

# 2018 Alaska Trapper Report: 1 July 2018–30 June 2019

Timothy J. Spivey



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**Cover Photo:** High school science class students from Port Alsworth, Alaska with an assortment of furbearers trapped by students. ©2019 Branden Hummel.

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## Code of Ethics

### A TRAPPER'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Respect other trapper's "grounds" – particularly brushed, maintained traplines with a history of use.
2. Check traps regularly.
3. Promote trapping methods that will reduce the possibility of catching nontarget animals.
4. Obtain landowners' permission before trapping on private property.
5. Know and use proper releasing and killing methods.
6. Develop set location methods to prevent losses.
7. Trap in the most humane way possible.
8. Dispose of animal carcasses properly.
9. Concentrate trapping in areas where animals are overabundant for the supporting habitat.
10. Promptly report the presence of diseased animals to wildlife authorities.
11. Assist landowners who are having problems with predators and other furbearers that have become a nuisance.
12. Support and help train new trappers in trapping ethics, methods and means, conservation, fur handling, and marketing.
13. Obey all trapping regulations, and support strict enforcement by reporting violations.
14. Support and promote sound furbearer management.

This code of ethics is reprinted from the *Alaska Trappers Manual*. The manual was created in a joint effort between the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The manual is currently available from the Alaska Trappers Association for \$20.00, including shipping, or from some bookstores in Alaska.

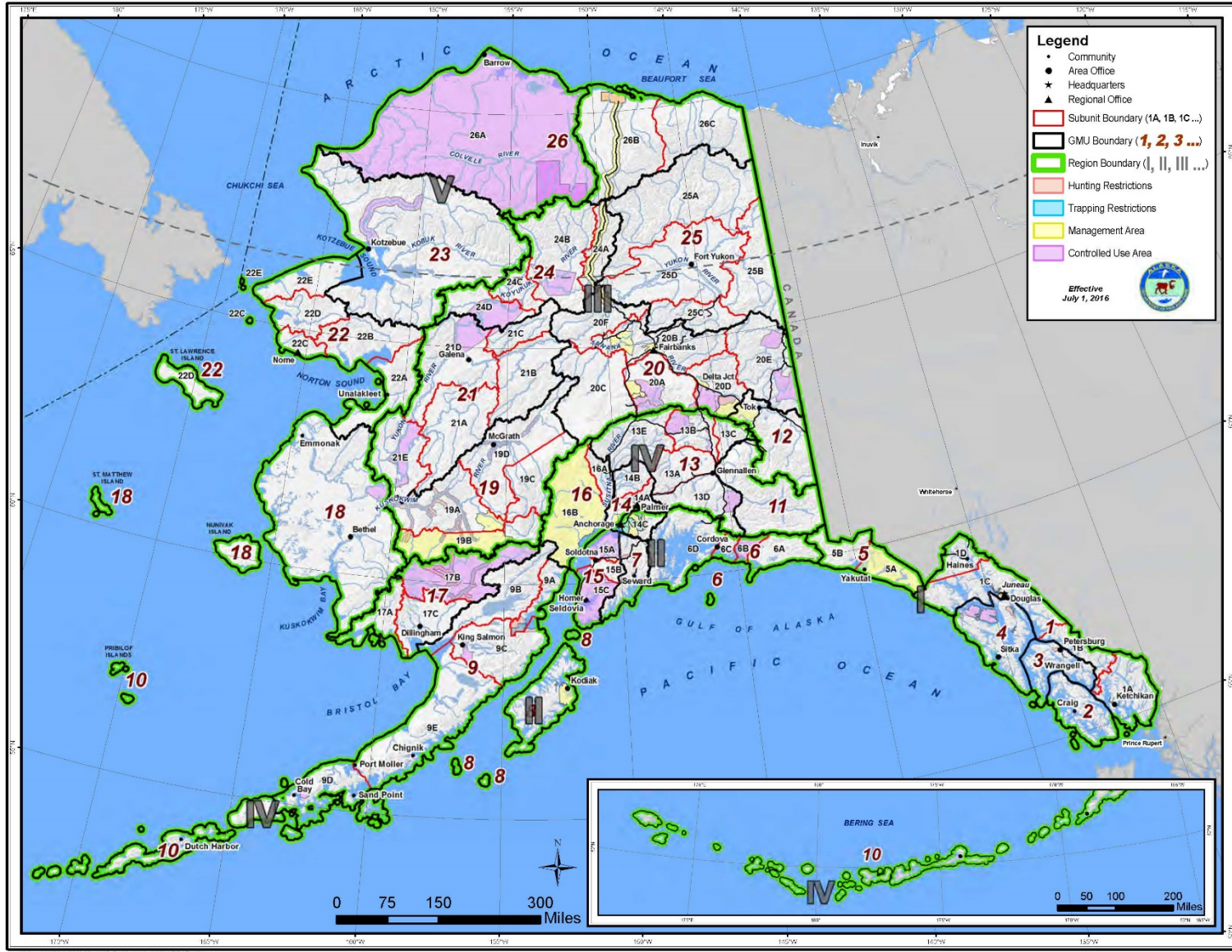


Figure 1. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation regions and game management units.

## Introduction

This *2018 Alaska Trapper Report: 1 July 2018–30 June 2019* contains information provided by trappers through an annual trapper questionnaire. On the following pages, you'll find out how other Alaskans ran their traplines, what their primary target species were, how much effort they put into catching fur, how abundant furbearer and prey species were on their traplines, and how many furbearers they trapped. You'll also find fur sealing summaries from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and comments from trappers throughout the state.

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

The accuracy and value of information provided in this report depends on the numbers of trappers who reply. To help the 2018 questionnaire reach trappers, we identified potential trappers using licensing and fur sealing records; We sent the 2018 questionnaire invites to only people who purchased a trapping license, hunt/trap combination license, hunt/trap/fish combination license authorizing them to trap in 2018. Of the 7,687 questionnaire invites mailed or emailed out, we received 573 responses, yielding a 7.5% response rate. Of those responding, 17% of the responses were provided using the paper format, while most respondents chose to answer the questionnaire online. The response rate was slightly lower than the response rate for the 2017 questionnaire.

This year, trappers were assigned to the 5 standard regions found in Figure 1 based on their mailing address. If a trapper responded with his/her primary trapline in a region separate from their mailing address, we reassigned that trapper to the trapline's region. This was done in an attempt to accurately reflect trapping effort and locations. Throughout this report, regions will be listed by a roman numeral in place of description (e.g., Region I instead of Southeast): Region I = Southeast Alaska; Region II = Southcentral Alaska, Region III = Interior Alaska, Region IV = Central and Southwest Alaska, Region V = Arctic and Western Alaska.

As always, we maintain strict confidentiality. The names of individuals and references to specific traplines will not be included in any reports. We hope you find this report informative and welcome your suggestions for improvement.

Trapper questionnaire reports are mailed to all trappers who responded to the survey. Currently, this report and all previous reports can be found on our website:

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

# A Profile of Trapping in Alaska

## TRAPPER INFORMATION

### Did You Trap?

This year, 7,687 questionnaire invites were mailed throughout the state and 573 were returned for an overall response rate of 7.5% (Table 1). The response rate was highest from Region V and lowest from Region II. Statewide, 45.4% of respondents trapped during the 2018–2019 season, regulatory year (RY) 2018 (a regulatory year begins July 1 and ends June 30; e.g., RY18 = 1 July 2018–30 June 2019).

**Table 1. Response to the 2018 Alaska trapper questionnaire.**

Region	Trapped	Did not trap	No response	Total invites	% Responding
I	43	47	975	1,065	8.5
II	37	106	2,131	2,274	6.3
III	82	57	1,895	2,034	6.8
IV	74	82	1,670	1,826	8.5
V	24	21	443	488	9.2
Total	260	313	7,114	7,687	7.5

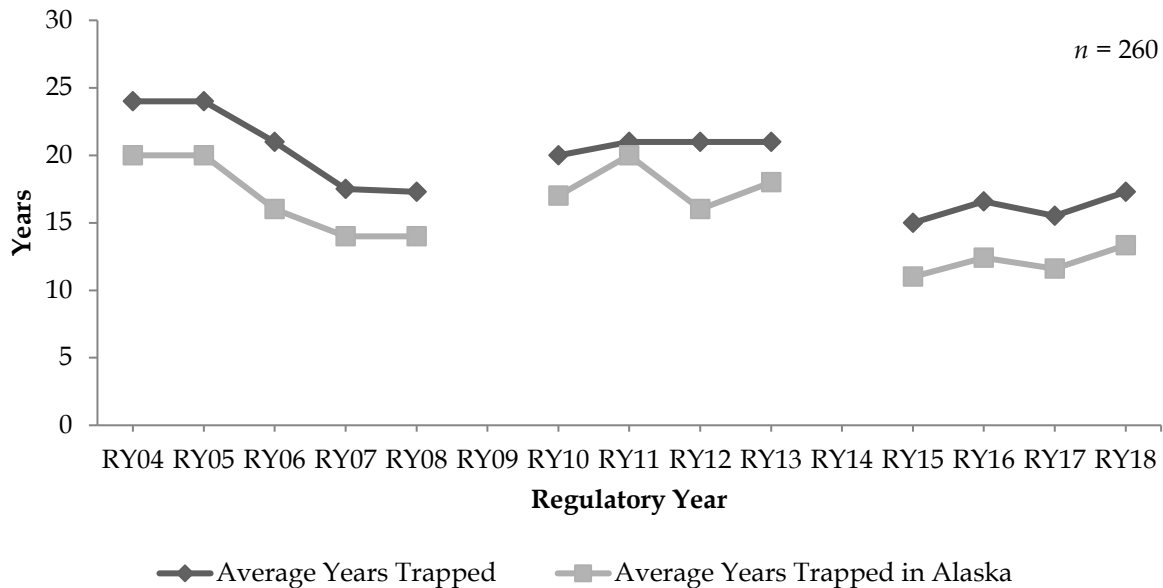


Photo by Aaron Webber.

Statewide, of respondents who reported they did not trap in RY18 but reported when they last trapped ( $n = 302$ ), 26% ( $n = 78$ ) last trapped within the past 2 years, 47% ( $n = 143$ ) last trapped more than 2 years ago, and the rest (27%,  $n = 81$ ) indicated they were not trappers.

## Trapping Experience

During the RY18 season, active trappers statewide averaged 17 years of experience trapping and 13 years of experience trapping in Alaska (Fig. 2,  $n = 260$ ). This is down from the averages over the last 15 years, suggesting there's a younger group of trappers in the field. The average experience trapping in Alaska stayed roughly the same as in 2017, suggesting Alaska is retaining its current trappers. No data were collected in 2009 or 2014. Trappers in Regions I, III, and IV averaged the highest trapping experience overall (18 years trapping), and trappers in Region III averaged the most experience in Alaska (15 years trapping).

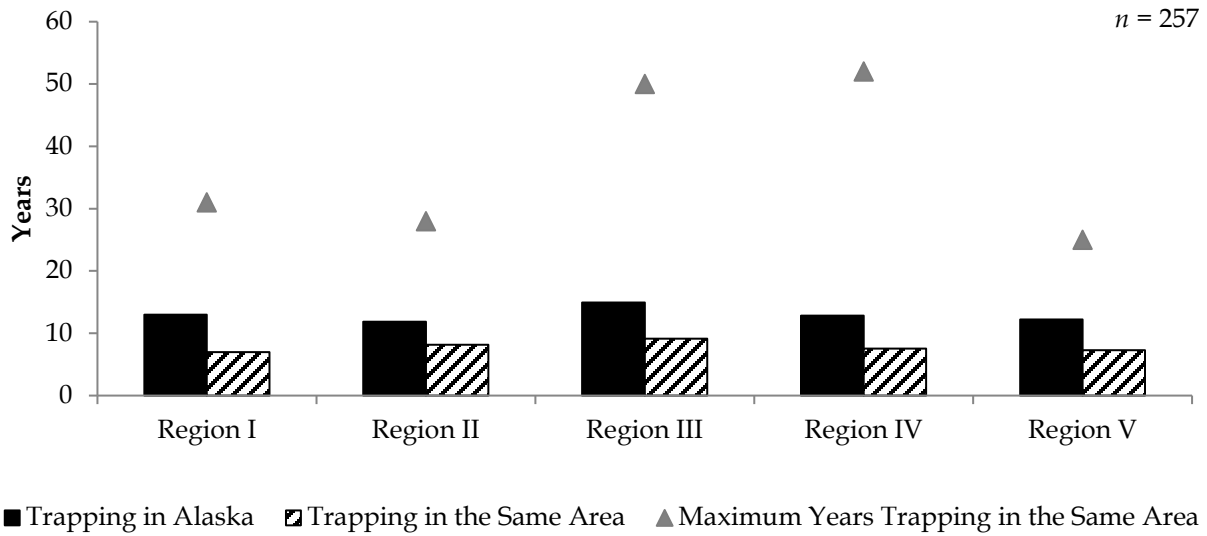


**Figure 2. A statewide 15-year trend of trapper age and experience, Alaska, regulatory years 2004–2018.**

## **TRAPLINE INFORMATION**

### Trapping Area

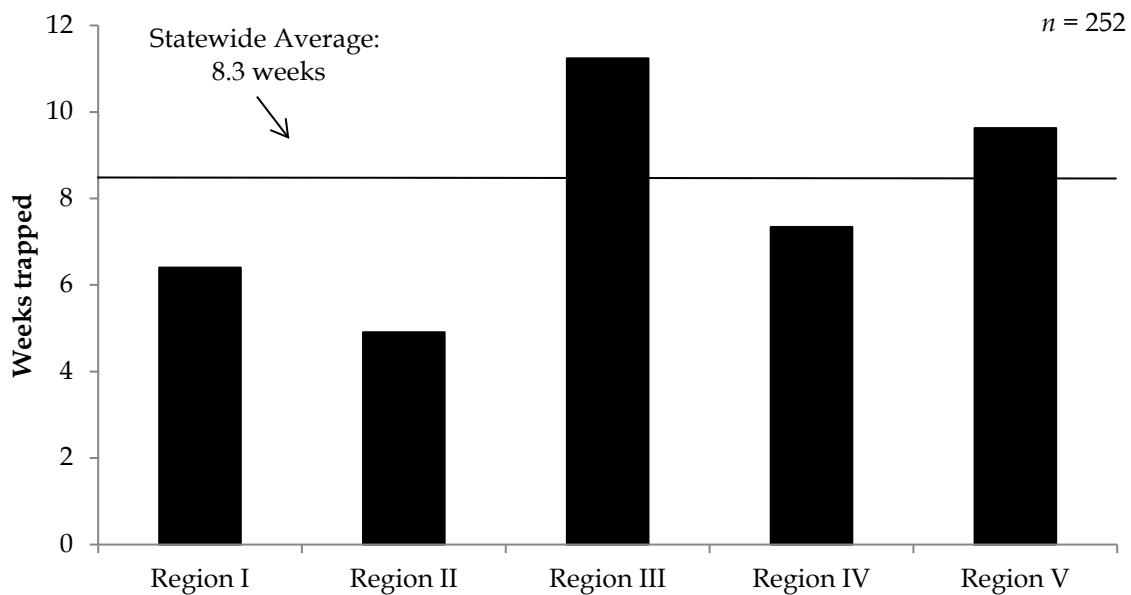
Statewide, trappers have trapped in the same area for an average of 8 years (Fig. 3,  $n = 257$ ). Trappers in Region III have spent the longest time trapping in the same area (9 years), while Regions I and V trappers have spent the least amount of time in the same area (7 years). The longest time spent trapping in a single area was 52 years, reported by a trapper in Region IV.



**Figure 3. Length of time spent trapping by region in Alaska, regulatory year 2018.**

Trapping Frequency

During the RY18 season, trappers averaged 8.3 weeks of trapping (Fig. 4,  $n = 252$ ). Region III trappers spent the longest time trapping (average of 11 weeks), while Region II trappers spent the least amount of time trapping (average of 5 weeks). Statewide, 69% of trappers trapped 10 weeks or less.



**Figure 4. Number of weeks Alaska trappers spent trapping during regulatory year 2018, by region.**

## Trapline Transportation

Trappers who received the 2018 questionnaire were asked what their primary mode of transportation was for both traveling to their traplines and for running their traplines during the RY18 season. Statewide, the most common mode of transportation trappers used to get to their trapline(s) ( $n = 255$ ), was a highway vehicle 48% ( $n = 124$ , Fig. 5). Statewide, trappers also commonly reported accessing their trapline(s) using snowmachines ( $n = 60$ ). While highway vehicles were the most common mode of transportation to traplines in Regions II–IV, boats were the most common form of transportation used in Region I and snowmachines were most frequently used to access traplines in Region V.

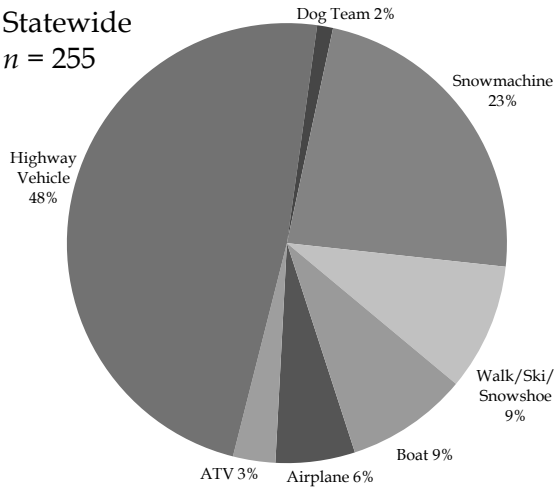


Photo by Aaron Webber.

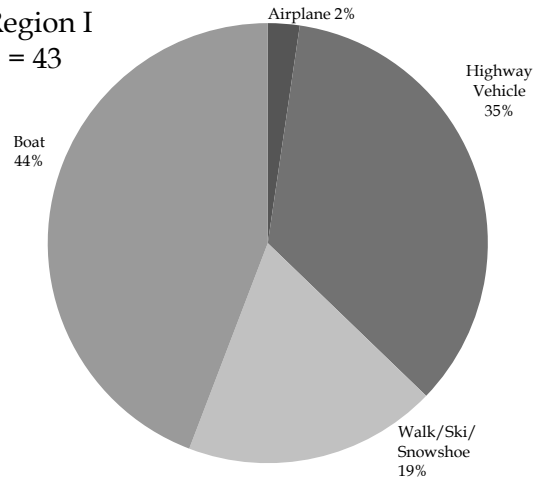
Statewide, the most common mode of transportation trappers used for running their trapline(s) ( $n = 255$ , Fig. 6), was a snowmachine 48% ( $n = 122$ ). Statewide, trappers also reported running their trapline(s) by walking or snowshoeing 29% ( $n = 74$ ). While snowmachine was the most common mode of transportation for running traplines in Regions III–V, walking or snowshoeing was the most common form of transportation used by trappers in Regions I and II.

