reasoning behind closing beach areas from Juneau to Echo Cove. 80% of the shoreline from Petersen Creek to Echo Cove is unnavigable by so called dog walkers. Sometimes I wonder if you people aren't associated with these anti-trapping groups. I can understand not wanting traps set on or near the high traffic areas and I personally I wouldn't consider doing it for fear of losing the traps more than anything else. You have effectively closed down lots of prime trapping area.

\* Only when the Americans remember that God created the planet for mankind and not mankind for the planet will the cry for outlawing trapping end Gen. 1:1-31. Thank you for your part in keeping us posted as to your ideas and plans. You have done well in attitude at your job. For what is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Math. 16:26, John 3:16.

\* To much early and late trapping.

\* Had the opportunity to trap for 3 weeks during a hunting trip. Didn't trap along Juneau road system this year mainly due to lack of fur/too much pressure and problems with trap thieves. Couldn't fill out previous years abundance because this was the first year trapping area.

\* Will advise later. But then are other ways to set leghold traps so animals are killed immediately on catching.

\* Right now my traps are about 50% killer traps. But I prefer to use leghold traps they work much better for marten. I use killer traps for river otter.

\* You should have sent me a survey for the 88-89 and 89-90 seasons. I trapped the Chilkats (50 miles) Hawk Inlet, (40

miles) and Port Snett (30 miles of line). Last year I just trapped to check out a bird-proof marten set.

## SOUTHCENTRAL AREAS

- \* Snow and rain made it tough. Wolverine - SDA prohibition improved population. Should stop same-day-airborne on wolves.
- \* Bad weather. -30 below and +40 above.
- \* Sorry I can't tell you if its less or more because I finally moved back from Kuskowim, I should know a little more next year.
- \* Because there was less snow on the ground and it makes it harder on the snow machine and we have one month to trap beaver and some of the other areas have more trapping time, how come? We the hunters in Togiak, want to have more than one month to hunt beaver or other furbearing animals and why we don't have openings on moose.
- \* The same. But it lots of snow so hard to fine runway. And it gets so cold later.
- \* Everything the same except there were a lot more new beaver, ptarmigan was awful poor.
- \* Weather was course - more storms this year. Couldn't get out. Need to have longer season for brown bear, 3-month season, too many bear. Beaver season open earlier, because the when their fur is good. Beavers are plentiful.
- \* Better weather and more time.
- \* I trap with snowmachine but the ice was thick and was good trapping this year. We pull all sets account of cold weather.
- \* New machine, knowing I can travel more without engine failure.
- \* Low prices due to lower prices trapping effort was less.
- \* Creek flooding in December than a hard freeze making ice depth very thick also I work two jobs and prices were very low.
- \* Marital problems. Marten season should be open until the end of February.
- \* When I trap I usually trap PWS or the Cape of Yakataga Area. On PWS I usually have about 60 - #1 1/2 victor for mink and 23 #330 conibear for land otter. As you can see I'm not too serious. I usually use the large boat 54' purse siener for a

home camp and a 16' skiff to run the traps. Mostly keep moving around as to only catch the cream of the fur and leave plenty for brood stock. Typical catch would be 60 mink, 25 land otter, 3-5 marten and a wolverine or two in a month of trapping. In the one area I use 3-wheeler Honda.

\* I did not trap 90-91. I don't have no comments. I did like trapping one time. I'm 68 years old now if my health don't fail me I'll go trapping. I'd like to go trapping if the prices are fairly good or if my health don't fail me.

\* Longer seasons for beaver. Road construction at 39 mile Copper River Highway lead to trucks hauling rocks 24 hours a day making it unsafe for me to trap along the highway as I normally do. Value of fur also made it strictly recreation. Maybe lose season to taking of muskrat until they increase in numbers.

\* There getting to be so few fur animals the seasons should be longer. We have noticed a very sharp decline in the seal herds. We use to be able to get a seal right around the village waters anytime the year. Now we go days and I not see one and go miles to get one. That's after the Exxon oil spill over ground...?

\* No limit east of the Copper River for beaver and a later season for beaver for open-water trapping. Due to the very small number of trappers east of the Copper River, the remoteness and roughness of the terrain and the abundance of beaver plus their mice-like ability to reproduce, there shouldn't be a bag limit and the season should extend to April 30th to allow for open-water trapping by the rare serious traditional beaver trapper. The price of beaver these days is so low that a glut of high tech serious beaver trappers east of the Copper River just isn't going to happen.

\* I have not trapped for the last four or five years due to age and health problems and do not intend to trap anymore.

\* (No changes). Fur market is so bad can't afford to trap except maybe marten only thing you can sell. I have been buying fur in Alaska for 35 years or more. I think oil killed more land otter than most people think.

\* The weather was ok, too far down river to get into the fur and got a late start I was still cutting trail when I quit at Christmas. I wrote to you before and told you the area I trap. Got started late and never got to my main line which is where the fur is. Icy Bay loggers are going to ruin that area of coast plus all the salmon streams with it. It is a small strip of timber on the coast from Suckling to Icy Bay. Remove the trees and you won't have much left. The marten population will dispense with no trees and cover. When I trap this year it will be full of marten because the clear cutting is driving them from west.