## Primary Mode of Transportation from Home to the Traplines

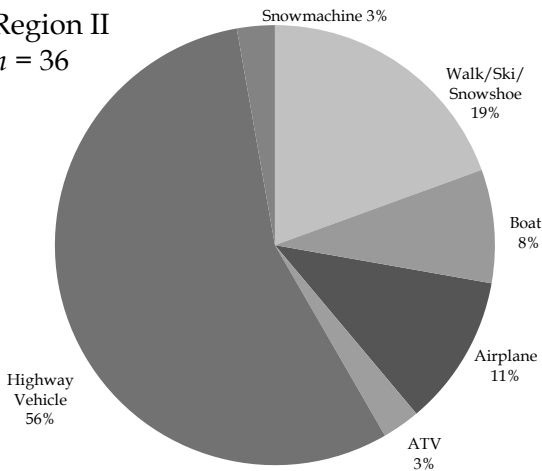
Statewide  
n = 255



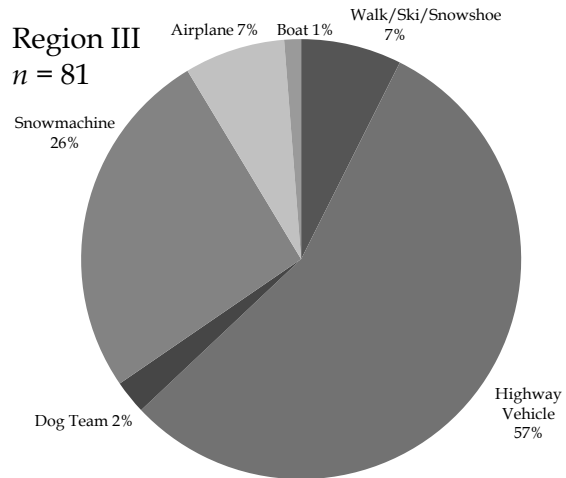
Region I  
n = 43



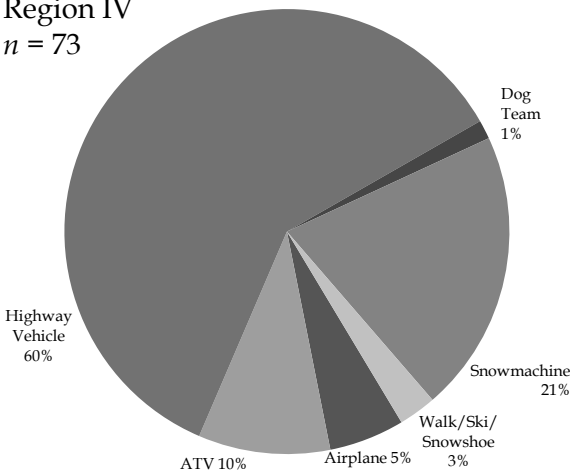
Region II  
n = 36



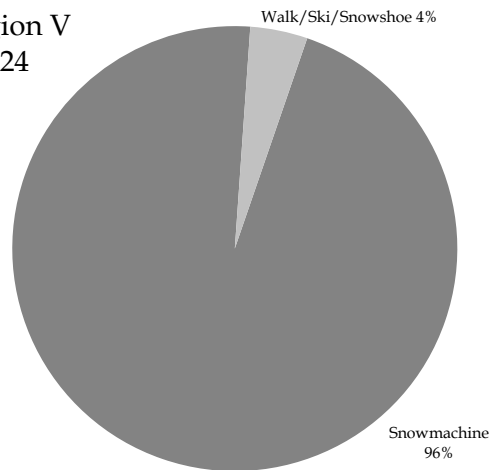
Region III  
n = 81



Region IV  
n = 73



Region V  
n = 24

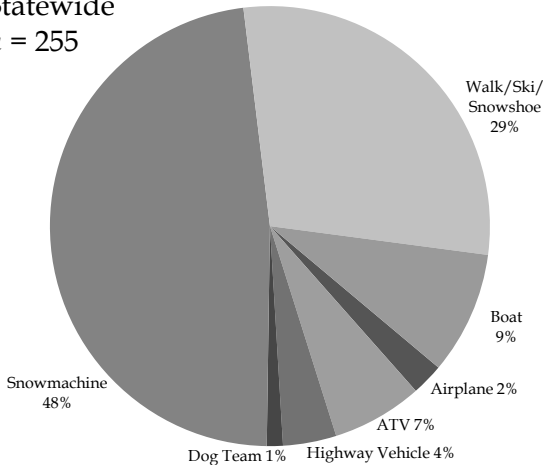


**Figure 5. Primary mode of transportation used by Alaska trappers to reach their traplines during regulatory year 2018.**

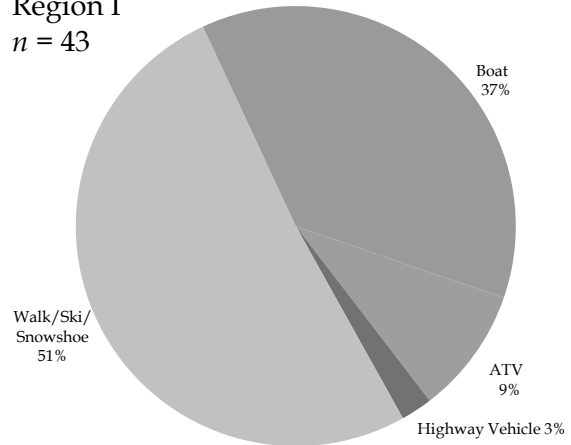


## Primary Mode of Transportation Used to Run the Trapline

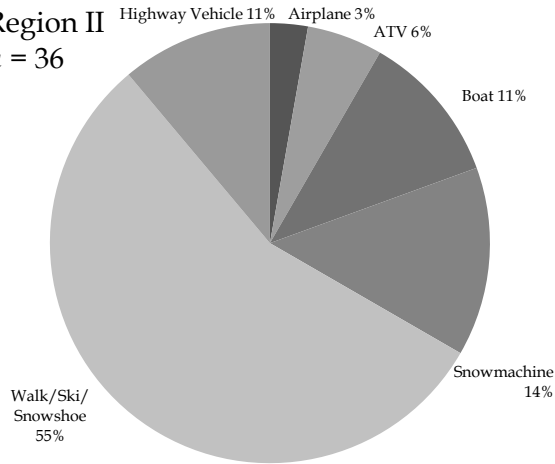
Statewide  
n = 255



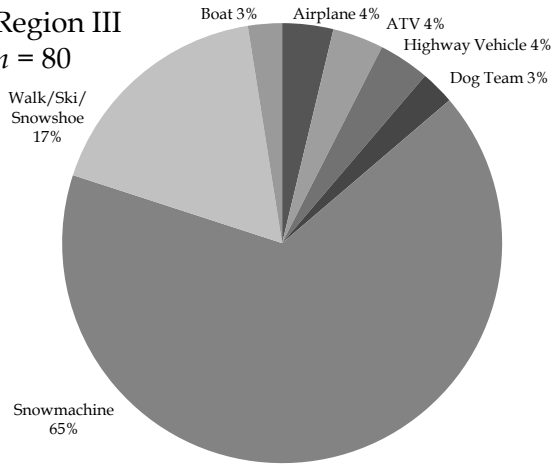
Region I  
n = 43



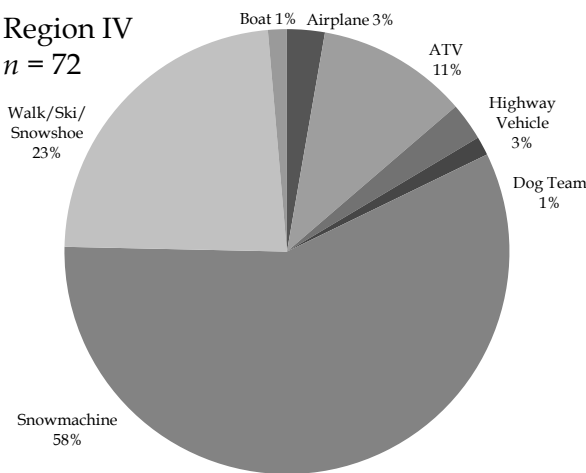
Region II  
n = 36



Region III  
n = 80



Region IV  
n = 72



Region V  
n = 24

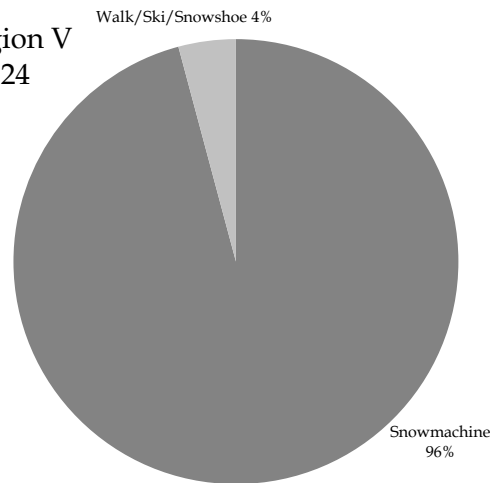


Figure 6. Primary transportation used by Alaska trappers to run their traplines during regulatory year 2018.

## Trapline Composition

Statewide, traplines averaged 21 miles in length with 30 sets (Table 2). Region V trappers had the longest average trapline length, at 38 miles, and Region III trappers had the highest average number of sets per trapline, at 50 sets per trapline. Region I trappers reported the shortest average trapline length (8 miles) and Region II reported the lowest average number of sets (15) per trapline.

**Table 2. Average reported trapline length and number of sets per trapline in Alaska for regulatory year 2018.**

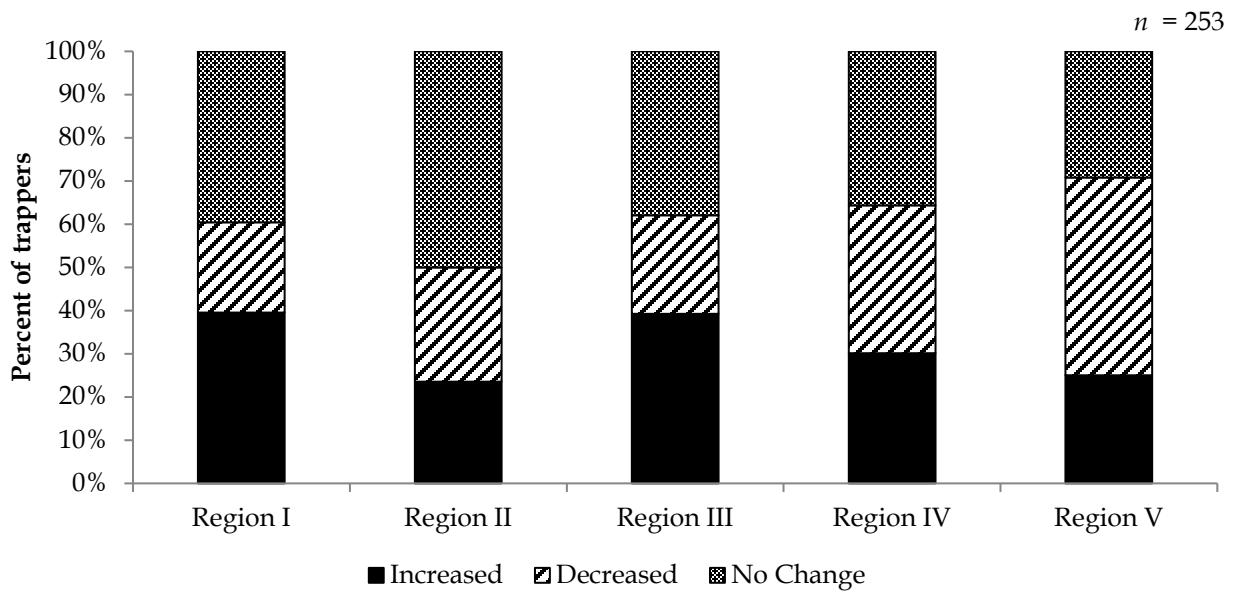
Region	Average trapline length (miles)	Maximum length (miles)	Average number of sets per trapline	Maximum number of sets per trapline
I	8	60	19	150
II	12	80	15	80
III	28	150	50	250
IV	19	150	24	150
V	38	190	42	250
Statewide	21	190	30	250



Photo by Bob Clay.

## Trapping Efforts

During the RY18 season, 38% ( $n = 97$ ) of Alaska trappers ( $n = 253$ ) did not change their efforts compared to last season (Fig. 7). Of those who did change their efforts ( $n = 156$ ), 54% ( $n = 84$ ) increased their efforts. As a result, 80% ( $n = 66$ ) of trappers who increased efforts saw an increase in their overall catch.

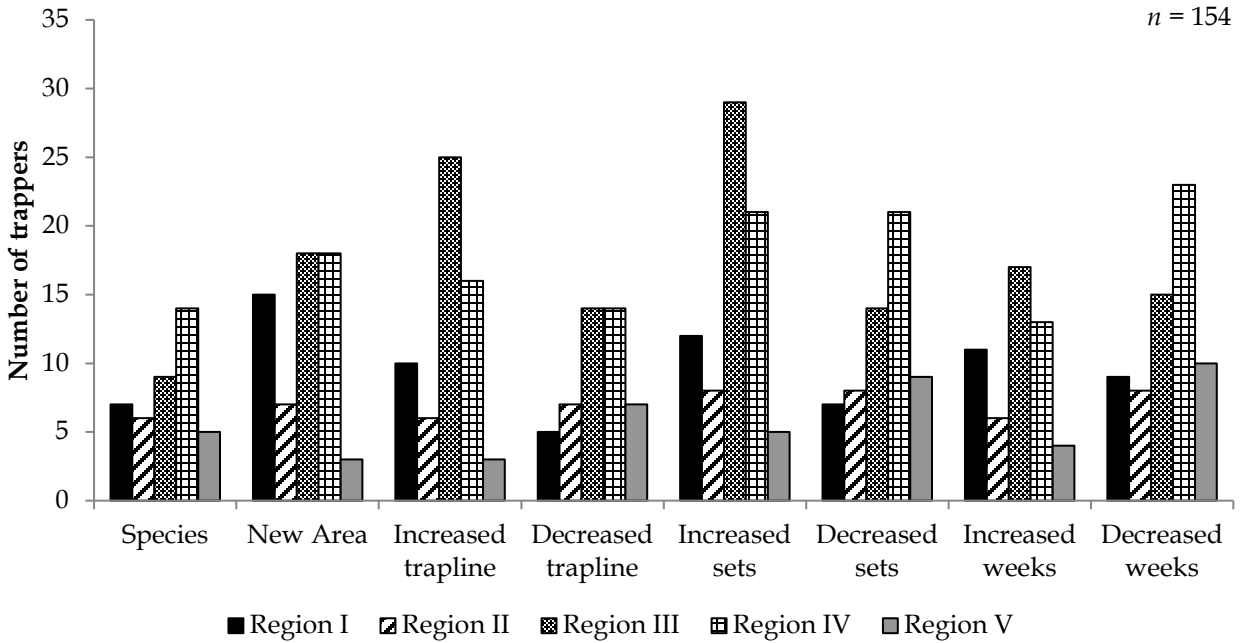


**Figure 7. Change in trapping efforts for the regulatory year 2018 season by region, Alaska.**



Photo by Bob Clay.

Trappers could choose multiple responses for how their efforts changed in the RY18 season (Fig. 8,  $n = 154$  trappers). The two most common changes in effort across Alaska were decreasing the number of weeks spent trapping ( $n = 65$ ) and increasing the number of sets ( $n = 75$ ). Trappers in Region IV ( $n = 23$ ) showed the greatest decrease in the number of weeks spent trapping, while Region III trappers increased the number of sets ( $n = 29$ ) more than trappers in any other region.



**Figure 8. Types of change in trapping effort for the regulatory year 2018 season, Alaska.**

Statewide, trappers reporting factors that affected their efforts during the RY18 season ( $n = 238$ , Fig. 9), indicated trapping conditions (weather, snow depth/cover, ice, etc.) was the leading factor influencing both an increase ( $n = 42$ ) and decrease ( $n = 79$ ) in trapping effort. Other trappers ( $n = 29$ ) also reportedly caused trappers to increase effort, while the preseason advertised prices ( $n = 17$ ) and fuel prices ( $n = 17$ ) negatively influenced trapper effort.



**Figure 9. Factors affecting trapping effort by region during the regulatory year 2018 season, Alaska.**

## TARGET SPECIES AND FUR DISPOSITION

### Target Species

Table 3 below shows how each species ranked in order of importance by region, with 1 being most important and 14 being least important. Rank was calculated by totaling the number of trappers who ranked that species as 1 of the 3 most important species they were trying to catch.

Marten was once again the most important species across Alaska (Table 3, Fig. 10). Marten ranked as the most important species in Regions I, III, and IV, the second most important in Region II (first was river otter) and tied for the third most important in Region V (first was wolverine and second was lynx). Statewide, lynx ranked as the second most important species, and wolf came in as the third most important species.



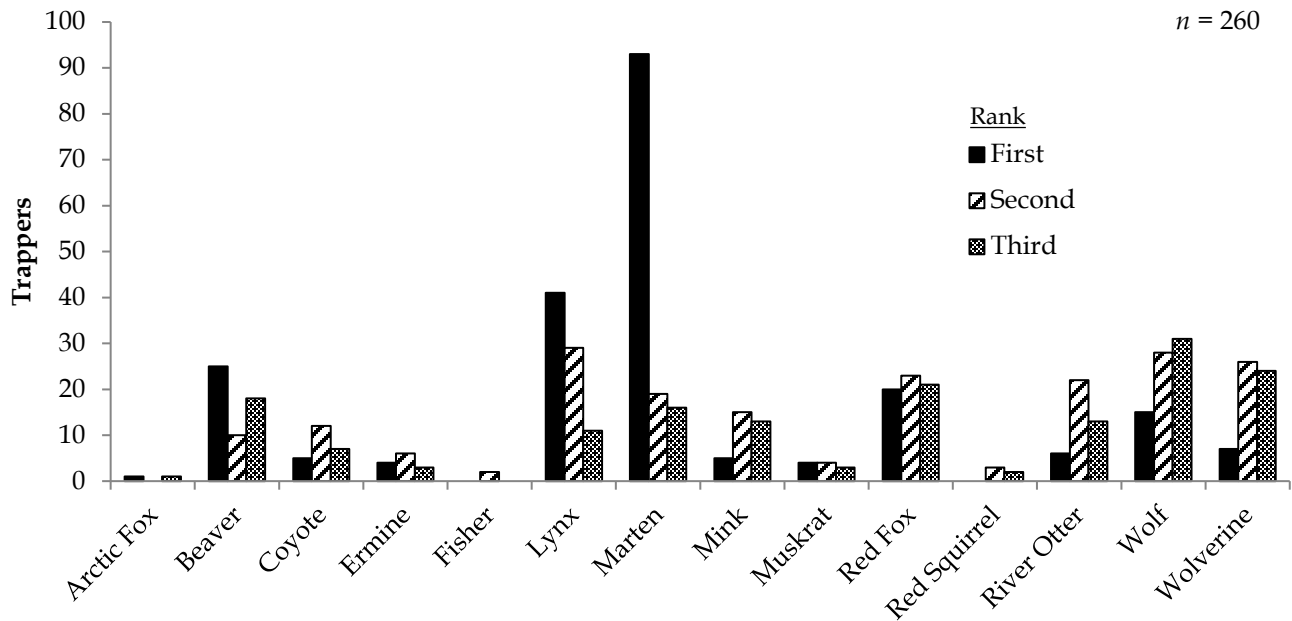
Photo by Jesse Grady.

**Table 3. Species ranked<sup>a</sup> by importance at both statewide and regional levels, Alaska, regulatory year 2018.**

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

<sup>a</sup> Rank = 1–14; with 1 being most important and 14 least important. Repeats of rank indicate that one or more species tied for that rank.

<sup>b</sup> Double-dash indicates no trapper ranked the species as one of the most important.



**Figure 10. The number of trappers statewide ranking each species as the first, second, or third most important species they targeted during the RY18 season in Alaska.**

### Presence of Ectoparasites

Trappers who trapped during the RY18 season indicated that ectoparasites, including fleas, ticks, lice, and other species, were mostly scarce or not present across all furs harvested (Table 4).

“Other” ectoparasites noted on furbearers included red bugs on beavers in Regions I, II, IV, and

V, as well as a case of mange on a red fox in Region V. Regionwide ectoparasite abundance was determined by reassigning a numerical value to each category (not present = 0; scarce = 1; common = 2; abundant = 3) and averaging the sum of each region. We created an arbitrary range of values to classify the average opinions of trappers regarding ectoparasite abundance in an area: values of 0 indicated ectoparasites were not present, values >0 and <1.67 indicated scarce ectoparasite abundance, values of 1.67–2.33 indicated common ectoparasite abundance, and values >2.33 indicated abundant ectoparasite abundance. No average values were 2.33 or greater.

**Table 4. Presence of ectoparasites found on Alaska furbearers by species and region, regulatory year 2018.**

Region	Ectoparasite <sup>a</sup>	Species													
		Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red Fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
I <i>n</i> = 17	F		S <sup>b</sup>		S	NP	NP	S	S		S	S	S	S	NP
	L		S		NP	NP	NP	S	NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	T		NP <sup>c</sup>		NP	NP	NP	S	NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	O		S		NP	NP	NP	NP	NP			NP	NP	S	
II <i>n</i> = 7	F		S	S	S		C <sup>d</sup>	S	NP	NP	NP	C	NP		NP
	L		NP	NP	NP			NP	NP	NP	NP		NP		NP
	T		NP	NP	NP			NP	NP	NP	NP		NP		NP
	O		S	NP	NP			NP	NP	S	NP		NP		
III <i>n</i> = 25	F	S	S	S	S		C	S	S	NP	S	S	NP	S	S
	L	S	S	NP	NP		S	S	NP	NP	S	NP	NP	S	NP
	T	S	NP	NP	NP		S	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	O	S	S	NP	NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
IV <i>n</i> = 15	F	NP	S	S	S		C	S	NP	NP	S	S	NP	S	S
	L	NP	NP	NP	NP		S	NP	NP	S	S	S	NP	S	S
	T	NP	NP	NP	NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
	O	NP	S	S	NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
V <i>n</i> = 11	F		NP		S		S	S	NP	NP	S		NP	NP	S
	L		NP		NP		NP	S	NP	NP	S		NP	NP	NP
	T		NP		NP		NP	S	NP	NP	NP		NP	NP	NP
	O		S		NP		NP	NP	NP	NP	S		S	NP	S

<sup>a</sup> Ectoparasites: F = fleas; L = lice; T = ticks; O = other.

<sup>b</sup> S = Scarce

<sup>c</sup> NP = Not present.

<sup>d</sup> C = Common

## Harvest Methods

### USE OF PREDATOR CALLS

Statewide, only 36 trappers used any type of predator call; of those trappers, 36% ( $n = 13$ ) used only electronic predator calls, 44% ( $n = 16$ ) used only manual (mouth) predator calls, and 19% ( $n = 7$ ) used both electronic and manual predator calls (Fig. 11).

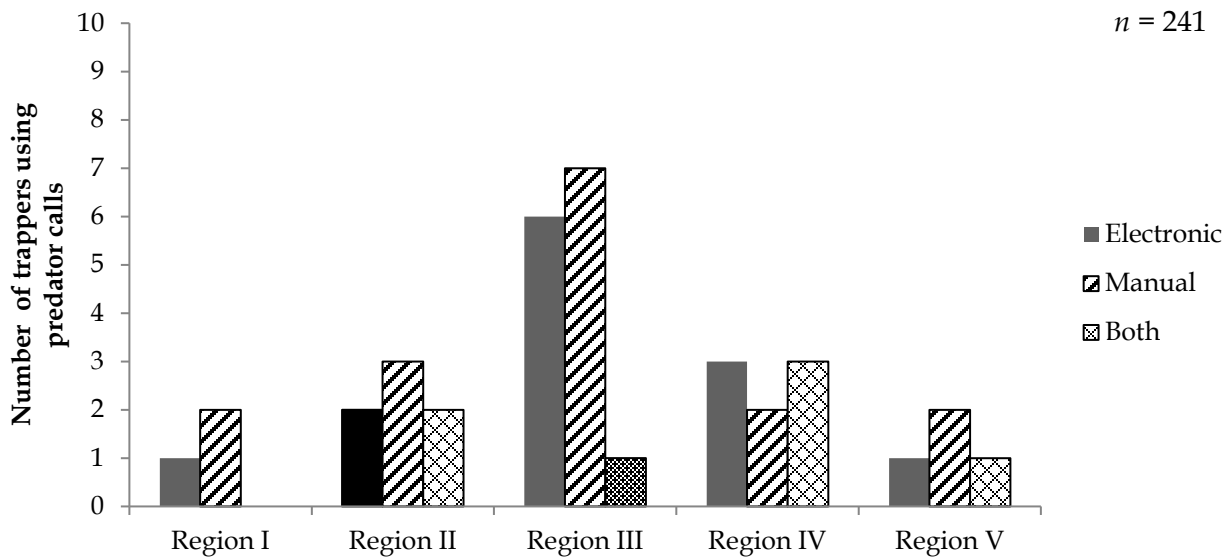


Figure 11. Use of predator calls by region during regulatory year 2018, Alaska.



Photo by John White.

### TRAPPING TECHNIQUES AND SUCCESS

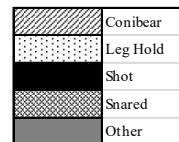
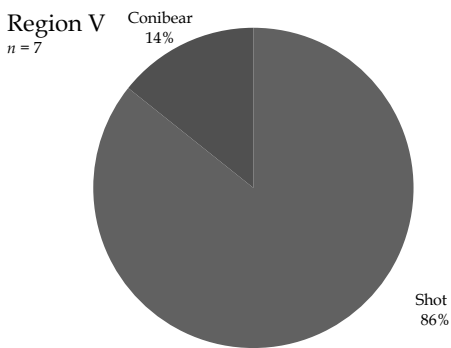
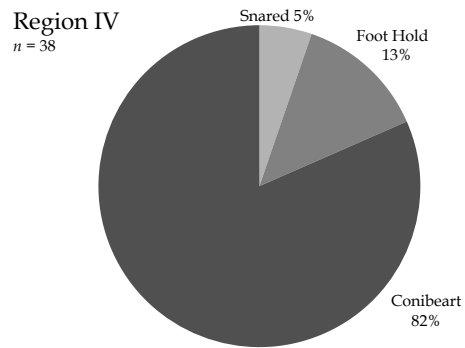
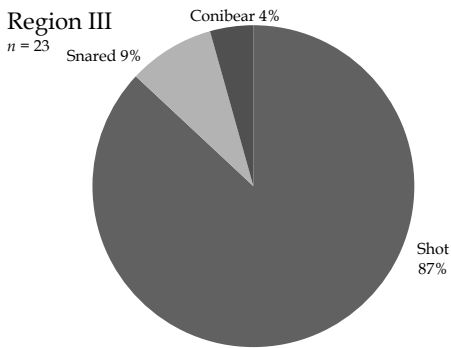
Trappers responding to the 2018 questionnaire were asked to provide the number of pelts they took using each trapping technique (i.e., shot, snared, foothold, Conibear, or other). Summaries of the number of pelts taken using each technique for each species harvested are provided in Figures 12–25.



# ARCTIC FOX

Region I  
No harvest reported

Region II  
No harvest reported



Statewide  
Trends in  
All Fox  
Harvest  
Methods

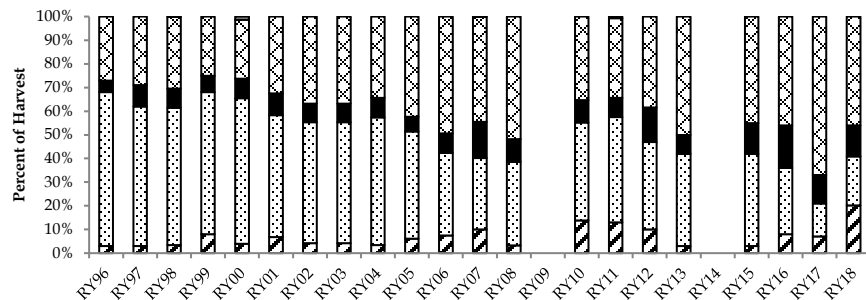
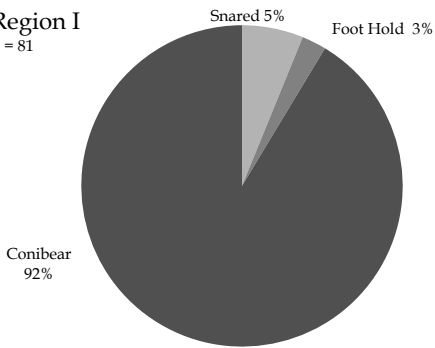


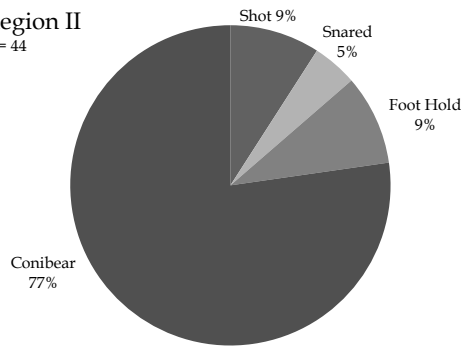
Figure 12. Methods trappers used to harvest arctic fox in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

# BEAVER

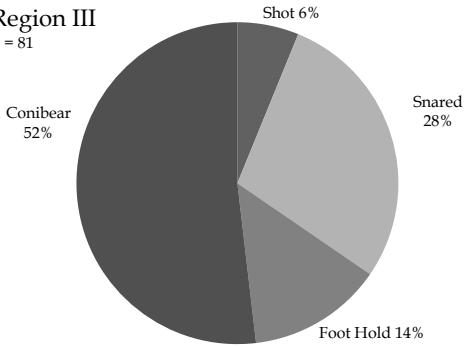
Region I  
n = 81



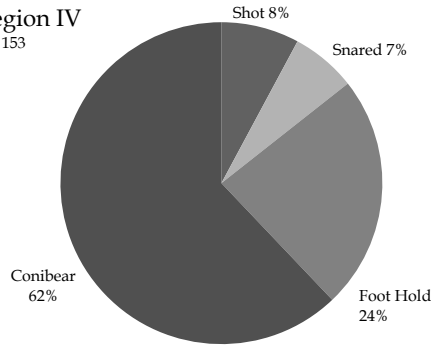
Region II  
n = 44



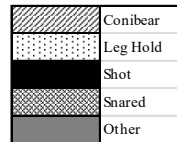
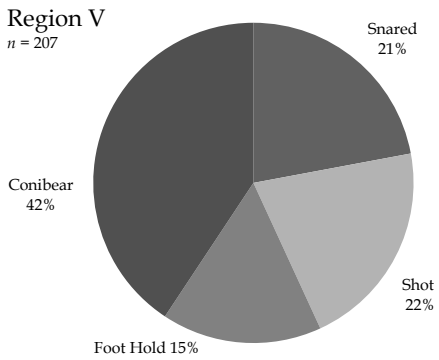
Region III  
n = 81



Region IV  
n = 153



Region V  
n = 207



Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

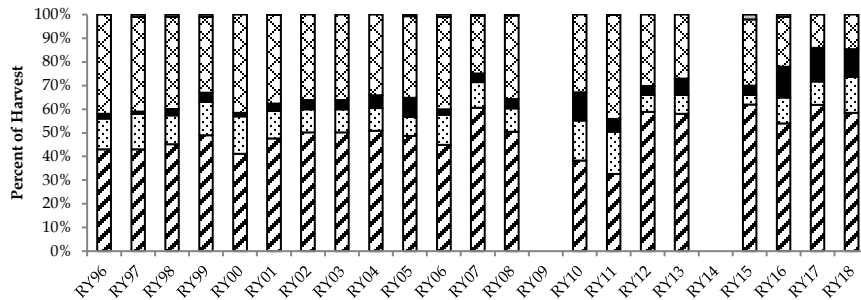
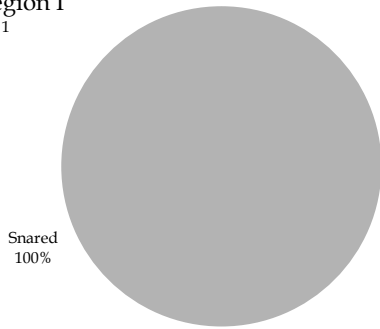


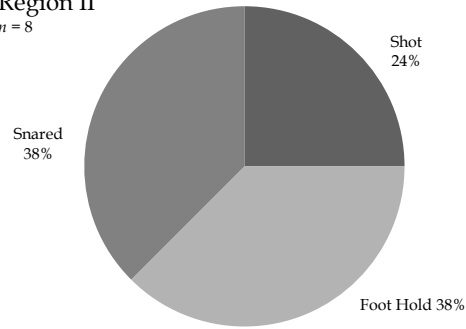
Figure 13. Methods trappers used to harvest beaver in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

# COYOTE

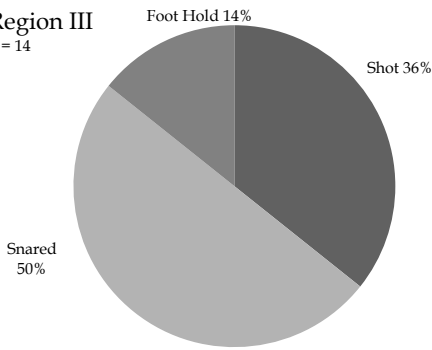
Region I  
n = 1



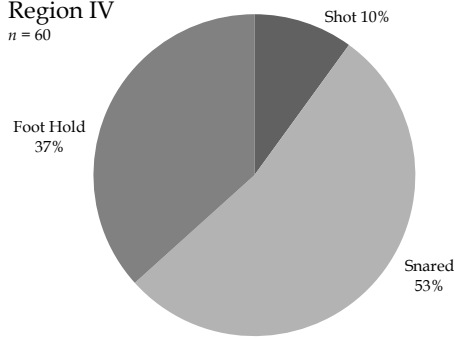
Region II  
n = 8



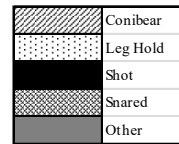
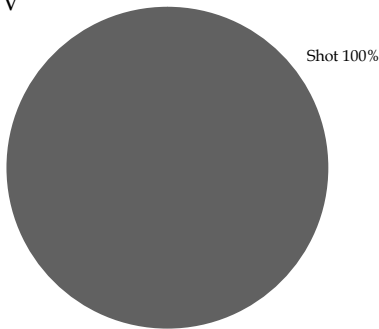
Region III  
n = 14



Region IV  
n = 60



Region V  
n = 2



Statewide  
Trends in  
Harvest  
Methods

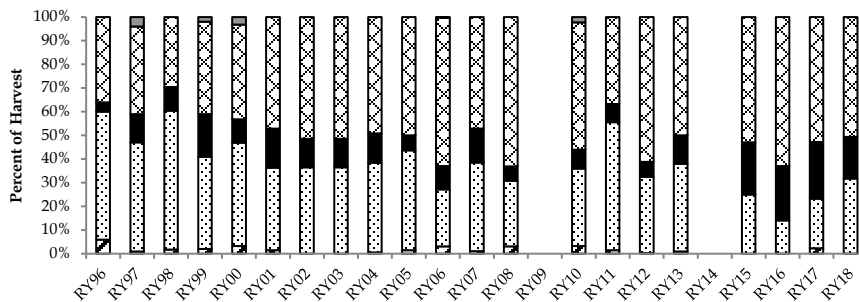
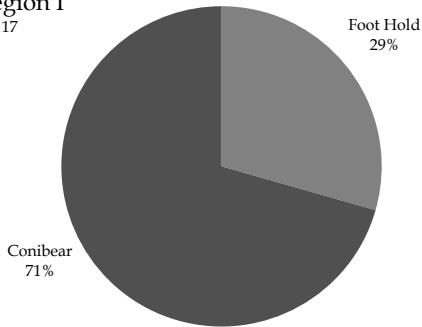