\* I had more spear time. Same-day-airborne on wolves, we need it bad!

\* Extend marten season through to February 28th. I had problems with a few marten during February getting into my wolverine sets. No cats here to speak of, so I would not even consider a lynx season here - Unit 6D. I got a special permit (at 1-15-91) last fall to remove problems beaver along the Richardson Highway 6D and 13D. If the problem arises this season again I would like to be considered again to trap the beaver. You biologists are doing a great job. Keep up the good work. With the animals rights movement, all sportsmen, hunters, trappers, fishermen, etc., need to work together or we could be in serious trouble. Just read an article the other day where fishing is now being attacked by "animal righters". Yes, they say now to hook a fish in the mouth or catch them in a net is cruel. What next, huh!!

\* I hadn't trapped any beaver in the last couple of years. It would be nice to have the ending season for beaver moved up to May 1st again. There is an over abundance of beaver in one unit, and it is hard to trap them under the ice. It is also easier to take the adult beaver not under ice.

\* Beaver extend to end of April or early May as it was! Due to unreliable ice conditions I usually did not trap beaver until April. I never had any fur problems or any complaint of quality and was able to market them with no problem. If there was a declining population then I would agree with a shortened season because the beaver caught in April have survived the toughest month. But we seem to have the opposite problem. Why let the highways shoot them all summer when the problem could be cut off early by the extended part of the processing season. I utilized the hides and most of the meat. If professional trappers feel the fur is better early then they have the time early, I personally have no problems with April beaver and have been pushed out of utilizing and trapping beaver since the season has been shortened. Also, if we did have a year, like occasionally we did in past years, where we had favorable conditions and a substantial early harvest, then it could be closed by emergency order. Lets not unnecessarily take away opportunity when the resource does not demand it. If - doesn't like late furs then he doesn't have to buy them or trap them. Mine sold like hotcakes and the meat comes in at a skinny part of the year.

\* It would certainly help to shut season on all furbearers before you must declare an emergency closure to let all species repopulate. Hunting season ptarmigan and rabbits could also stand a shut down. Thanks for trapper questionnaire statewide report.

\* Increased number of coyotes, wolves, and less pressure by other trappers. Experimented with new snare ideas and targeted a specific animal to learn what works best. Good year to hone



skills in deep snow, rain, slush, etc. fur quality really good. Allow beaver season to remain open as it used to. This will reduce if not completely eliminate need for shooting them in the summer. Our seasons shouldn't be managed on the basis of matching interim season and bag limits our weather, ice conditions and population are completely different. How long until trapping season will be opened in oil spill affected areas? Don't want those areas closed permanently just for Wally World. Trapping pressure are so small in that area it wouldn't effect animal density. May give you better data if trappers get out there and take some animals. I can supply you with a list of people who want our beaver season changed back (extended). We have waited long enough - shooting them in the summer is a total waste - it's time somebody uses some common sense!

\* Increase the limit on beaver. Extend coyote season until April 15. Put a stamp on the return envelope - more people would probably respond.

\* There was a lack of fur present. Mink season to run concurrent with otter to stop incidental by catch. Marten to run concurrent with wolverine to stop incidental by catch.

\* No bag limit for beaver in the Cordova area mile 0 to 27 mile, season to be changed from February-April 30. Reason for change of season is in the past two years the snow and ice were real bad, that is why I think the season should be changed, to read, February 1st to April 30th, that is for the Cordova area.

\* Did not attempt trapping local this season do to lack of buyer interest in furs although I did seriously consider trapping until I talked to the local fur buyer.

\* I did not trap the winter of 90-91 because I had a fulltime winter job and the decrease in fur prices. However, I did spend considerable time roaming the woods. Its my guess mink and marten are still in good supply, as well as coyote and beaver. beaver are everywhere. A spring beaver season is almost necessary to be able to harvest any surplus economically.

\* The price of fur. I like to trap as a hobby not to make a living.

\* More nice weather and good snow conditions.

\* We could use more enforcement during the month of April - lost of snowmachines running down fox and chasing moose around, etc.

\* Personal problems - divorce.

\* Just moved up two years ago and was working alot. Also trapping alot of these species is new to me.

\* Fur prices down.

\* Started late - November 21. Heavy snow mid-December - heavy wind.

\* The 1990-91 season had ideal weather conditions for maintaining a long working line. Over all populations of furbearers looked healthy.

\* First time out.

I haven't trapped these past two winters but I still get out. I feel there should be no season for lynx and wolverine as I haven't seen these critters or their tracks for quite sometime, marten signs are scarce, wolf sign is plenty and fox seem to be holding their own.

\* Less. Because I had operations and couldn't trap.