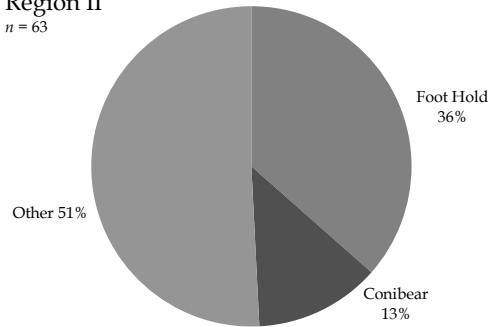
Figure 14. Methods trappers used to harvest coyote in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

# ERMINE

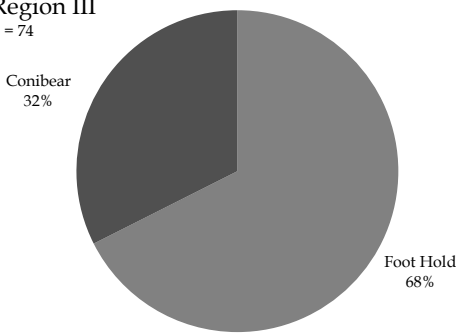
Region I  
n = 17



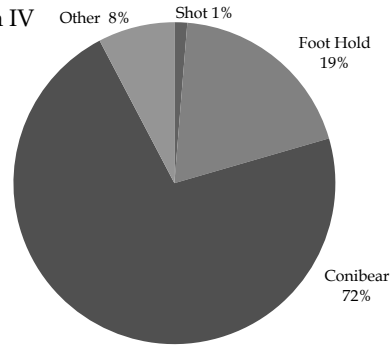
Region II  
n = 63



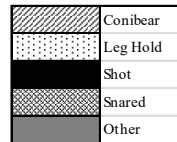
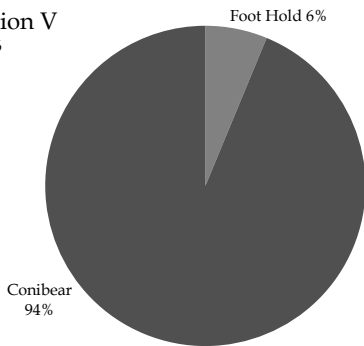
Region III  
n = 74



Region IV  
n = 78



Region V  
n = 16



Statewide  
Trends in  
Harvest  
Methods

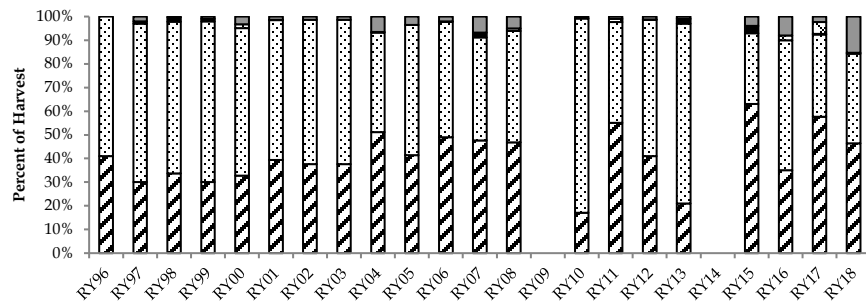


Figure 15. Methods trappers used to harvest ermine in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

# FISHER

Region I  
n = 2

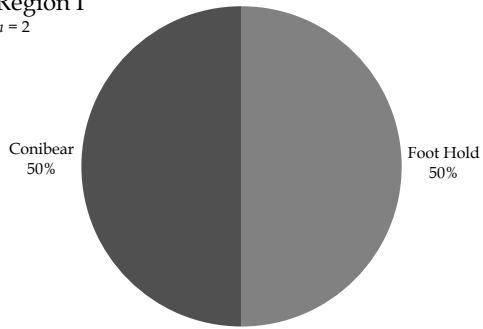
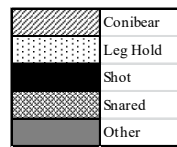


Photo by John Jacobson.



Statewide  
Trends in  
Harvest  
Methods

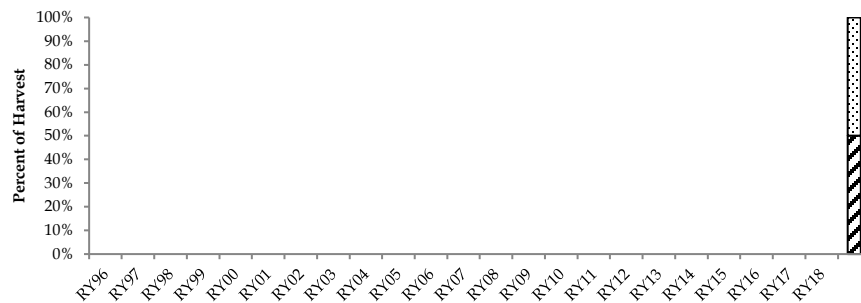
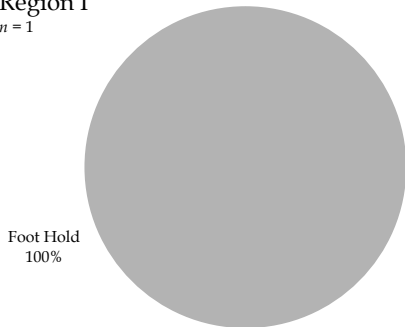


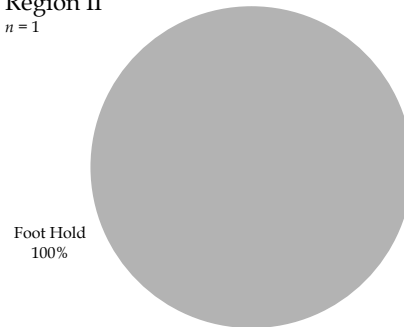
Figure 16. Methods trappers used to harvest fisher in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

# LYNX

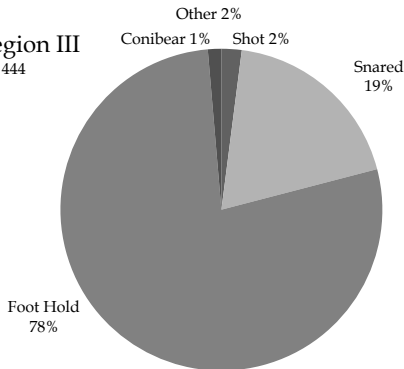
Region I  
n = 1



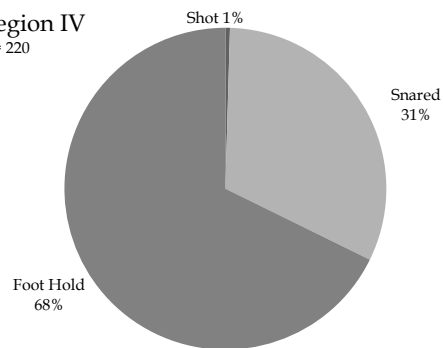
Region II  
n = 1



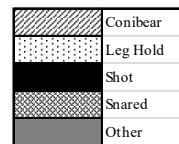
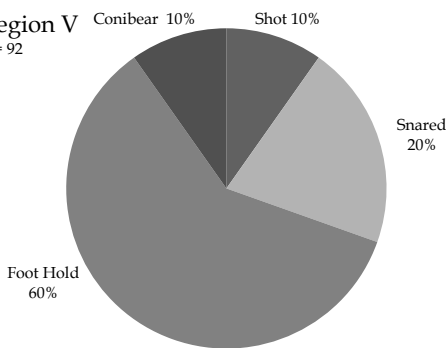
Region III  
n = 444



Region IV  
n = 220



Region V  
n = 92



Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

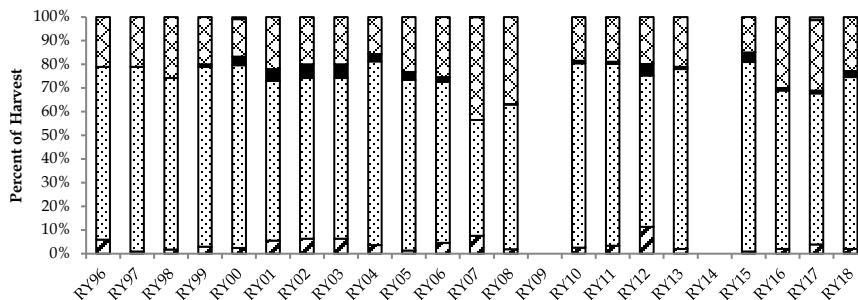
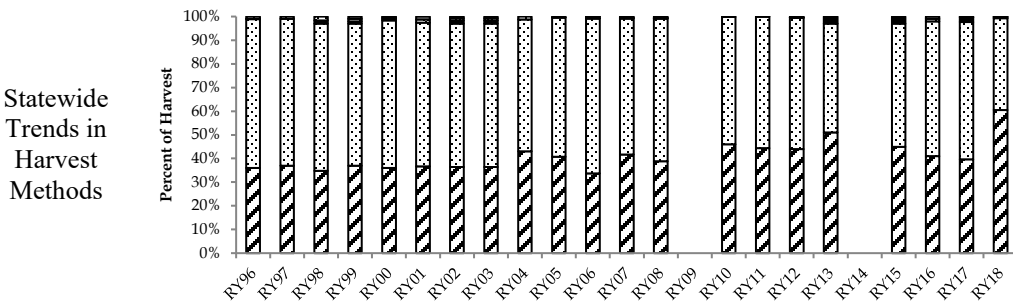
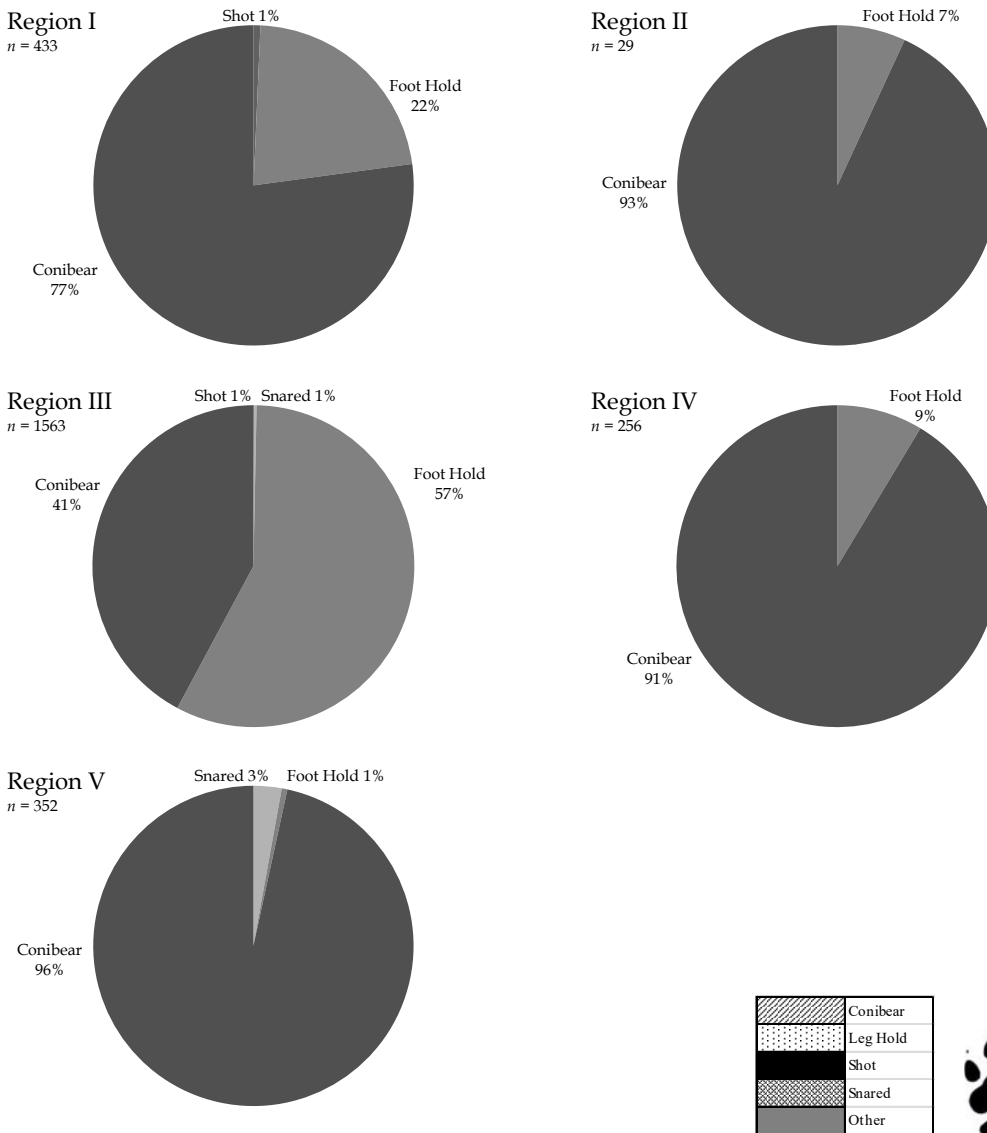


Figure 17. Methods trappers used to harvest lynx in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

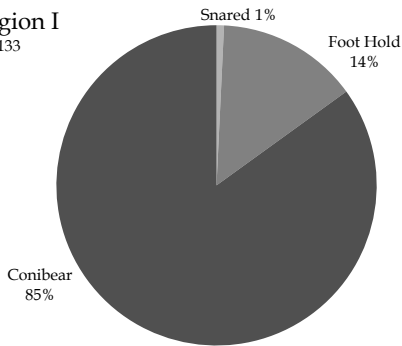
# MARTEN



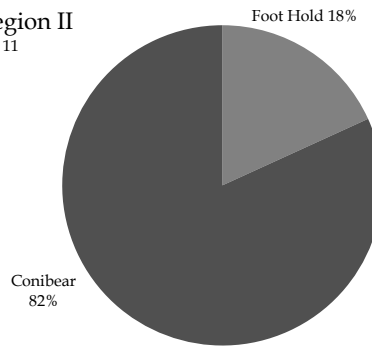
**Figure 18. Methods trappers used to harvest marten in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.**

# MINK

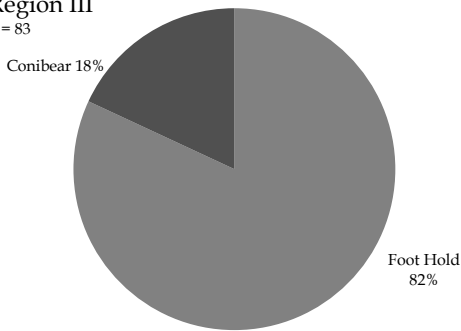
Region I  
n = 133



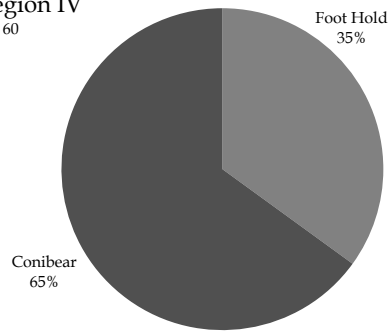
Region II  
n = 11



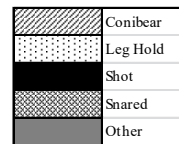
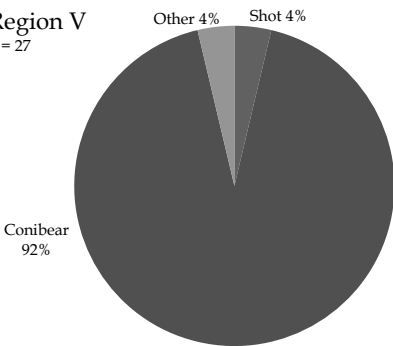
Region III  
n = 83



Region IV  
n = 60



Region V  
n = 27



Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

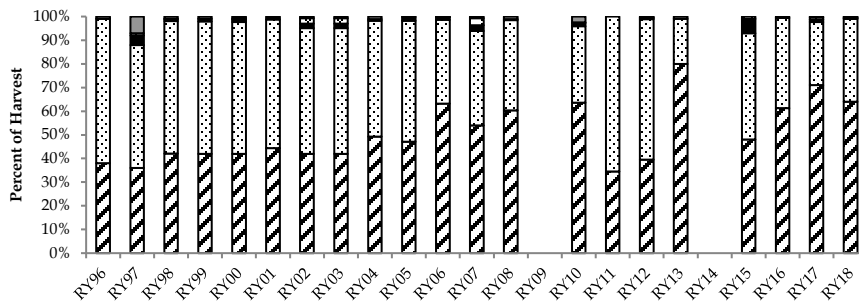


Figure 19. Methods trappers used to harvest mink in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.



# MUSKRAT

Region I  
No harvest reported.

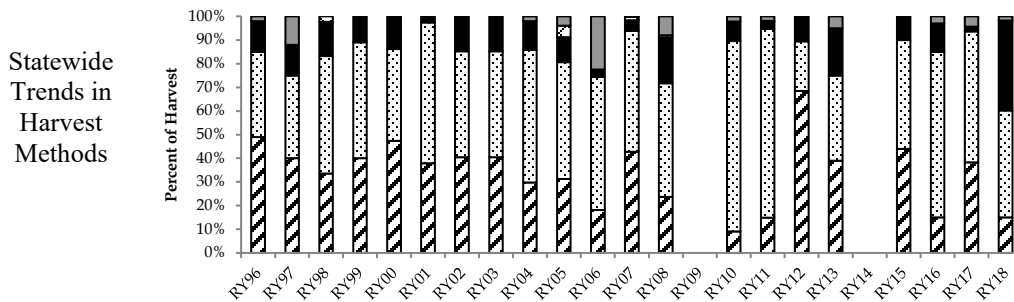
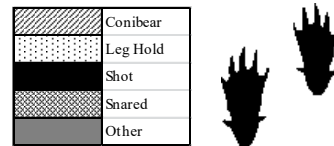
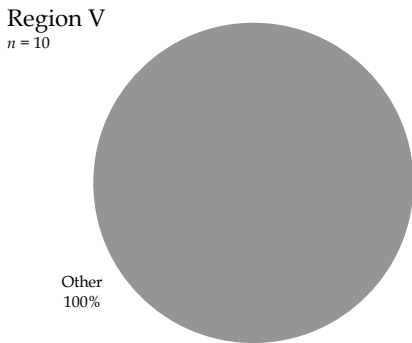
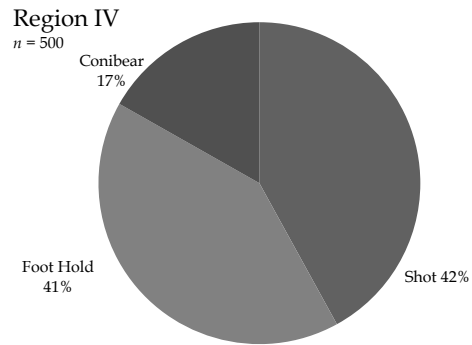
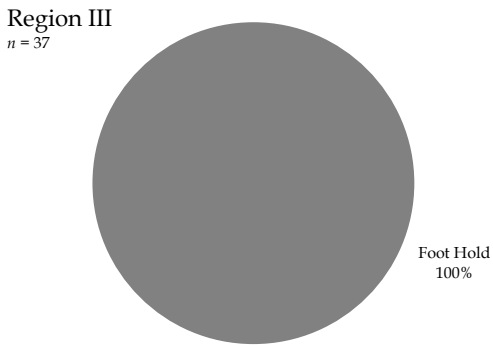
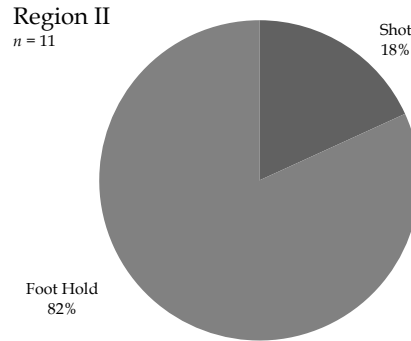
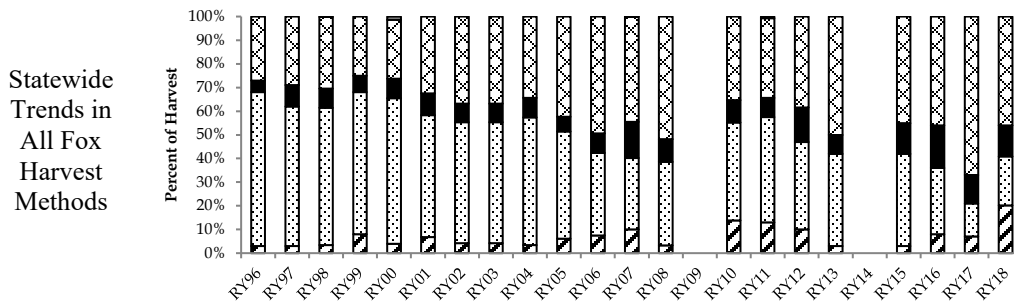
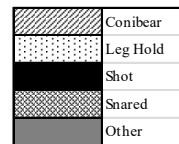
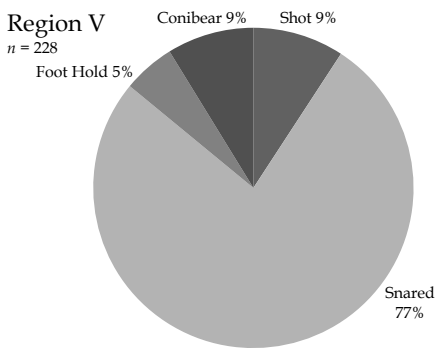
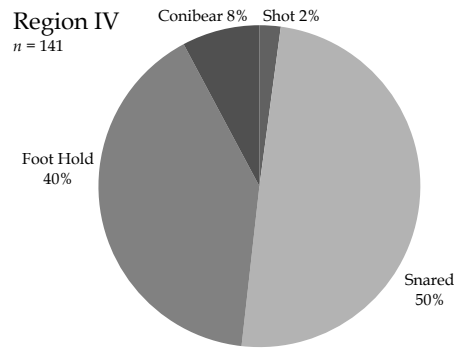
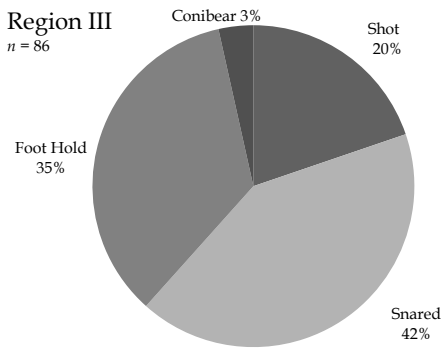
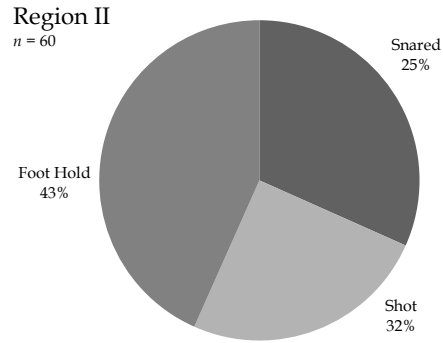
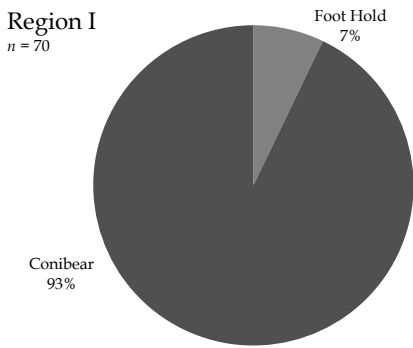


Figure 20. Methods trappers used to harvest muskrat in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

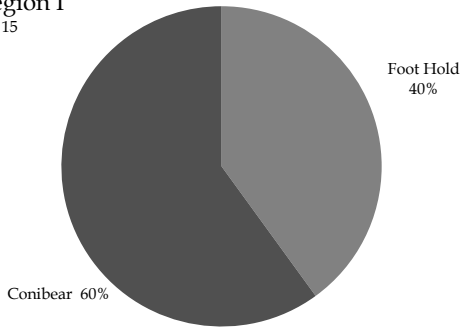
# RED FOX



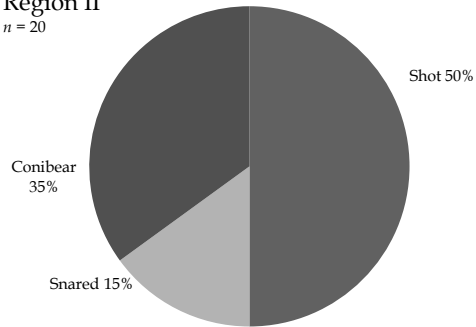
**Figure 21. Methods trappers used to harvest red fox in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.**

# RED SQUIRREL

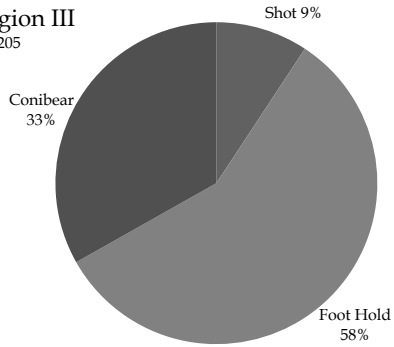
Region I  
n = 15



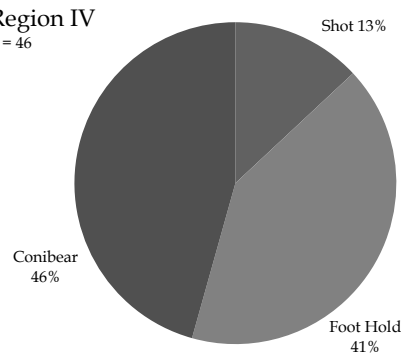
Region II  
n = 20



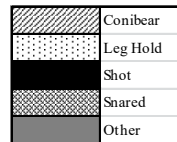
Region III  
n = 205



Region IV  
n = 46



Region V  
No harvest reported.



Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

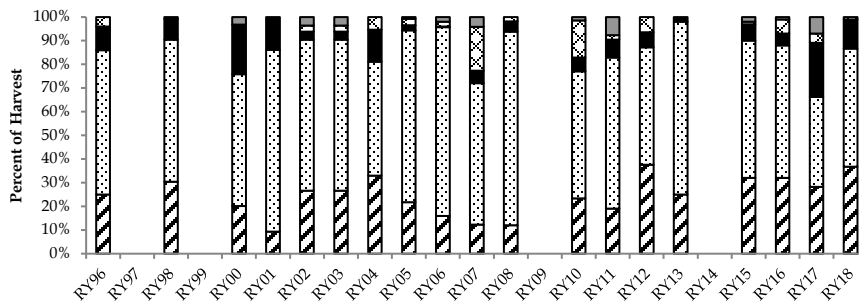
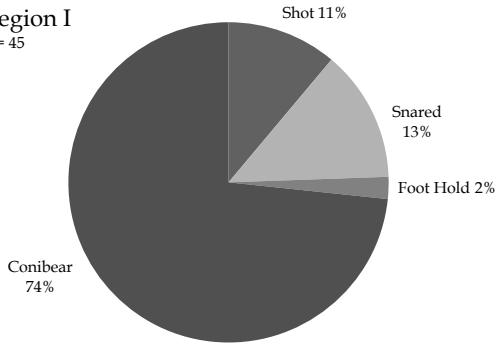


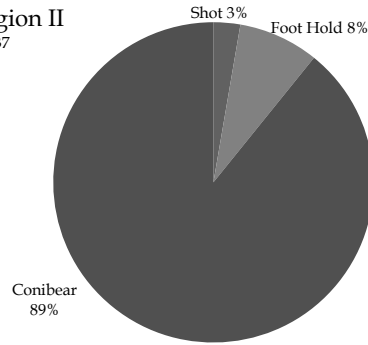
Figure 22. Methods trappers used to harvest red squirrel in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

# RIVER OTTER

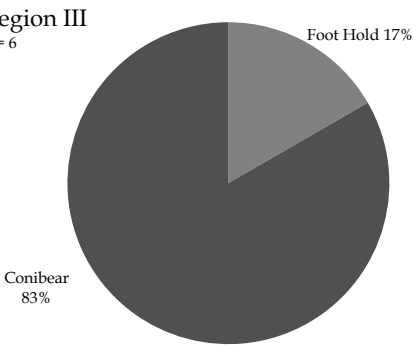
Region I  
n = 45



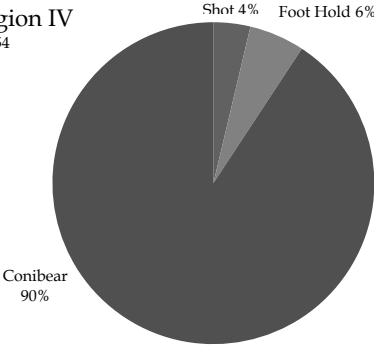
Region II  
n = 37



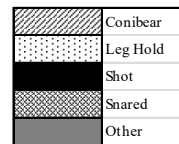
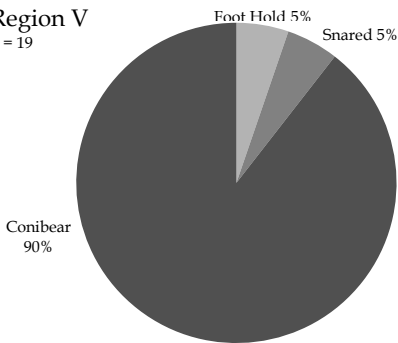
Region III  
n = 6



Region IV  
n = 54



Region V  
n = 19



Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

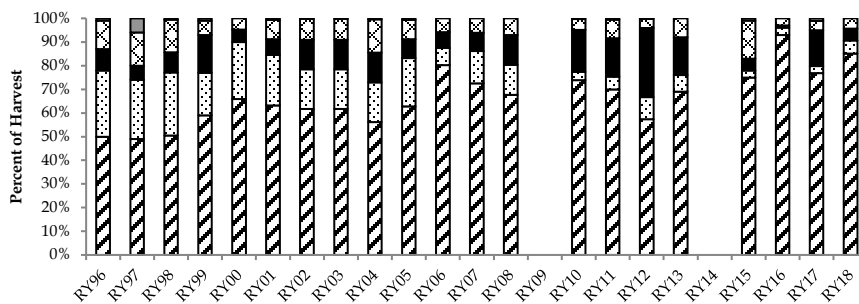
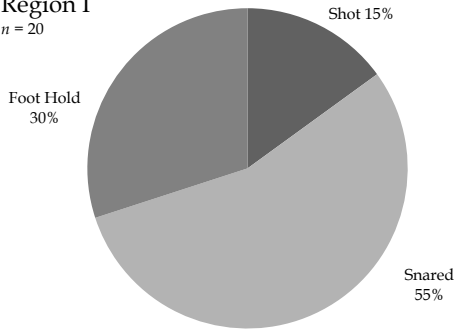


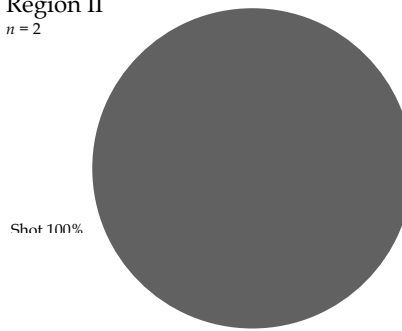
Figure 23. Methods trappers used to harvest river otter in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

# WOLF

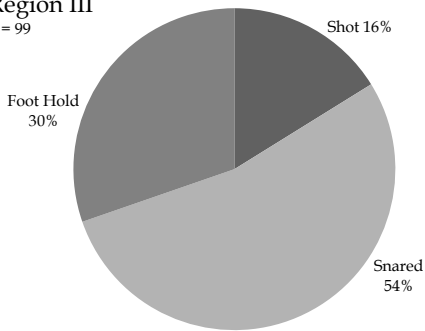
Region I  
n = 20



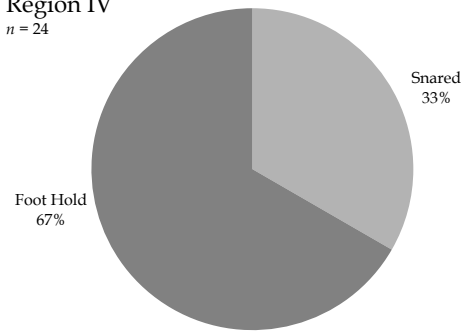
Region II  
n = 2



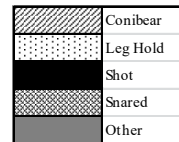
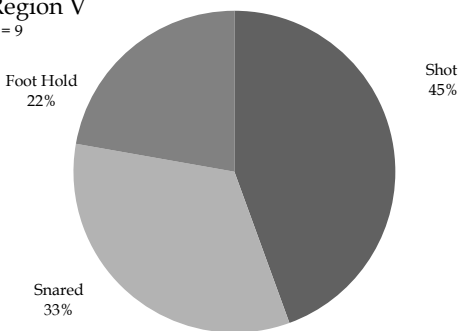
Region III  
n = 99



Region IV  
n = 24



Region V  
n = 9



Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

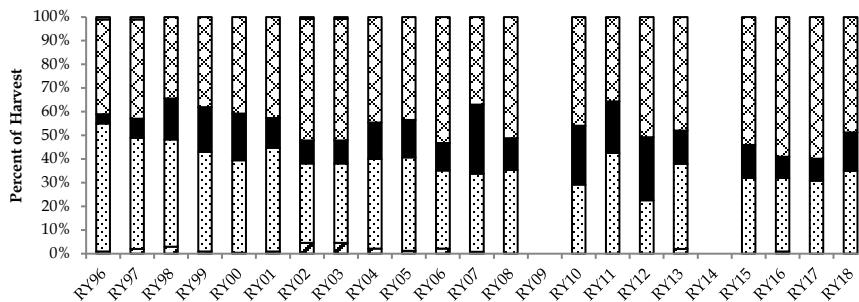
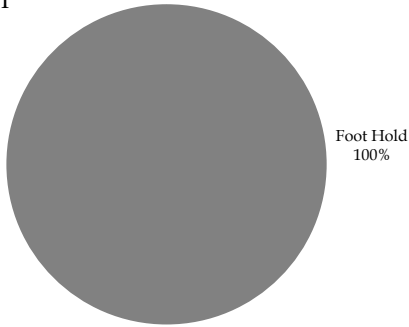


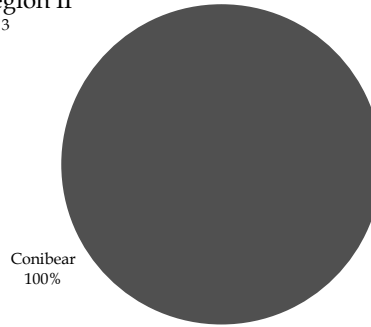
Figure 24. Methods trappers used to harvest wolf in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

# WOLVERINE

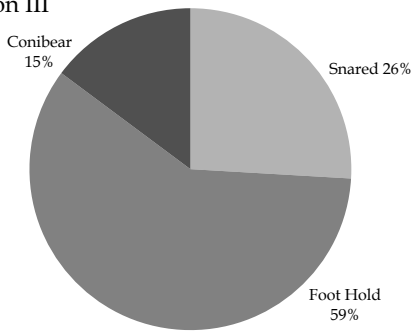
Region I  
n = 3



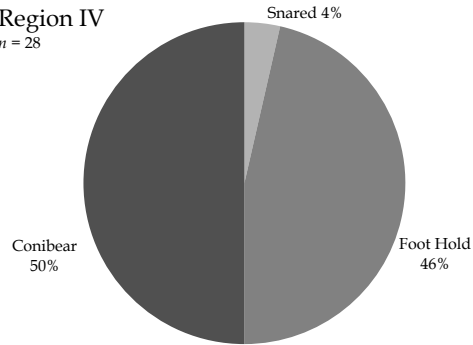
Region II  
n = 3



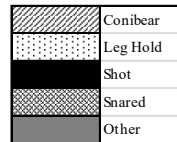
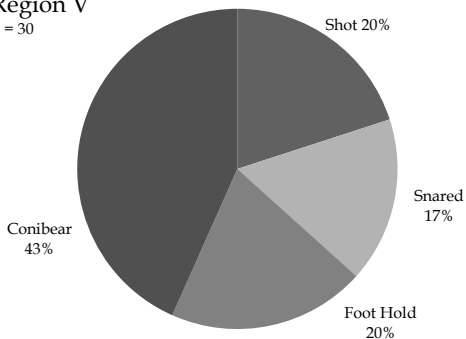
Region III  
n = 27



Region IV  
n = 28



Region V  
n = 30



Statewide Trends in Harvest Methods

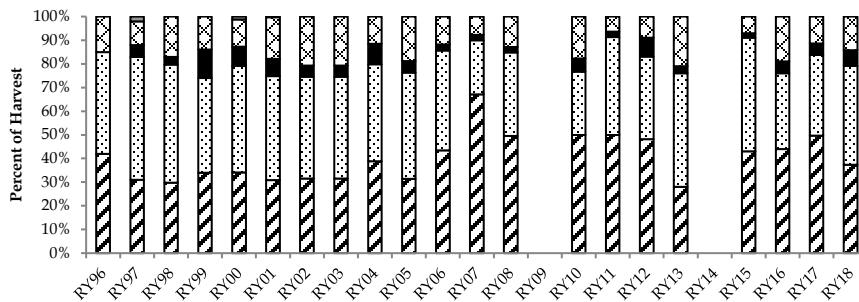


Figure 25. Methods trappers used to harvest wolverine in Alaska during regulatory year 2018.