\* Snow conditions were better - less snow and more ice - freeze-up earlier made river ice safer for travel. Then I didn't have to fight the deep snow conditions as in previous seasons. I can only speak for the area I trap. I don't have the lynx here in my area like you probably have up around Glennallen, Chitna, and upper Squirrel Creek areas. Therefore I do not support any extension of the lynx season. I heard of some trappers north of me picking cats out of their traps all trapping season and turning them loose, that did not happen to me. The very few cats that were in my area this season were here only because they came down from north of me before they got trapped out. This is just my opinion - gassed on a few years of field experience, I might be right or wrong - who knows, but if cats don't show up here in abundance like in the early 70s, there is a reason for it. In one of the areas I trap - I did have a problems with marten getting into my wolverine sets. I am more concerned with this so-called animal rights B.S. That's going on, plus this subsistence issue - anyway - take care - you guys are doing a good job - keep up the good work. I worked hard at wolf trapping all winter only to trap one wolf. Then when I located a couple hot spots middle of February I found out the season was closed by emergency order - so had to pull my wolf sets. I don't think this is fair for the trapper since bigger percentage of wolf were taken by airplane hunters - consequently the trapper had to terminate wolf trapping also. How about leaving the season open for the trapper - Nov - March - as in the past, and stop airplane hunting earlier especially if getting close to the quota.

\* More time.

\* Wolf season should not have been closed in Unit 13! There should be no closed season on wolf.

\* Due to extremely low fur prices, and lynx just starting to come back and the only furbearer I trapped was marten.

\* Trapping is a healthy way to manage wildlife. So is managed hunting. The younger trappers need all the assistance you can give to be able to continue. Government in all forms must be forcefully told that the environmentalist do not realize the damage they are doing by interfering with state(s) management of the wildlife.

\* More snow this than last and a lot last year. Marten depends on weather in spring warmer weather they start to shed. Longer season won't bring the price up you might try to promote fur as a renewable source of money.

\* The same late season worked early season. In both lynx and marten if population's look good then the season could be extended. Lynx seemed to be in a extra long down cycle from the last up. I think ADF&G should wait and see. In the case of marten they have been taking a hell of a pounding the last years. Thank you.

\* First year to trap - just learning. I trap only for my own use.

\* I didn't trap much this year but did alot of flying and looking for tracks. There was an abundance of marten sign - in most places - especially north and west of Lake Louise. The lynx seem to be making a real come back and I think could stand a longer season - especially if for prices remaining as they are - low.

\* Did not have time to run an effective trap line due to no time for follow through. So I did not set any traps. I am very sorry I took so long for a reply, have been very busy with work, please continue to send me questionnaire because I hope to have time in the future to do a little trapping and will always be happy to help you in your studies and or game management.

\* Need to take more wolves from Unit 13 - Increasing more than in 20 years I have been in area. Many moose and caribou kills. Saw packs up to do 16 in number. Many small packs.

\* My snowmachine is worn out. I injured my back. A baby in the family kept me close to home.

\* Price of fur is so low that I cannot justify the expenditure or effort.

\* Low fur prices and equipment failure due to deep snow. Lynx are still low for a longer season. Areas that I have taken 4 and 5 out of on high lynx years, only saw 1 or 2 sets of tracks this year but this is better than last year.

\* I didn't try my main area because of no snow machine and I was devoting alot of my time to my time on my homestead.

\* Conditions last season although periodically cold were excellent. The easiest and most profitable since 1983-84. We also put more effort into the season to obtain better results. Saw first lynx tracks (6 sets) since 1985. Caught first lynx since 1982. Present but still scarce. I don't think a longer season is needed yet in my area. Had the best results ever for marten switched over to 100% use of 120 conibear and cubby buckets. Also put forth more effort. Increased catch from average of 6/year to 17(89-90) and 24(90-91) with bulk of catch 915) in January. Ratio 89-90 was 13m, 4f for 90-91 16m, 8f. In February after season closed over 30m sets of fresh marten tracks were observed on one section of trapline. There was generally a movement from west to east from a higher to lower elevation (3-400' difference). Tracks seemed to indicate a slightly higher ratio of females. Upon flying the area in late February numerous pockets of fairly abundant marten tracks were observed north and west of present line that were untouched. Observation also discovered no trapping within 8 miles east of line none within 30 miles north or 10 miles west. Expansion of trapline 10 miles with hopes of increasing marten catch to 50+. Longer season would be helpful. Have not seen a wolverine track since 1984. However some were spotted by air north of present line. Wolves were abundant with a good harvest. Tracks present after closure of season in January. Caribou were again nonexistent. However, moose seemed plentiful, calves were very scarce. Most moose observed were mature bulls. 9 different bulls over 36" were observed November.- December, 2 younger bulls and 3 cows with 1 calf. Rabbits were more abundant this season than at anytime since 1983-84. But still nowhere peak abundance.

\* I am trying to let fur build back up on my line.

\* Low price for fur. Depth of ice for beaver trapping.

\* Deep snow towards end of season. Cold weather animals weren't moving. Few times snowmachine breakdown.

\* Question #12 - At this time there could not be any reason to increase the lynx season. We saw two different lynx tracks this winter. That makes a grand total of 5 different lynx tracks I have seen on this line in 15 years. The two tracks I saw were both within a mile of the highway. Question #10 - There was plenty of snow this winter but most of my trouble was wind. It seemed like there was at least twice as much wind this winter. My traps were drifted under most of the time. 2/3 of my line is above timber line which offers no protection.