## Species Relative Abundance and Population Trends

The species relative abundance index is based on work done with snowshoe hares in Alberta, Canada by Christopher Brand and Lloyd Keith (1979).<sup>1</sup> They compared the responses to a trapper questionnaire with their estimates of hare densities based on their own fieldwork and found there was a good relationship between these 2 measures. They developed an index for the responses received from trappers on the questionnaire. A numerical value was assigned to each of 3 responses: 1 = scarce; 2 = common; and 3 = abundant. The value of the abundance index was derived from a mathematical equation that expressed the cumulative response value of trappers in a given region as a percentage of the range of possible values:

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

Where I = abundance index

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

n = number of trappers reporting

The abundance index (I) ranged from 0% to 100%. Index values of 0–19% indicated animals were scarce, 20–50% indicated animals were common, and values greater than 50% indicated animals were abundant. In the following tables, we converted the index values to the appropriate category: scarce, common, or abundant.

We do not know if the same ranges of percentages are appropriate for animals in Alaska, as they were established for snowshoe hares in Alberta. However, this index does provide a way to generally compare trappers' interpretations of species abundance in a given area over time and can be very helpful when used in conjunction with other abundance indicators and sources of information.

The numerical trend index indicates if trappers felt animals were fewer, the same, or more numerous than they were the previous year. This index is slightly different than the relative abundance index. The trend index was calculated by assigning a 1 if the 'fewer' box was checked, 2 for the 'same,' and 3 for 'more' animals. The average was then calculated for all trappers in an area. Since we don't have an independent measure of trend to compare the index values to as we did for relative abundance, it is necessary to select arbitrary ranges of values to classify the average opinion of trappers in an area. For purposes of this report, an average trend value of <1.67 represents fewer (–), a value >2.33 represents more (+), and intermediate values represent no change (n/c) in trend.

Due to the relatively small sample size in RY18, we present species relative abundance and trend at a regionwide level rather than at the game management unit (GMU) level (Table 5). Sample sizes were too small to provide useful data at a smaller geographic scale.

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<sup>1</sup> Brand, C. J. and L. B. Keith. 1979. Lynx demography during a snowshoe hare decline in Alberta. *The Journal of Wildlife Management* 43(4):827–849.

Table 5. Regionwide relative abundance and trend of furbearer populations, Alaska, regulatory year 2018.

Species	Region I		Region II		Region III		Region IV		Region V	
	Relative abundance <i>n</i> <sup>a</sup> = 33	Trend <i>n</i> = 33	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 25	Trend <i>n</i> = 23	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 64	Trend <i>n</i> = 63	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 58	Trend <i>n</i> = 54	Relative abundance <i>n</i> = 19	Trend <i>n</i> = 18
<i>Furbearers:</i>										
Arctic fox	not present	n/c <sup>b</sup>	not present	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Beaver	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c
Coyote	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Ermine	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c
Fisher	scarce	n/c	not present	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	not present	n/c
Lynx	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c
Marten	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Mink	abundant	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c
Muskrat	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Red fox	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c
Red squirrel	common	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c
River otter	common	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c
Wolf	common	+ <sup>c</sup>	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	scarce	n/c	common	n/c
Wolverine	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
<i>Prey:</i>										
Grouse	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	- <sup>d</sup>	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c
Hare	scarce	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c	common	n/c	abundant	n/c
Mice/rodents	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c	common	n/c
Ptarmigan	scarce	n/c	scarce	n/c	scarce	-	scarce	n/c	common	n/c

<sup>a</sup> *n* is the total number of trappers who provided information on abundance or trend; not all trappers provided information on every species.

<sup>b</sup> n/c = no change in trend.

<sup>c</sup> + = decrease in trend.

<sup>d</sup> - = increase in trend.



## Furbearer Harvest Report

Only 4 of the 14 species defined as furbearers are required to be sealed throughout Alaska: lynx, river otter, wolf, and wolverine. Marten, beaver, and fisher are required to be sealed in some units but not statewide. Table 6 shows the number of each species trappers reported harvesting in each subunit in the RY18 season. The letter Z means no subunit or none was specified.

It would be helpful to know what proportion of the total harvest the questionnaire response numbers represent. For species that require sealing, the number sealed represents our best information about the statewide harvest. Table 7 gives the harvest totals reported on the questionnaire as a percentage of the total number sealed. Assuming the proportions for species that are not required to be sealed fall within the ranges observed below, the statewide average of species reported on the questionnaire is 23% of the actual harvest.



Photo by Paul Pedersen.

**Table 6. Furbearer harvest as reported on the 2018 trapper questionnaire, Alaska.**

Region	Subunit <sup>a</sup>	<i>n</i>	Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine
I	1A	4	0	2	0	1	0	0	8	26	0	0	0	12	2	0
	1B	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	38	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
	1C	10	0	29	1	11	2	1	37	49	0	0	8	8	10	3
	1Z	7	0	1	0	1	0	0	34	7	0	0	0	9	2	0
	2Z	17	0	38	0	1	0	0	236	140	0	10	0	25	2	0
	3Z	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	3	8	0	0	4	4	3	0
	4Z	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	165	11	0	0	4	0	0	0
	5A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
I Totals		52	0	70	1	20	2	1	521	243	0	10	16	58	21	3
II	6C	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
	6D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	6Z	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	7Z	3	0	2	2	2	0	0	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	2
	8Z	10	0	30	0	44	0	0	11	1	0	53	0	35	0	0
	14C	4	0	8	0	4	0	1	4	0	1	0	20	0	0	0
	15A	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0
	15B	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	15C	4	0	0	6	16	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	1
	15Z	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
II Totals		25	0	41	8	70	0	1	27	11	10	53	20	39	0	3
III	12Z	6	0	20	2	6	0	25	33	6	14	12	4	1	14	0
	19A	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	30	0	0	7	0	1	1	0
	19C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	19D	3	0	10	0	1	0	1	172	1	0	2	0	0	14	0
	19Z	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	20A	9	0	2	1	9	0	38	125	15	20	8	9	0	10	4
	20B	26	0	26	2	26	0	50	340	11	21	24	78	1	8	0
	20C	5	0	0	0	6	0	21	84	2	0	4	1	0	0	0
	20D	11	0	10	4	9	0	69	17	0	0	3	25	0	7	0
	20E	9	0	0	1	12	0	74	383	5	0	8	0	0	5	2
	20F	2	0	0	3	0	0	46	119	2	0	0	2	0	6	2
	20Z	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	4	0
	21B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	21D	2	0	2	0	0	0	19	2	6	0	8	0	4	0	0
	24A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	24B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Region	Subunit <sup>a</sup>	<i>n</i>	Arctic fox	Beaver	Coyote	Ermine	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Red fox	Red squirrel	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine	
	24Z	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	25A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	25B	1	0	2	0	6	0	16	99	3	0	1	80	0	2	2	
	25C	3	53	6	1	4	0	1	80	3	0	2	5	0	1	3	
	25D	1	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	7	
	26C	1	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	
	26Z	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
III Totals		84	73	79	14	79	0	397	1,487	54	55	89	206	8	72	20	
IV	9B	2	0	6	0	0	0	1	0	6	0	13	3	3	2	0	
	9C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	9D	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	26	0	2	0	0	
	9E	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	
	11Z	4	0	0	2	2	0	62	12	2	0	3	0	0	12	3	
	13A	9	0	0	0	1	0	27	6	1	16	12	0	4	4	2	
	13B	11	0	9	1	8	0	8	68	4	0	3	6	4	5	3	
	13C	3	0	0	5	1	0	36	12	3	4	7	0	7	14	2	
	13D	5	0	10	2	9	0	77	1	0	0	6	5	0	3	1	
	13E	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	13Z	6	0	17	6	1	0	25	2	0	4	5	0	1	4	5	
	14A	14	0	27	15	8	0	2	0	5	270	12	2	3	0	0	
	14B	9	0	6	10	2	0	0	4	2	18	23	2	4	0	4	
	14Z	2	0	4	6	3	0	2	12	4	21	4	5	2	0	1	
	16A	6	2	26	4	18	0	0	39	15	2	0	18	10	0	2	
	16B	4	0	33	9	22	0	0	71	10	0	2	15	2	0	0	
16Z	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		
17A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
17C	9	0	7	0	2	0	0	18	2	0	12	0	9	0	0		
IV Totals		91	2	149	61	78	0	240	286	62	335	150	56	51	44	27	
V	18Z	13	0	140	2	4	0	30	33	11	10	213	0	13	5	18	
	22A	3	2	3	0	2	0	3	5	2	0	15	0	1	0	0	
	22B	1	1	0	0	3	0	10	0	0	0	12	0	0	2	7	
	22C	6	1	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6	0	0	
	22D	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	22Z	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	23Z	8	0	4	0	12	0	45	309	20	0	27	0	2	2	4	
V Totals		32	5	174	2	21	0	88	347	33	10	273	0	22	9	30	
Unknown		10	0	31	1	1	0	23	34	4	12	2	0	4	0	1	
Statewide		294	78	544	87	277	2	750	2,702	407	422	577	298	182	146	84	

**Table 7. Trapper questionnaire reported harvest as a percentage of total number sealed, by species and region where sealing was required, regulatory year 2018, Alaska.**

Region	Percent (%) of RY18 species harvest reported in questionnaire							Average
	Beaver	Fisher	Lynx	Marten	River otter	Wolf	Wolverine	
I	25	40	6	18	20	14	11	19
II	21	– <sup>a</sup>	7	47	27	0	10	24
III	–	–	15	–	12	16	8	15
IV	41	–	37	100	34	13	21	44
V	–	–	100	–	36	17	48	57
Statewide	–	–	22	–	26	14	17	23

<sup>a</sup> Dash indicates there was no sealed harvest.

## Furbearer Sealing Records Summary

Sealing refers to the placement of an official marker or locking tag (seal) by an authorized department representative on an animal hide and/or skull. The sealing process may also involve recording biological information about the animal and the conditions under which it was taken, taking measurements, and collecting biological samples. Lynx, river otter, wolf, and wolverine are required to be sealed statewide. Marten, beaver, and fisher are required to be sealed only in certain GMUs. The harvest totals reported below are based on fur sealing records. Numbers reported here on Table 8 may differ from those in previous reports because additional sealing forms have been turned in.



Photo by Paul Pedersen.

**Table 8. Reported harvest from regulatory year sealing records, Alaska, regulatory years 2014–2018.**

Species	Region	RY14	RY15	RY16	RY17	RY18
Beaver <sup>a</sup>	I	398	322	223	219	277
	II	307	279	149	132	195
	III	49	22	3	9	4
	IV	579	446	464	376	360
	V	2	4	2	0	0
	Total:		1,335	1,073	841	736
Fisher <sup>b</sup>	I	6	2	0	5	5
	II	0	0	0	0	0
	III	0	0	0	0	0
	IV	0	0	0	0	0
	V	0	0	0	0	0
	Total:		6	2	0	5
Lynx	I	1	0	3	1	16
	II	9	10	9	11	15
	III	980	1,045	1,382	2,384	2,608
	IV	128	116	188	367	647
	V	239	326	116	368	84
	Total:		1,357	1,497	1,698	3,131
Marten <sup>c</sup>	I	1,679	2,272	2,266	2,914	2,858
	II	106	195	153	123	58
	III	0	57	38	0	0
	IV	310	671	195	470	209
	V	0	2	0	0	0
	Total:		2,095	3,197	2,652	3,507
River otter	I	388	447	294	292	288
	II	389	324	222	158	142
	III	71	123	61	53	66
	IV	220	204	164	183	149
	V	330	397	141	271	61
	Total:		1,398	1,495	882	957
Wolf	I	163	148	167	192	146
	II	51	46	46	40	24
	III	563	494	538	586	463
	IV	112	159	231	255	336
	V	130	198	163	137	53
	Total:		1,019	1,045	1,145	1,210
Wolverine	I	14	17	17	29	27
	II	16	41	36	27	31
	III	270	256	175	226	247
	IV	100	159	148	144	128
	V	115	136	129	65	62
	Total:		515	609	505	491

<sup>a</sup> Beavers are required to be sealed in game management units (GMU) 1–11, 13–15, and 17.

<sup>b</sup> Fishers are required to be sealed in GMUs 1–5.

<sup>c</sup> Martens are required to be sealed in GMUs 1–7 and 14–16.

## Commercial Transactions Involving Furs

### AVERAGE PRICES PAID FOR RAW FURS

Prices published by 2 major fur auction houses (North American Fur Auction and Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc.) during January–July in each of the previous 5 years were averaged to produce the prices in this table. Top prices were also from fur auctions. Prices for RY18 in Alaska were obtained from the 2019 January–July auction house prices.

**Table 9. Average fur prices published by North American Fur Auction and Fur Harvesters Auction, Inc., for the last 5 regulatory years, 2014–2018.**

Species	Average price (U.S. dollars)					Top price RY18 (U.S.\$)
	RY14	RY15	RY16	RY17	RY18	
Arctic fox	43.29	39.91	36.39	33.11	34.10	96.00
Beaver	13.30	10.04	10.71	10.83	12.91	71.00
Coyote	51.75	39.87	47.67	57.12	77.18	300.00
Ermine	4.74	1.84	2.72	3.27	2.61	16.50
Fisher	63.33	35.62	49.61	43.84	32.16	112.00
Lynx	87.37	61.88	69.46	75.87	79.59	360.00
Marten	54.12	46.51	83.32	69.47	44.09	210.00
Mink (wild)	9.83	9.10	10.44	10.76	9.07	21.00
Muskrat	3.94	2.87	3.89	3.17	3.73	10.10
Red fox	23.84	16.53	17.85	18.81	14.50	100.00
Squirrel		0.38	0.70	0.81	0.53	1.00
River otter	38.65	20.00	28.79	28.68	22.15	125.00
Wolf	127.75	157.88	176.36	144.51	168.54	750.00
Wolverine	217.41	208.90	242.19	255.75	291.95	525.00



Photo by Jesse Grady.

## MINIMUM ESTIMATED FUR VALUE

Table 10 below summarizes the minimum total estimated value of furs trapped during the 2018–2019 season. The minimum total value was \$773,231.12, with marten and lynx accounting for more than half of that total. This table is intended to provide an estimate of fur values in Alaska and does not represent fur revenue. Average fur auction prices were used to calculate fur value. For beaver, fisher, lynx, marten, river otter, wolf, and wolverine, we used number of furs sealed. That means beaver, fisher, and marten values are certainly underestimated because the table includes only animals harvested from the areas in the state where sealing is required. For species that were not sealed the number of furs is the harvest reported by trappers on the questionnaire.

**Table 10. Minimum value of furs harvested in Alaska, regulatory year 2018, by species.**

Species	Total number sealed or reported	Average price (U.S.\$)	Minimum value (U.S.\$)
Arctic fox	78	34.10	2,659.80
Beaver	836	12.91	10,792.76
Coyote	87	77.18	6,714.66
Ermine	273	2.61	712.53
Fisher	5	32.16	160.80
Lynx	3,370	79.59	268,218.30
Marten	3,125	44.09	137,781.25
Mink	407	9.07	3,691.49
Muskrat	422	3.73	1,574.06
Red fox	577	14.50	8,366.50
Red squirrel	298	0.53	157.94
River otter	706	22.15	15,637.90
Wolf	1,022	168.54	172,247.88
Wolverine	495	291.95	144,515.25
<b>Total minimum value</b>			<b>773,231.12</b>



Photo by Patrick Jones.

## Fur Sealing Requirements

Lynx, river otter, wolf, or wolverine taken anywhere in the state, marten in GMUs 1–7 and 14–16, fisher in GMUs 1–5, and beaver taken in GMUs 1–11, 13–15, and 17 must be sealed by an authorized department representative. If you ship furs of these animals to a buyer or auction house out of state, the furs must be sealed before you ship them.

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

- ❦ There are federal licenses and permits needed to ship within or outside the country. Please check with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service if you intend to ship fur out of Alaska to another country, such as Canada. If you intend to ship a wolf, lynx, or river otter skin (raw or tanned) out of the country (for example from Alaska to a fur dealer in Canada) you must get a federal wildlife export permit (also called a CITES permit), a federal import/export license, and arrange for inspection of all furs by a federal agent.



Photo by Jesse Grady.



## Regional ADF&G Fur Sealing Officers

Region I (GMUs 1–5)

Chad Rice  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 110024  
Juneau, AK 99811-0024  
(907) 465-4354

Region II (GMUs 6, 7, 8, 14 and 15)

Erik Bollerud  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, AK 99518  
(907) 267-2344

Region III (GMUs 12, 19, 20, 21,  
24, 25, and 26B,C)

Jessie Dunshie  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
1300 College Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
(907) 459-7205

Region IV (GMUs 9, 10, 11, 13,  
16, and 7)

Joel Holyoak  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
1800 Glenn Hwy #4  
Palmer, AK 99645  
(907) 746-6396

Region V (GMUs 18, 22, 23, and 26A)

Amy Russell-Jamgochian  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 1148  
Nome, AK 99762  
(907) 443-2271



Photo by Paul Pedersen.