\* One thing that hindered me was the late moose and caribou hunts. Hunters using my trails would trip my trail sets. Therefore resulting in not getting the targeted animals.

\* Fur prices being low and the reluctance to use foothold traps on the ground the last 3 years. However, the last 3 weeks

of February - I finally relented and used foothold traps. I caught 5 fox, 2 coyote, and a wolverine in a short time period. Taught me a big lesson, I've neglected alot of fur that I could have had over the years lately. I and some pals trap a few areas. In 13B, we trap Phelan Crick and the Upper Delta River. Lot of beaver, some fox, coyote, wolf, marten, etc. But too high in elevation to hold large populations (except for beaver). Fur quality however, is excellent and that why we trap there. Very disappointing on wolf sign thataway. Saw a single set of wolf tracks on opening day and that was it for the year. Where are they? Oh well, hoped this helped.

\* Price of canines down. Very few marten around. Wanted to let the main line repopulate. ADF&G needs to initiate an aggressive trapper (and non-trapper) education program. We need to look more seriously at what the Canadians are doing as far as education and research. They seem to be far ahead of us. I would like to see more informational literature getting out to trappers, via newsletter, s local papers, public meeting, etc. pertaining to professional research of fur bearers and their prey species. Realizing the cost involved, how about at least sending summaries of research and other pertinent trapping info to the people who return your trapper questionnaires. A little incentive helping out ADF&G! Trappers are generally an honest, hard-working bunch. We need to aggressively enforce the regulations and weed out the bad so-called trappers.

\* I strongly oppose the land and shoot method of hunting wolves and would suggest that there would be no hunting same day as airborne. I believe that the wolf populations suffers greatly by the land and shoot law.

\* The snowfall of 89 and 90 made for a short season for me. It was to hard to keep sets going in 500 inches of snow. We had a nice winter last year. Due to the snow fall of 89-90 the animals changed their routes. This year (90-91) the snow was back to normal and the animals seem to go back to the same routes and habits. Some of my best coyote areas (in 89-90) only had a few coyotes in them. This year the numbers were back up to the numbers in 88-89.

\* Fur prices. Snow depth. Real windy area. My main traplines are in Unit 20D and 20B. However, I do run 13 generally later in the season (last 1/2 of January and February and March). Lynx are on the come back, but I think in Unit 13B, one more year yet before increasing the season. Marten are strong in this unit. I believe the season could be longer, but support an October 15th opener, as marten prime early. I would never suggest the season be extended on the end of the year. February and March in Unit 13B are very nice animals. You have a very healthy coyote population in the Pump 10 to Black Rapids area. I fear for the Dall sheep population in that area.

\* Gradual decline in marten numbers so let a 15-mile line. No wolves in my area due to no caribou. I'm not in favor of aerial wolf hunting.

\* As prices have declined and seasons shortened in the last few years it is obvious that overall efforts by trappers has decreased. Lynx: I think our last October trapper meeting in Glennallen clearly demonstrated that a very high percentage of area trappers favored longer lynx season - especially trappers in those areas where lynx have good habitat, ie Unit 11 and 13D. I think many trappers are loosing respect for the law as they don't feel it has been fair in the balance between harvest and protection. Too much protection when a fur harvest could have been had without hunting the resource. Marten: again our last October meeting most area trappers felt there was no biological reason to take away February season on marten in either Unit 11 or 13. This seemed like a very hot issue to many - and obviously some trappers were mad as they felt that they had lost the earnings from 25% of the marten season, at a time when marten numbers were still quite high, because of a "fear" that they may be overharvested. One comment I heard was the "we need to manage by good biology - not fear". I agree.

\* Last year I was side-lined by a knee operation in January 90. Trapping conditions overall were above average this past year - snow amount at or below normal, only 1 thaw more wind than normal (especially in Unit 11), but ice conditions on most creeks and rivers are very good. Concerning the Lynx season: Lynx in many areas have returned to the point of being the predominate furbearer in the woods. I feel the lynx population doubles or triples by next winter, as it will in some areas, the serious trappers will be left with 2 probable scenarios, with only a 30-day lynx season. It will tend to turn otherwise honest and law-abiding trappers into outlaws, or it will force the trapper into a 30-day season on everything, as it will be virtually impossible to trap any of the larger species of furbearers in a serious manner without the constant hassle and interference of unwanted lynx catches. Most trappers who supported closing the lynx season during the low cycle years, did so, assuming the Fish and Game would keep it's promise to reopen it during the peak years, which is now. Many recreational trappers curtail their activities when fur prices drop, and they surely have on lynx. But for the trappers who truly depend on trapping for part or most of their livelihood, especially those in the bush, having unnecessarily short seasons can be a greater hardship than lower fur prices. It does no good, and we can't afford to be a year or two behind on the seasons. For those trappers who don't have high lynx numbers, and extended seasons should have little affect on them, as they can continue to leave the lynx they have alone, if they so wish. On an increasing lynx cycle, a very significant percent of the population are family packs which for the most part are very residential and don't do much widespread traveling so the fear of "if I don't catch it, the next guy will", is not all that valid in my opinion. Having the open season of one

species of furbearer out of sync with all the others especially during the years when it is more numerous than all the others, is not a good management plan, and does not encourage good and proper trapping etiquette. Concerning the Marten season: Marten populations continue to be at all time highs in all the areas of units 11 and 13 that I trap, and are still far higher than they were 15-20 years ago. With marten prices at what they've been lately, and having endured the type of trapping pressure put on them in the past 5 years or so, and the fact that their populations are still very high overall, proves to me, anyway, that overtrapping has simply not been taking place throughout most of their range. Obviously, there will be areas of easy access along the road systems that will get hit hard, but I don't think it's right or fair to jeopardize trapping seasons for the entire unit because of that. How many bull moose survive the hunting season that live along the highways or well-used trails? Hunting seasons aren't based on that alone, and never should trapping season. Trappers who run on creeks and rivers such as I many years, cannot even gain access to some of their areas until well into January. This makes it impossible for me at least to eventually trap my best marten country, with February closed. Although I caught less than 100 this past winter, over 70% were males, and most of these from areas I've trapped steady for 15-20 years. All the Canadian studies would say that there is evidence of a stable and healthy population. They also recommend that marten be trapped during their peak primeness - December 1 to mid-February. Any Alaskan furbuyer would also testify that marten hold their fur quality better through February than most other species.

\* 3-foot snowfall in about 1 1/2 weeks around Xmas slowed my efforts down considerably. Had to break existing trails with snowshoes after the big snow so didn't figure it was worth breaking new trail to other areas that late in the season - January 15 lynx was over, didn't figure there would be any wolves down low in that deep snow. Though there were quite a few wolverine traveling through the area where I was set out and did good on them. They started really showing up the first part of January and even after the season ended I would cut fresh tracks most anytime. I went out in any direction. Early in the season they were slow in coming around, however I did see the usual amount of tracks, for that time of year. Marten were slow this year, but that is nothing unusual. I have seen other years when the numbers seem low and the very next year numbers pick-up considerably. I suspect they just weren't in this part of the country, though we will have to wait until next year and see how the numbers do. One pair of wolves came through before the season opened and later in March there was a hungry long female around for about a week. Otherwise no wolf activity last year. An educated observer could almost say the wolves have been trapped out-but we know better than that.

\* Trapping conditions were good.

\* Because last season I didn't trap and also it was just about impossible to keep my sets working with the snow conditions and wind that we caught this winter. I'd run my line that same night it would snow and blow and fill in my traps.

\* Heavy snows this year kept me from trapping some of the lines, I would have worked other wise. A few trappers in the Unit 11, McCarthy Road, have all but given up trapping because of fur prices, cost of fuel, and lifestyle in general. This has caused an increase of marten in some areas but not on my line where marten are up very high and I did not get to them because of deep snow. The rabbit and lynx population are on the rise and with their prices being so low I believe a longer season on lynx would be go - I could not say if a longer marten season is in order or not - and I'm not sure what an emergency order to increase the season should be.

\* I had problems with deep snowdrifts late December to early Janaury. Also at the same time I had problems with my snowgo. Late January to all February had bad overflow problems on the lakes due to gas holes. The fur was there. I had a rough time getting there. I have noticed a steady increase in lynx in the area in the past 3 years. The rabbits are thick so the feed is there. I only took 2 cats last 90-91 season, I didn't want to hit them hard. I plan on seeing more lynx next 91-92 season and I don't think an extended season would hurt. As for marten, they are abundant compared to 15 years ago they were scarce. I only took 10 marten due to mechanical failures on my snowgo, and overflow, frozen lakes and drainages are my only access to my trapping out here. The marten were very abundant in February after the season closed. I am all for an extended marten season for 91-92 even by emergency order if necessary.

\* Less snow.

\* The last year I trapped (1987-88) I noticed a marked decrease in populations of: marten, lynx, and wolverine. The decline coincided with increased trapping activity in the immediately preceding years. Other factors were not obvious except in the case of lynx (& coyote) which followed the decline of snowshoe hare populations. There is a marked increase in hare populations and lynx have been showing up in the areas with good hare habitat. I don't necessarily think that an extension of the season would be a good idea yet, maybe in 92-93. Some with marten and wolverine. A conservative approach may benefit us all in the long run especially where we have the NPS looking over our shoulder. I plan to trap on a limited basis this winter. At least as much as it takes to see whats there.

\* Too many people on my trail springing my traps. Also poor fur prices contributed to a lesser effort.

\* Fur prices were lower.



\* I just have not made an effort to trap the way I used to (must be getting washed up).

\* I have trapped less the past 3 years because my presence is needed more at home due to my family increasing in size. My wife needs the extra help because we home school.

\* Low fur price. Changing weather conditions. 2' of snow one week, 5" of slush the next. Half of the season was good traveling the other half sucked. I do believe airplanes have a big impact on wolf and wolverine numbers. It really steams me when I see airplanes flying low over a trapline. The other person working a trapline by any other means busts his ass only to have low prices and over priced equipment. But I really enjoy trapping, the experiences are priceless, and that and not the prices of fur is why I trap.