## Area Biologists and Game Management Units

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## Trapper Comments

We are looking for ways to improve the trapper questionnaire; please feel free to provide your suggestions. We are also interested in your ideas for trapping in Alaska. Below are responses trappers provided on the 2018 questionnaire to the following question: “Do you have any other comments or suggestions for ADF&G or the Board of Game on how trapping can be improved in Alaska?”<sup>2</sup>

### REGION I

- 🐾 Allow hunting of predators (all carnivorous animals) with artificial light. Nearly every other State in the Nation allows it, why doesn't Alaska? Trappers often shoot animals with the aid of artificial light while trapping during periods of marginal daylight conditions. Why not make it legal? Perhaps make it legal only while taking animals while in possession of a trapping license.
- 🐾 Because of our weather patterns the last several years, I don't think the trapping of marten and mink should be opened until the first of Jan. or at least no earlier than Dec. 15th. Many hides are not prime yet and there is very little underfur making them less sellable and desirable. I realize primeness is based more on sunlight but our cold weather and snow has shifted to later months. Next year I won't even start trapping marten until Jan. because of the poor hide primeness. In the last 10 years, it has seems like it has gotten worse and worse. We seem to get most of our snowfall in March nowadays. Fur prices have been very low lately and people have not put in the effort which should help populations. Hopefully the fur prices will get better.
- 🐾 Continue to support the ATA. Initiate programs to reward successful wolf trappers where predator #'s are high and prey #'s are low.
- 🐾 Did not Target Marten this year but 4 years ago harvested a small female up near Emerald Bay that took 21 ticks off of. Every once in a while will find a tick or two.
- 🐾 Don't let the Ketchikan borough manage trapping practices. They treat the area as if it were a subdivision of Seattle and not part of Alaska. The Ketchikan gateway borough singlehandedly killed all desire i had to trap in the Ketchikan area.
- 🐾 Eliminate wolf trapping season and increase wolf hunting season. Trapping kills a lot of pups and bitches along with deer bycatch when using snares. When hunting wolves it's more likely that kills will be mature male wolves. Also hunting pressure keeps them wary and away from people and pets.
- 🐾 Fish and Game seems to have a good handle on trapping and how to manage the animals in my area.

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<sup>2</sup> Trapper comments are not modified.

- 🐾 Give us back the first two weeks of May for Beaver. Take a look at sea otter and open it up to non-natives.
- 🐾 I am thankful for the opportunity to have trapped for Marten and Mink in the 1980's when I was in High school and just after. Friends have told me that fur prices are currently down. Due to the responsibilities of work and family I am not able to take the time to trap today. It would be helpful to list zones in Alaska where each species can be found, and information about currently available fur markets. Does the State of Alaska promote value added products, such as hats and gloves made from furs?
- 🐾 I believe that science and research should be used to manage Alaska's wildlife not emotion and some biologist's opinion, why in the heck are we protecting wolves on certain islands in southeast Alaska? They are an apex predator and must be managed as such. The wolves have decimated the deer on islands in southeast. The science proves this yet the southeast managers would rather have collars on every wolf in the region and limit lawful trapping. Please hire people that trap and are true wildlife managers. It's shameful to have managers managing trapping yet are clueless as to the world of trapping. The future of trapping in the Last Frontier looks bleak since the state does nothing to promote trapping and the positive aspects of trappings. Most of the trails and roads around this state were made by trappers and the roots and heritage of trapping runs deep. The state needs to do more for trapping.
- 🐾 I believe we are under counting total wolf population in unit 1. Boots on ground show much more sign... lots of kill sights of deer and even a bear.
- 🐾 I didn't fill out the questionnaire completely as to abundance of species that are not present in GMU 2.
- 🐾 I do believe the traditional trapping trails are being taken over by non-trappers (Dog Walkers) tourism industry, and also State, Federal trail enhancements. These trails were always what we considered to be traditional game trails, that trappers have use for what seems to be ever! Now they are being enhanced to accommodate many other user groups that I have mention above. I give great credit to ATA (Alaska Trappers association) for helping out on these issues! Without the Board of game, and ATA support, I feel the Trappers would be pushed aside! So please keep up the great work!! We must keep in mind most trappers do not trap along these trails as they have better place to go! But it nice to have these local areas for the young and upcoming trappers that are trying to get a start and find a place to go. We must keep the interest of the young generation. Thanks for opportunity to take this survey!
- 🐾 I go out with my son on his trap line therefore I purchase a license every year. If I do not go with him I will still purchase a trapping license because ADFG needs to realize that trapping is an important part of Alaska's history and continue to promote the craft with the next generation.

- 🐾 I have a PID that includes trapping. If I do set out a trap it's just to catch the mink raiding my chicken coop which I believe falls under DLP, not regular trapping laws.
- 🐾 I have my trapper's license just in case I see a critter when out hunting deer during trapping season. I can shoot it and get the pelt for my own personal use.
- 🐾 I think we should be able to bait 30 days prior to the season opener.
- 🐾 I would like to thank the ADF&G especially DWC for continuing and maintaining the annual trapper questionnaire. I believe this to be one of the best publications the ADF&G puts out to the public. Lots of great info included in this report. As well as being helping to establish trends and baseline data, it also documents that trapping is a viable part of our great states livelihood, culture, and general way of life. This important to document as there is always a looming threat to hunting, fishing, and especially trapping. Thanks ADF&G for helping us maintain our voice and continued great management our resources. This is never an easy job and you're always an easy finger pointing target, but you're doing great. It seems most trappers around Juneau already mark their trap lines somewhere along the 'line. However, many times these signs get ripped down, ignored, or destroyed. The signage is helpful to not only to inform trappers that the area is currently being trapped by another trapper but also informs hikers that traps MAY be present during certain times of the year. I would love to see ADF&G hand out more official looking signs, perhaps on corrugated plastic, to trappers to voluntarily hang near their 'lines. These signs could cite the CBJ and SOA regs and would perhaps deter tampering with and let the non-trapping community know that trapping is legal, safe, and admissible in this area. ...just an idea. Thanks for your time and the opportunity to comment!
- 🐾 Introduce more species to GMU 2.
- 🐾 Keep up the good work!
- 🐾 Keep up the good work.
- 🐾 Fewer restrictions in the Juneau area.
- 🐾 Need to improve trapping of wolf on POW; they are hurting the deer population on the island.
- 🐾 No.
- 🐾 No.
- 🐾 No, but thank you for the opportunity.
- 🐾 No, I think the BOG does a great job of regulating the trapping regs.
- 🐾 None. There seems to be a decrease this year in prey rodents and a correspondent decrease in fur animals. I plan to not target mink and marten next year in my area.

- 🐾 Nope, love ya guys.
- 🐾 Post maps of local open/closed areas to trapping.
- 🐾 Stronger enforcement on dog leash laws.
- 🐾 Working with local trappers to hold people accountable for taking trapped animals and trapping equipment from people. It appears this has been an issue and I and others had difficulty showing who took what and proving it so they can be held accountable. My concern is that this issue prevents some people from wanting to get out there and trap out of concern they will lose their gear and trapped animals, losing time and money in the process.
- 🐾 Would like to be able to run traps in unit four without needing to label each trap.
- 🐾 Yes, in 2018 went into area which i had been scouting for a number of years. Just prior to going in there making exploratory sets; ADFG decided to take a rotary aircraft into site and start low altitude flying & what i understand tranquilized a few animals. That shot the end of season exploratory trapping of new area. I understand in the past as an advisory board member and in discussion with present day advisory board members that you left animals alone during the trapping season. Please refrain from doing this during the season causes a lot of grief in the field. Season is short enough. Thanks for Your Cooperation.

## REGION II

- 🐾 Ban trapping in units 14, 15, and 7. There are too many conflicts posed by other user groups and too many uneducated or indifferent trappers in these units near the bulk of AK population centers. If people want to trap off in the boondocks I have no objection. But too many times traps are set near roads on established trails or are not checked and removed by wannabe trappers. Then someone comes by with rover off leash and a tragedy ensues. There is enough unoccupied land in other game units to allow dedicated trappers to continue to pursue trapping as a sport or to supplement income.
- 🐾 Can we river otter season run with beaver? Hard to discriminate when setting traps.
- 🐾 Consider non-profit "bounties" for predator reduction.
- 🐾 Feb. otter season Kodiak unit 8.
- 🐾 I am always happy to do a survey to help out. I am not much of a trapper, I put out one set on my land I have a cabin on in 15a. My responses might not be what the average trapper will enter for this survey. I just like to get out. I did see a lot of tracks and believe that if I put in more effort I'd have gotten a few Martin, Weasels, definitely could have picked up a Beaver or two, I know where there are lodges and no one has been targeting them. The opportunity is there, just got to put in some time and effort.

- 🐾 I buy the hunting, fishing, trapping license to support the resource. I've never been a trapper, though might try in the future.
- 🐾 I had a great time. I learned a lot.
- 🐾 I had always wanted to trap, and acquired all the necessary equipment to do so, but never actually got into the field and set any traps. I continued to purchase a trapping license for 2 reasons... 1. I felt it was worthwhile to help fund wildlife conservation and ADF&G work via license fees. 2. The bag limit for fur bearing animals is higher if a hunter also has a trapping license (although I never came close to filling regular bag limits, it gave me options).
- 🐾 I have not trapped before, but obtained a trapping license in hopes of giving it a try this past year. I'll try to give it a shot next winter, though.
- 🐾 I live in Eagle River and there is very little public land open to trapping within reasonable driving distance that is worth the time and effort. You'll likely hear this same sentiment from others like me who quite frankly don't have the time (or desire) to drive a hundred plus miles to find open grounds. I trapped actively when I lived in Fairbanks and involved my kids. I'm a proponent of keeping the tradition of trapping alive in Alaska. It would be great if there were more locations opened to trapping within Eagle River (i.e., the Eagle River drainage) and areas within Chugach State Park.
- 🐾 I no longer trap. However I purchase a trapper's license every year to help support it. Thank you.
- 🐾 I obtain a trapping license to take furbearers with a rifle in the winter. I currently do not run traps, but may in the future if I move to interior. Please remain focused on science based management of furbearer and predator species with respect to policy decisions in the future. Don't cater to emotional, sometimes scientifically unsound viewpoints of the extremely vocal urban-based non-consumptive resource users. The burden of conservation largely falls on the shoulders of responsible trappers/ hunters, and piling on more emotionally based laws aimed at limiting or discouraging these folks from participating will only harm the resource. Less \$ for conservation due to license sale declines, overpopulation leading to habitat loss, and heightened impacts to prey species to name a few. Thanks.
- 🐾 I purchase the trapping to help fund conservation and allow and fur bearing kills with firearms that is allowable by law.
- 🐾 I use the website to ensure that I'm legal and during the correct times.
- 🐾 I wish I could find a mentor. Someone who would let me tag along throughout the year and let me be hands on with actually doing it so that I can learn. The only people more secretive about their spots than trappers seem to be sheep hunters.

- 🐾 I'm not a trapper; I always get a trapping license in addition to my hunting license because it creates secondary opportunities when out in the field hunting.
- 🐾 Investigate complaints of trap/trapline tampering and damage.
- 🐾 Just supporting the education.....
- 🐾 Maybe some trapping education programs for beginning trappers. Some of the trappers around here tend to put sets out in places that place pets at risk. Several dogs have been killed by traps. Maybe some education could prevent that?
- 🐾 No.
- 🐾 No.
- 🐾 No.
- 🐾 No.
- 🐾 No comments.
- 🐾 No more comments.
- 🐾 No suggestions.
- 🐾 None.
- 🐾 None, you're doing a good job, so far.
- 🐾 None. I hopefully will be able to trap this year.
- 🐾 Nope.
- 🐾 Nope.
- 🐾 Not at this time.
- 🐾 Once the lynx population rises on the Kenai Peninsula trapping for the cats should not be allowed. The lynx cat should be huntable with rifle.
- 🐾 Open a firearms season for beaver in 14C. Require ID tags on all traps. Consider opening a Lynx season for portions of 14C. Require a minimum distance from houses, roads, right-of-ways, and certain designated public trails. Thanks for your work!
- 🐾 Please add N/A or didn't trap or zero success...



- 🐾 Please continue defending our rights as trappers. There are those who are misinformed and seek to trample our rights and privileges. Thank you for your help in preserving our Alaskan way of life.
- 🐾 Protect the right of Alaskans to continue to trap do not close any areas or change regulation because of user groups that don't like trapping, that's all I ask of my local game department.
- 🐾 Put on a mandatory trapping class before allowing a person to purchase a trapping license. Cover how to select an area, how to set snares, how to make snares safe from catching moose, how to set footholds and disguise them, and how to remove a dog from all types of traps.
- 🐾 Require traps be checked every day unless they are equipped with an electronic notification device. Intent should be o have no live animal in a trap longer than 24 hours. Ban ground level kill traps like snares and conifers within 3 miles of areas that are heavily used by other user groups.
- 🐾 Thank you ADF&G and Board of Game for actively supporting Alaskan trappers in the pursuit of harvesting a wonderful, renewable resource.
- 🐾 Thankful that we have the opportunity to take my kids (ages 12 and 9) out into the woods through the medium of trapping. It's one of my favorite times of the year.
- 🐾 This is the first year I touch a trap in a few. The price is so low it isn't worth wasting gas or time. We sent a small sample to NAFA auction to see what happens??? It was fun to catch a few critters though!!! Maybe next year. My wife did find a tick on a rabbit's ear this year. First ever... The rest of our critters are clean of bugs.
- 🐾 Time to open lynx season on the Kenai Pen, the numbers are increasing quickly.
- 🐾 We must address the issues of pets/dogs being killed in traps!!! These dogs are often hunting dogs that folks have infested greatly in, both financially and emotionally. I propose we either address areas off limits to trapping, trails etc. and start doing a better job educating both user groups. Most long time trappers I have talked to say it is pure laziness on the "that trapper" that catches dogs. They are simply either not trapping responsibly or not setting far enough off the beaten path. Also dog owners need to know how to release their pets. Finally there is NO REASON for the "kill traps" that snap a snare closed and especially should not be used in "urban areas" i.e. the Mat Valley. You want to fly or snow machine out and run a line, use what you want and is legal. However these traps are not a responsible choice where user groups overlap. I would like to someday trap for my personal use of the firs, as well as the heritage and experience, but I can never imagine killing someone's pet, as an owner of three bird dogs. Perhaps we simply address the issue as closure areas off limits to trapping and/or a gear type restriction that allows trappers to trap, but does not likely catch pets (i.e. foot holds vs snares??) as well as a better job of marking the trap set in urban areas so the user groups

can avoid that areas, i.e. signs that say active trapping at the trail head? Not sure on the right answer but this need to change. Thanks!

### REGION III

- 🐾 ADFG does not impede trapping efforts. The major factor now is an extremely late freeze up, poor ice conditions and weather. I was unable to get on the river until December/January. I travel for work a lot so I only get out once or twice a week. Deep snow and warm weather made it a nightmare.
- 🐾 Align lynx and wolverine season dates.
- 🐾 Better access to current land usage maps.
- 🐾 Better registration to help with trapping near another person.
- 🐾 Extend wolverine season to the end of February in unit 13E.
- 🐾 Federal and state seasons should be aligned in some areas.
- 🐾 General comment - 2 of the 3 red fox trapped were missing half of their tail. It looked like it was chewed off, is this common? I'm new to trapping in Alaska and am curious. Thank you!
- 🐾 Help educate the public about trapping.
- 🐾 I do a fair amount of "calling" also and believe that it is a very common practice now for folks that don't even trap. They use the trapping license for "calling" as it lengthens season /bag limits, etc. The harvest numbers of some of these veteran callers that go every chance they get could definitely exceed most small time/hobby, personal use type trapper's seasonal take. Might be something to keep an eye on sooner than later as it becomes more popular every year.
- 🐾 I had two wolves with Follicular Dysplasia this year out of six.
- 🐾 I just help a trapper out every now and then. Because I found it very difficult for a new trapper to find an area to set up a small line without crossing someone's lines or area. I'm not wanting to be in one of the good ole boy clubs. I just want a small line to maybe run for about a month. Public maps where everyone's lines are would be great info for new trappers. And maybe what they are trapping so if they are targeting one animal you could target others that might be in the area.
- 🐾 I like this survey and the product it produces. Would like to see more marten research, looking into range, long timeframe birth rates, effects of fires, etc.
- 🐾 I neglected to mention a one wolverine harvest.

- 🐾 I purchase a trapping license to help fund wildlife research and management.
- 🐾 I ran 5 traps but did not catch anything the whole season.
- 🐾 I think that all trails that are used for trapping should be marked. Trappers should be required to go a certain amount of miles away from town before setting up traps.
- 🐾 I think the ADF&G is doing a fine job.
- 🐾 I think the use of trash should not be allowed for trapping lynx. Whole and broken CD's are becoming wildly common for use as a visual attractor at lynx sets and it looks bad. Thank you.
- 🐾 I think trapping should be left the way it is.
- 🐾 It would be great if folks marked their trap lines. I found a few traps on the trails to little Donna lake cabin that had no signs on the trail. Next season I wish to learn to trap. I believe it is a good thing if people follow the rules.
- 🐾 It's been a few years but when I was trapping, ADF&G was very helpful and kind to help me get a grasp on rules and do's and don'ts. I look forward to having the time do it again soon.
- 🐾 Just getting back into trapping so still learning the ropes on trapping in Alaska. My poor results are probably from inexperience. Thanks.
- 🐾 Just observations- muskrats have been down for years. I wonder why. More reported wolverine in my area I wonder why. Marten and lynx are never common at the same time. Why? Old fire scars don't always seem to be good for marten. Moose populations have been down for years in my area, it's not from predation or habitat loss, I wonder why. I have trapped the same area for over 30 years. I have seen one lynx high in that time. They went from very few with a good marten population to tremendous abundance in one year with a dramatic drop in marten populations. Marten populations shift at times, not unlike a small scale migration and they will not cohabitate with a large lynx population. This did not coincide with a hare high cycle. Lynx and hare at times, travel great distances. Male wolverine have no home range. Wolves will eat all the moose in their area before they target caribou. Fox all but disappeared in my area 30 years ago. Federal policy's and attitudes are a great hindrance to public use of lands. Their relationship with the public they supposedly serve is horrible and there is no reason for it. The Alaska fish and game do an outstanding job. I applauded your efforts. Keep up the good work.
- 🐾 Let the beavers live so that I can trap more.
- 🐾 Lynx season should start December first due to primeness of pelt. The fur buyers do not want November cats.