\* I think aerial hunting, trapping, and spotting of game should be eliminated. It does nothing to promote the great outdoor sport many of us enjoy. By using an airplane one is not able to grasp the greatness of the land as you can if you are able to travel by ground. It is not a sport at all, and should only be utilized by professional Fish and Wildlife personnel or State Game people, for wildlife surveys and "controlled" hunts if absolutely needed for management purposes.

\* Continued low prices. My trapping conditions are about the same as usual - aerial trapping is abused and keeping wolves and wolverine down. I think land and shoot should be stopped.

\* Less snow, more time off from regular job, milder conditions. Residents up north complain about too many wolves and coyotes. How about transplanting them down to Unit 9C. Sure would like more opportunities to catch them here. Good year overall. Next year fox and lynx numbers should be up even more because of the abundant snowshoe population. Surprisingly though, didn't see on Arctic hare this year. Think I will concentrate on snares next year. Also glad that coyotes have moved into our area. Hope they continue to move in. Lots of fun this year. Lost 65 pounds trapping this year.

8 I got a new trapping partner. Lots more caribou (and carcasses) in area.

\* Not much snow didn't last to long. Land and shoot trapping should be abolished because in my opinion this isn't called trapping. This type of trapping should be outlawed. Also in our Game Unit 9B I think the quota on beaver should be increased to 45 because of the abundance of beaver, although I don't get my quota, I think it should be increased because the beavers are ruining the salmon spawning creeks where I live and ruining the scenic beauty of the rivers, creeks, etc..

\* I had more time this year to spend trapping. There were a couple of warm spells that opened up the creeks and made mink, otter, and beaver trapping alot easier. There were alot less caribou around my trapline this year and wolves seemed almost extinct compared to last year, wolverine populations seemed to have raised from the year before.

\* No snow easy traveling 90-91. Too much snow last two years 88-89.

\* My airplane was not flying and I used a snowmachine and 3 wheelers once. Depth of snow was poor. Ice was thick for trapping beaver.

\* Poor prices as well as family illness forced early end to season. Lack of snow in this area limited extent of line.

\* No enough snow - bad weather - no price on furs.

\* That I never tried hard enough to trap.

\* Trapping for personal use.

\* No good for martens - low prices I only trapped for personal use because of this.

\* Fur prices I trapped 6 days and caught 11 otters/9 mink. I burned myself out goose/duck hunting last year and didn't feel like playing outside all winter. I lived in Cold Bay last year would have been a good year to trap otter/mink, our winter was very mild, lakes and tributaries froze a month late and opened right back up - no time to ice-fish. I like the thought of trapping next season but I'm sure I will.

\* Too much aircraft same day airborne. Use FWP patrol A/C air borne violations.

\* Travelled further, fairly good snow conditions.

\* There are too many amateur trappers leaving too much working gear in the field. A training course for first year trappers should be required in order to obtain a trapping license.

\* I understand there was a problem with fox on the south end of Kodiak, with many being afflicted with something that causes large areas of fur to fall out - something that looks like mange - a mite? This condition has existed for several years. The dog contracted it last winter.

\* I didn't trap this season because of a job obligation. I worked through the winter logging. I wanted to go trapping.

\* Low prices and I was busy building cabins. I did not try to trap much due to building some cabins. Also low fur prices. The

cost of operating gas, food, does not allow for low priced fur. Also I am 68 years old and don't fly quite as high as some years back. I believe in letting fur alone to a certain point when the price is bad on that species, but too much of one fur on your line can damage the other fur, by food competition also disease from over abundance. Also you should use one of your movies (I believe your have some) to show wolf and eagle kills. Both sound and picture on T.V. and slow down anti-trappers. We are gentle, they are true cold-blooded killers. Most beaver kills and house destruction.

\* Trapping effort would generally be same due to; 2 dozen traps set, 5+ miles of trapline, same number of fox and land otter regardless of price offered. Main months of trapping are December and January. 1) More red fox were sighted, daytime that is. 2) Otter, more sighted. 3) More mallards than usual as where as butterballs, golden eyes about the same, maybe less. 4. Big bucks sighted, not too many deer. Too many loose dogs. 5. Is or are seasons about 2 weeks earlier? 6. More bear (young) sighted in June, that is heard about and sighted.

\* Getting older in age, lower fur prices, trapping for fun not money.

\* I trapped Izut Bay on the east side of Afognak Island. I don't remember filling out a survey, so that is why I've answered your ?'s. Freezing rain made pan trapping difficult. Very few marten until I reached 1000 feet elevation. River otter were diminished by the oil spill and I found 1 land otter dead (4 year old) and the apparent cause of death was starvation. The pads on the otters front feet were torn with chunks of flesh missing like it had tried to dig in sharp shale. The beach was lightly oiled and I think it had swallowed some oil. I skinned it and the fur turned out alright. the fox were plentiful at first and I trapped eleven of them, 10 were very big males. Out of those, 2 had been trapped before as they were missing toes on their front paws. They averaged 58"-60" and about 20 lbs. 1 fox had mange. I didn't notice any friendly fox or signs of rabies. I spent 4 months there.

\* Did not trap because spent winter in Wyoming. Glad to see your report and questionnaire, I hope you get more than a 37% response. Its up to the trappers to help manage our resource. Keep up the good work, I'll be back next winter!

\* Difficult to access trapping areas due to weather. Low fur prices. Beaver quota for this area to low. Beaver starving themselves out of drainages, over abundant. With the high cost to access trapping areas on Kodiak, it is not practical to transport and set up for the amount of fur allowed, hence, little trapping effort. My apologies for the lateness of this questionnaire. It got sidetracked.

\* I am learning.

\* Spent the majority of December and January outside. Did not trap to heavily this past year. Concentrated on beaver and a couple wolverine sets - quite a bit of wolverine activity during March but season closes end of February. Did not attempt to trap any other furbearers - Hopefully next year. Questionnaire an excellent idea for following fur trends - keep it up.

\* I trapped alone - and by doing so I worked harder to maintain a good working trapline. I believe what the Alaska Dept of Fish and Game needs to do is try to get the USFWS to do away with the 4-day trap check. It is not so much the 4-day checking of traps that keeps the trappers from trapping in Unit 15 - but the weather. I have trapped on the Kenai Peninsula for 40 years and it is the weather that I use as my guide as to where I check traps. It is impossible to keep and maintain a workable trap line on this 4-day trap check. Trappers should have more say on these regulations.

\* A larger dog team with more trap trained dogs.

\* Extensive search for productive area via the road system covering 800 miles. My trapping this year was mostly an exploratory effort along an extensive portion of the central road system. The limited nature of my line and continually changing weather greatly affected harvest levels. Marten populations are very spotty with some good concentrations and unharvested area. Fox seem to be increasing across a large portion of the state. Lynx appear to be doing quite well also. It is my opinion that the DOT should not have the authority to manage furbearer populations for any reason contrary to current regulations or seasons. They feel they can indiscriminately kill beaver to prevent culvert damming. I would suggest transplanting problem beaver to seed over unused habitat. My wolf trapping effort was greatly reduced in Unit 15 due to fur thieves, I lost two coyotes to these individuals who make things hard for everyone.

\* I had help from an experienced beaver trapper which resulted in more sets and higher success. I do not anticipate doing much trapping for a couple years as the population is now low in the pond below my house on Soldotna Creek.

\* Would like to see all aerial hunting same day for furbearers stopped. There is a difference between hunting and shooting.

\* I sold my airplane and I was not in the state between September and December at which time I would have done my preseason recon.

\* It was our first year establishing a line so we only ran 8 miles or so but we have plans to push it further next year. All winter we had hard pack snow which was great for the machines but we had a lot of trouble with legholds freezing up. Consequently, what fur we did take was with snares. We got a late start mid

January, snow was scarce until early December, then we just got busy over the holidays. Lots of coyotes and wolves in our area and some beaver.

\* Ten minutes isn't enough time to read your report, but 50 minutes! I would suggest that lynx should not be protected where they can't be reached by machines such as this side of Kachemak Bay, where they are hardly threatened. Now black bear are varmints, and by collared moose calf study have proven to be most deadly on those young animals. Their hides should be made salable. They will not become threatened by such, and the moose crop might be increased.

\* Increased area.

\* The last 2 years there has been deep ice 40 inches. Plus I feel the beaver season should be from February 1 to April 15. There is a lot more beaver on the lower pen than in past years and nobody is trapping them. Most all the small streams and rivers are being dammed up to a point that fish may have a problem returning.

\* I didn't trap this year in part because of not having the time as I'm trying to get my guide business in order. Also because of so many rules and regulations that it's getting tough to stay legal. I realize this is in part because of so many people and the pressure on the resource. But I wonder if the decisions made on the resource are done with biological data or with emotional pressure from certain well organized groups.

\* Due to unexpected health and business problems, we haven't run a full scale trap line for a couple of years. We fully intended to have full season this year. The marten in this area have increased some from the decline of two winters ago. We will trap a few this winter. Wolverine have continued to increase for the last 3 years. Wolves have started to come back a little but we won't trap for them.

\* My takes were good in early season. Did not want to take more than I thought the area could stand.

\* Too many freeze/thaw systems. Generally low fur prices kept my enthusiasm down. I strongly urge putting same-day-airborne/land and shoot wolf hunting back on the trapping license where it belongs. We harvest and sell these furs as an important cash crop. I feel the "ethics/fair-chase" issue is merely a smoke screen by anti-hunter/trapper to totally eliminate harvest of wolves. Incidentally, wolves appeared to be in great abundance this year and definitely more than last.

\* First season - just to get fur for hat/gloves. I only trapped until I had 2 beaver and 6 muskrat - that was all I wanted.

\* Too much cold weather. Too much snow. Too hard to sell what little fur I caught.