🐾 I have been trapping for just about ten years. This Year was the best season I have ever had. However having struggles with other local trappers claiming I am too close to their lines was a huge set back. But the number of fox and lynx have taken a huge leap from the last two years. I try to keep all the data I can on the animals I catch. The sex, age and the health. The majority of lynx I took this year where in their second year, roughly 68% where female, but all where very healthy animals. The fox where first year to second year animals, with it being an even 50% male and 50% female, all where very healthy. The Otters that I took this year, (3 males, 1 female), where all very healthy. Two of the male otters where extremely good size. One reaching 66" from nose to tip of tail. Slightly less Hares than last year. However certainly enough to support the predator population in the area for a while. Thank you.

🐾 No I trap the road and all my lines start in unit 12 but it would only let me put one unit on each line.

🐾 No.

🐾 No.

🐾 No.

🐾 No it seems to be run very well.

🐾 None.

🐾 None.

🐾 None.

🐾 Nope.

🐾 Nope. Get a trapping license every year because my husband is a trapper just to be legal in case I help out, but I don't trap.

🐾 Not at this time.

🐾 Please use monies from trapping licenses, to improve trapping conditions throughout the state of Alaska.

🐾 Predator control bounty on coyotes.

🐾 Registered trap lines would be great. Every year it seems we have more and more problems with people running our line, setting traps right next to ours, stealing fur from our traps and tampering with our sets. It's causing trapping to become more frustrating and less enjoyable. Since the troopers can't do anything unless you have solid evidence, and it's not really feasible to set game cams on every trap, just having to register your

trap line would make it less stressful knowing that you're the only ones who are allowed to trap a certain area.

- 🐾 Sorry I could not provide better answers for you. This was the first time I have ever tried trapping. In fact, I was snaring hares; I did not have any "traps." 2019/2020 I will try to set marten traps for the first time. I only trap/snare on my own private property.
- 🐾 The hardest part of getting into trapping in Alaska is finding an area to trap without setting up in someone's territory, if there were a database of trapper's historical territories or lines it would make it easier to enter.
- 🐾 There should be a database of trappable lands and let other trappers know what areas are claimed.
- 🐾 This year was just rough cause of the lack of snow and late. Getting out on the line and across the rivers didn't let us get out as we normally do. Also the earlier break up made us pull out earlier than normal.
- 🐾 To do away with fee on mental health trust lands, or to be clearly identified on trails.
- 🐾 Trapping education in the villages, too many old school (this is the way we have always done it). To many kids are coming up and there are getting to be more and more people in the villages and they don't understand why it is not as good as when their grandparents use to do it. There is little information in the villages about licenses and ADF&G activities in their area that are trying to help. Lack of regulation enforcement results in ignorance for the younger generation.
- 🐾 Trapping is very difficult and frustrating when you have to deal with winter hunters. Winter hunters have no respect for trappers. They steal at any opportunity possible. I've had my line interfered with constantly, from tampering with traps, bait to taking fur. It's also maddening with hunters crisscrossing your trail.
- 🐾 Work with ATA to provide education requirements for first time Alaska trappers. Sloppy trapping in high human population areas is threatening all trappers through new proposed regulations and restrictions.
- 🐾 Yes with a Beaver Nuisance Permit YYOU should not have to buy a Trapper license if YOU are only trapping by your own property and not someone else's. It is expensive 45.00 and I did not even get a Beaver.

## REGION IV

- 🐾 A longer season.
- 🐾 All in all good season, looking forward to the next season.
- 🐾 Allow trapping in Anchorage Municipality. Encourage youth to trap—offer incentives.

- 🐾 A lot of freezing rain this season early on, Pulled line day of Earthquake, didn't reset line with a recent job change. Plan on increased effort in 2019-2020.
- 🐾 Back off on the Arial wolf hunting in the Sonona and Oshetna Drainages!! They have shot the hell out of them this year!! We understand there may need some reduction, but there non-stop aircraft in our area. After the over harvest from the last hunt it took a very long time for the wolves to return please be very careful. Also the wolverine seem to be very low now hardly a track was spotted in our area. Thank you.
- 🐾 Change regulations to lynx and wolverine the same!
- 🐾 Classes for beginning trappers on reading and following the regulations.
- 🐾 Consider enforcing the "leash law" or some type of confinement for domestic interference. Too much infringement may be happening, due to population growth and people's attitudes. Just because we are in Alaska doesn't give rights to let pets run loose and trappers have to suffer the consequences.
- 🐾 DNR issuing trapping cabin permits!
- 🐾 Don't over regulate things like hunting has become. Don't sell trapping license to out of staters.
- 🐾 Educating the public.
- 🐾 Establish Trapping Management Areas to limit trap and set types to those that minimize conflict with other users. There are many types of trap/snare sets that have little or no risk to pets but trappers will need to be educated on these techniques. Without establishing Trapping Management Areas in less rural regions, legislation will eventually be "pushed" through, by those ignorant to trapping methods and wildlife, to ban the activity all together in areas where others recreate. Other areas of our Country successfully balance trapping with recreational users in even densely populated areas. In Alaska however, it seems to be an all or nothing proposition. Through education and common-sense restrictions in less rural areas our children will have the opportunity to participate in an activity that requires a direct and intimate understanding of the habits of wildlife and produces warm sustainable products.
- 🐾 Have a little longer season on some species in unit 14B maybe start a little earlier for beaver and otter? Thanks.
- 🐾 I always buy a trapping licenses with the hope of getting back out for some recreational weekend trapping or to shoot furbearers when allowed.
- 🐾 I apply for combination hunting, fishing and trapping license to help support all activities. I will continue to do this and perhaps one day I may actually try my luck at trapping.

- 🐾 I believe we should enforce trapping more such as Canada does. Set quotas for individual trappers, trap lines should need to be registered, people trap on top of other people all the time, other people wipe out areas than move on to another area and wipe it out as well. I enjoy trapping with my kids and I would like them to be able to do it with their kids, I'm afraid if we don't make changes were going to wipe out certain areas.
- 🐾 I did not trap because I believe we need more education in the trapping communities about ethical trapping, i.e. trapping close to public trails. Too many dogs are being hurt needlessly. Please help. It would be nice to see a class in how to remove your dog from a trap or snare as well.
- 🐾 I don't trap. I buy the license because I predator call. But I have never been successful at it.
- 🐾 I don't trap I just buy the license in case I ever get an opportunity to learn trapping. Sorry I don't have any questions.
- 🐾 I grew up trapping in Minnesota I am trying to retire and try to start trapping again.
- 🐾 I have always paid for a full hunting/fishing license to support Alaska Fish & Game but I have never done any trapping.
- 🐾 i have not been able to trap in Alaska due to having a job that does not allow me the time off i would like to be able to run a trapline correctly I am getting close to retirement age and plan to do some trapping in my golden years. I purchase a trapper license yearly in case i get a chance to get out and i figure the money i spend on the license we be used to protect the resource. Thanks guys keep up the good work.
- 🐾 I haven't trapped for 45 years and was wanting to teach my son how to trap. The weather has been too warm and the fox furs were not very nice so we didn't go.
- 🐾 I know this is not a popular idea to require; I would like to request there be at least a tiny baby step towards protecting pets by at a minimum producing and making readily available signs which indicate trapping areas and the types of traps in use. I think even if these signs were not required, if they were available then maybe people would start using them and just by having it a conversation new trappers might be more conscientious. Old trappers are not a problem at all but some of the newer trappers aren't as careful to stay away from high traffic areas.
- 🐾 I noticed lots of lynx tracks in 14C. A season for lynx may be in order.
- 🐾 I only got a trapping license so I could trap a beaver that was killing all the trees on my property but a flood washed his den away.
- 🐾 I participated in the GMU 13 aerial wolf predator management hunt and if continues will trap GMU13 again next winter for wolves.

- 🐾 I would like to have more areas open for early beaver so I could trap open water near my home in unit 14A.
- 🐾 I'm a predator hunter.
- 🐾 Just want to thank you for allowing us to harvest beaver in unit 16 with a firearm. It's getting overrun by beaver since they're not worth anything.
- 🐾 Keep fighting for trapper rights, other outdoor groups think they are above the law.
- 🐾 Keep up the great work!
- 🐾 Late freeze up late snow warmer conditions lead to less trapping this year.
- 🐾 My trapping could be improved if I actually started catching things. Haha.
- 🐾 No.
- 🐾 No not at this time.
- 🐾 None.
- 🐾 None. I've just been getting my trapping license to cover my bases in case I want to take a fox in the Aleutians. Thanks.
- 🐾 Nope, doing a good job.
- 🐾 Nope, I mostly travel as an able body with guys that are in their 80's that still want to trap, but their wives won't let them out unescorted.
- 🐾 Not at this time.
- 🐾 Not really however user conflict is a problem.
- 🐾 Our season was cut short due to the earthquake busting up ice and the melt/rain that happened shortly afterward. We did not encounter other trappers this year, but in the past did encounter an aggressive and threatening trapper late in the season- we had seen no sign of him all season (and were out there literally every other day) but he wanted to preserve "his" territory. We are a family with small children, just setting out a few muskrat sets and occasionally an ermine set, and in past years a few for fox and marten. We do not own atvs so we have to walk to check traps and often go after school and in the dark. As a mom I felt intimidated to take them out after that encounter, so we could only trap when my husband was home. This also significantly cut back on our season. The kids are so proud of their catches, and work hard to buy traps, research, find sign, prepare the site, set the traps, and check them in all kinds of terribly cold weather, and skin their animals. We value the lessons learned by trapping: work ethic, how the natural world works, death, responsibility, and joy of being together (to name a few). They are 7



and 10 this year. I would love if we could have space to encourage kids to trap without fear of belligerent trappers. I suggest that trapping follow the model of fishing and hunting by adding some youth days or youth areas. I keep reading that trapping is a dying art, and the way to revive it is to teach the youth- but when the culture of old school trappers can feel hostile it is no wonder more kids aren't involved. Thank you~

- 🐾 People are trapping close to public recreation areas where it's very common for people to walk their dogs and other pets. I believe trapping should be regulated better around these recreation areas to help keep peoples pets from getting caught in traps. This has become an issue, and is causing altercations between people recreating with their pets and trappers that choose to trap in close proximity to the recreation area. If the board of game could change the laws such that a larger area around recreation sites was closed to trapping, it would help.
- 🐾 Please protect us from thieves and anti-trapping groups....thanks.
- 🐾 Poor weather conditions (too warm), is a major reason I did not trap this last winter.
- 🐾 Protect it from those that are attempting to end it. Be more proactive in supporting it through allowing more lines and strict enforcement of those that ruin and or sabotage trap lines and equipment.
- 🐾 Rabbits on the rise, no sign of parasites on liver out of the 25 or so rabbits we snared/shot. Seems to be increasing number of muskrat pushups over the last five years. Lynx doing well. Lots of people trapping around Lake Louise, so success remains fairly low for us weekend fun trappers.
- 🐾 Remove otter and beaver restrictions in Chugach State Park. They are more than plentiful, have dammed most of the valley trails (Ship Creek is really blocked), few trappers are willing to walk in limiting the harvest, and minimal chance of dog owner issues in the winter. Could even require below water/ ice traps here. Also, there are many lynx in 14C that no one can get at during this peak cycle. Again, why not open Chugach and maybe limit to only foot hold.
- 🐾 Require people to have an id tag on their traps. The I'd tags you would have on file registered to someone.
- 🐾 Same deal as every other year.... Every seismic line and ATV trail off the Glenn Hwy. is claimed by somebody whether they use it or not. They leave a trap hanging every mile or so and say that the line is "theirs" even though year after year they are never out there. I assume they may come out when the fur price gets higher??? Same with some creeks off the Nelchina. The creek and entire drainage is "theirs." How can anyone claim a creek? This old idea of the trappers "cutting in their lines" is in many respects complete nonsense. They had nothing to do with cutting in seismic lines. Many of these trails are used by a myriad of moose hunters and snowmachiners yet they have exclusive rights to the trail for trapping. Shouldn't there be a better distinction??? Of course if a guy does cut in his own trail...you would leave it alone. However I tried that one year and got the

proverbial Ziploc bag with a note hanging on a nail saying that "this is my area." People do this because it is somewhat tolerated and even enforced to some degree. I can think of several policies that were in place for years that no matter how inequitable they were to the masses (or some races) and none the less were enforced. When you are dealing with public lands and have these dated "codes of ethics" propped up to subsidize just a handful of individuals something must be awry. I'm not sure when the mainstream trapping community is going to get this but they are essentially sanctioning a prohibitive system that excludes anyone else trying to find a place to trap. I.e., the old school trapping ideas may be snuffing out the next generation of folks that can carry it forward...are we ready to do that given all of the other pressures that trapping is facing such as anti-trapping movements? It is madness having to be put in confrontational situations with an individual(s) that has no more claim to an area than anyone else in the state should have. For a handful of low value fur. Are guys going to start throwing people off creeks for fishing because they have claimed it for their own use? It is no different. I trap year after year....regardless of whatever the price of fur is. It's not about the price of fur for me and I would suggest many other folks. However one shouldn't have to ask another man for permission access, tolerance or anything else that is no more or less his than any other law abiding, tax paying citizen. That doesn't seem very "Alaskan" to me....

- 🐾 Season slowed down when we got more snow. Snowmachiners started riding my line and messing with my sets and I was away from riding areas.
- 🐾 Send more snow and cold weather to Bristol Bay.
- 🐾 State of Alaska needs to take a strong stance in promoting trapping as a conservation tool, a heritage and cultural part of Alaska. There is plenty of good material to support and validate trapping even in close proximity to population centers. Removing or banning trapping can cause huge habitat issues and human conflicts with pets and livestock when prey animals are allowed to over populate, this has been evidenced with banning trapping in several states, We are Alaska, it is still a frontier state.
- 🐾 There are significantly more dead spruce trees on our trapline this year...The spruce beetles are devastating our trapping area that used to have a good balance of black spruce, regular spruce and birch....The dead trees are not only a new fire hazard but I suspect it's driven some of the predators and their prey from the area as well...There is most certainly a negative relationship between the loss of spruce trees and the lower numbers of prey and predator... Another area of concern in unit 16A is the winters are starting later; meaning lakes, creeks and rivers aren't freezing up in Oct or early Nov causing access issues for getting onto the trapline when season starts 10 Nov...Recommend extending trapping season in the south central region for most species by 2-3 weeks based on the winter freeze-ups occurring later based on recent years' experience...
- 🐾 Trapping has to be kept away from population areas. An urban interface buffer is necessary or we will cause so much friction with trapped and snared pets that additional problems will arise. Doesn't matter that Fido was not on a leash because the emotional knee jerk will be strong and supported by politicians. We must continue educating

ourselves and our kids to leave the interface alone. The buffer will create a safe habitat for all to enjoy. 2scents.

- 🐾 Wolves and wolverine tracks and sign disappeared on my mainline as soon as the aerial hunting began in mid- January.

## REGION V

- 🐾 I am fortunate to trap in unit 18. My biggest problem is anti-trappers moving into the area and weather. Traveling is becoming more dangerous with warmer winters. ADF&G does a good job in my opinion. I think we need to revisit lure form bird wings. Such as swan, Geese and Crane. These should be allowed again for lure and not trash like CDs. Thank you.
- 🐾 I have not trapped yet, however I hope to trap soon. The school had a trapping program that has been on hold the last two years. Hopefully we can get this program going again this year.
- 🐾 New to trapping, just getting a feel for things. The more educational material the better. Nome is doing a good job so far. Trapping can sometimes have a negative stigma attached to it, but it's a neat activity and great opportunity to really learn about the animals you're chasing.
- 🐾 No.
- 🐾 None at this time. Only reason for reduced effort was due to safety and weather conditions.
- 🐾 None. The weather made trapping impractical otherwise i was planning on targeting otter, wolf and lynx. Hoping for better weather and a safer river next year.
- 🐾 Nope. I was going to help a friend, and he found other work.
- 🐾 Nope. Thanks for asking :)
- 🐾 Not at this time.
- 🐾 Produce a more advertised form for trapping etiquette and ethics.
- 🐾 Providing workshop dates and locations in Alaska major cities for trapping workshops. Another suggestion would be to prohibit setting of traps within 1 statute mile radius of village perimeter to avoid attracting bears. I noticed a sow, and cub tracks behind teacher housing around March 20th. I've seen snares and I know traps are set on top of the hill behind RSH.
- 🐾 Put Trapping Regs in the same book as hunting regs. I am forever losing that tiny book.

- 🐾 Simplify bait rules.
- 🐾 Sponsor a trapper clinic in Kotzebue. Recruit experienced trappers to teach trapping basics, etiquette, and land-use considerations. I always expect to learn to trap and never do, but my intentions are there.
- 🐾 Thanks for everything you do!!
- 🐾 Thanks for the opportunity to contribute.
- 🐾 This season was a tough one because we had a late freeze up which limited my trapline. i had to pull my line 10 days early because my usual line was not safe due to warm weather thinning the ice....I'm not sure how to improve trapping with the weather getting the way it is....I've never trapped for the money but when you can't even get even get 25 % of the gas money you spend scouting and checking traps it's hard to want to keep doing it especially in the bush where gas is 7 dollars a gallon. I wish the season can be extended to weeks out west because when we pull our lines it like the animals are just starting to move around which is really bugging. But hey i will try again next season with hopefully a better turnout!!



Photo provided by Patrick Jones.

## Author's Note

I cannot thank ADF&G Information Services and our Division of Wildlife Conservation lead webmaster enough for their efforts and assistance in perfecting the online version of the questionnaire, scanning and compiling data, and running some of the analyses for this 2018 report.

I would also like to extend my thanks to everyone responding to the questionnaire, either via online or paper responses. While we still received reports from many dedicated trappers across the state, the response rate decreased slightly from 2017. I hope we can continue to improve the questionnaire in a way that will lead to an increased response rate and more valuable information to those utilizing this report. For many of the species involved in this report, you are our primary source of knowledge. We use your responses to determine what is happening with the furbearers to better manage those populations for future generations to enjoy. Please continue to respond to the questionnaire in the future and encourage others to do the same. If you know of anyone wanting to receive future questionnaires, please have them contact me by phone or email (see below).

Finally, I greatly appreciate all of the trappers who provided photos for us to use in the report.<sup>3</sup> Photos of furbearers, young trappers, or methods of take and transportation all help to show the effort that goes into trapping in Alaska. I thank you for taking the time to fill out the questionnaire and for your willingness to share your trapping experiences from the past season.

Best of luck this season!

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Photo by Kyle Smith.

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<sup>3</sup> Please be sure when sending pictures that those shown (or their parents, if children) are okay with your allowing ADF&G to use the image.