\* Generally I just trap for recreation small lines over short distances. Snow depth was greater than normal this past winter in my area which made coyote trapping difficult. Temperatures were normal. I have never seen such abundant marten sign in the Goose Bay Area of GMU 14A as I have seen this past winter. My father has trapped the area since the mid-50s and he agrees this past year has been the best for marten tracks in 35 years. No sign of wolverine in this area for 15-18 years. Last lynx tracks I saw were at least 10 years ago. Coyote very heavy, beaver strong, lots of otter, muskrat. Very little mink sign over the past 10-14 years - I think this is due to more otter in the area. I think that the beaver season in southcentral should be backed off to the old Feb 1st opening as most beaver do not prime up good until after the 1st of the year due to their heavy hides.

\* Extend season on coyotes in all GMUs where they are present. Extremely competitive animal that has had effect on beaver, lynx and fox populations. Coyote can withstand incredible trapping pressure and it is impossible to wipe them out. They are too wary to eliminate so a long season will not hurt them. Eliminate dual classification of wolves and wolverines as Big Game and Furbearer or they will go the way of the black bear. Also eliminate dual classification of fox, coyote and lynx. If "weekend warriors" want to shoot a lynx or fox fine - but make them buy a trapping license. Registered traplines have their pros and cons - but the cons out-weigh the pros. If you don't get the Area you want, then what? You don't trap that's what or you're offered one or the other side of the mountains. I know because I've had registered areas and I've been on the outside of the system too with no place to set a muskrat trap! The weekend guys fade in and out and a savvy long timer can work around these guys.

\* Extra deep snow, more overflow on lakes and creeks.

\* Soft snow! Difficult to get around!

\* I didn't trap marten or wolverine. All I trapped was beaver and otter so I stayed in the lower country. Upper Mat-Su-Talkeetna Mountains: Marten have become scarcer ea h season, so I decided not to trap them. There are very few if any around. I did see where a group came through some of my beaver area in late February. No wolverine, I think the airplane hunters are playing a heavy toll! 6 years ago I would catch an average of 3 or 4 a year. Same with wolves, but there never were many wolves around. I noticed an abundance of river otter this last winter. I took more than normal. Basically, I concentrated on beaver (Feb, March, April). There were alot around, before I haven't trapped beaver for the previous 3 seasons. The weather was cooperative

but fur prices weren't. Hey, let's do something about these marten and wolverine populations!

\* Real heavy snow and fur prices down. In my area I haven't seen a wolf track for 5 years there hasn't been a single wolf travelled along the river. We used to hunt them by air when it was legal but I think the time has come when the land and shoot has to stop as there are so many airplanes and pressure now. And also the snow machine has changed the trapping. Years ago the far outlying reaches were seldom trapped but now with the snowmachine and airplanes hardly no place that is safe.

\* Snow conditions were somewhat worse this year than last.

\* The snow was much deeper. I started late in the season and I was mainly out just to have a good time, not work my butt off.

\* Snow conditions - low prices on furs - and my health was poor last winter. Actually, I would like to see the marten season extended back to (and) February 29th -- as to get to my area across the Susitna is often not possible (by snowmachine) until well into January - and as I previously stated no one but me and possibly one other is making sets for them in 16A.

\* I have trapped 16A marten mostly for recreation several years. One year extensively. They seem to be semi-abundant in pockets. These pocket habitats have remained the same for 5 years. They appear to disperse more towards the end of the season. Where I don't know. I have noticed more wolf activity down in the forest the last 2 years, instead of just up high. I feel either their maybe more wolves (separate packs) or they ahem somewhat depleted moose in the high country.

\* Low prices - less time - lack of sign. Before the flood of October 1986, beaver were fairly abundant in my area. The flood waters washed out many dams, lodges and feed caches and they didn't have time to rebuild before winter. I believe many perished because of that. They are coming back slowly. The early opening of the trapping season has slowed the increase. On wolverine and lynx, I haven't seen a track of either one of those animals for about 5 winters.

\* Less productive than last year because of few price I didn't trap as hard except for coyote which was more for fun than fur.

\* I did not trap 1990-91 season due to snow depth and illness. Sorry I can not contribute.

\* Due to work schedules, I did not trap this winter. I usually trap a very small line for fur for my personal use. I plan to trap this season (91-92) I will only use about 15 sets on my line. Fox and coyote and mink.

\* Low abundance fur/snow depth. Divorce. I did get out to call coyote a few times and noticed there seemed to be more sign and numbers. Hopefully things will change and will at least get some recreations trapping in.

\* I would like to see information programs set up to inform the public on how fur animals and game in most areas need to be controlled to sustain a healthy population and that harvesting these animals and utilizing them is better than the boom and bust cycle that will occur and result in a total waste of a resource.

\* I got a school bus driver job for the winter. I was going to trap a little because it's in my blood but ended up not. I did volunteer work out one church instead finishing the inside of our new building. The situation of the fur industry makes me sick. We have to come up with something soon or it will be all over for the trapper, pity too because all the trappers I know are outstanding citizens and woodsmen and understand the principle of harvesting fur. We will be the losers and the whose state.

\* Sorry I haven't returned your questionnaire. Bad timing for me with the Bristol Bay salmon season but regardless, I haven't trapped in a couple of winters. I did give the questionnaire to another trapper but he is even more "negligent" than me.



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