

**Denby Lloyd, Commissioner**

Division of Wildlife Conservation  
333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, AK 99518  
(907) 267-2182



# Alaska Department of Fish and Game

## NEWS

**Friday, September 04, 2009**

**Contact: Corey Rossi  
267-2147**

**PALMER** – An experimental foot-snaring program to reduce the number of black bears and increase the survival of moose calves on the west side of Cook Inlet has concluded this year with the removal of 81 black bears.

While surveys of the area will be completed in late November, Alaska Department of Fish & Game biologists are cautiously optimistic moose calf survival will increase.

Predation by bears and wolves was previously identified as the primary factor in a rapid decline over the past decade in moose numbers in Game Management Unit 16B. In 2008, a study of moose productivity found a calf twinning rate of nearly 50 percent and a post-calving calf:cow ratio of 144:100. By the time fall composition counts were finished the calf:cow ratio ranged from 12:100 to 21:100, indicating severe predation. Bears are responsible for most moose calf predation in spring and early summer.

An expert contractor for the department provided training and oversight for the first of its kind program in Alaska. Eight people were selected after submitting applications detailing their experience with bears, foot-snaring, operating in Unit 16B and various other information, including an absence of wildlife violations.

While foot-snaring has been used to capture and radio collar bears over the past two decades, this was the first snaring effort designed to reduce bear numbers.

Permittees were required to successfully complete an orientation program and in-the-field training. The permittees operated out of five different locations in the unit. Either the contractor and/or an ADF&G employee was in the field monitoring operations for the duration of the program, which began in late May.

Although quite prevalent in the area, only eight brown bears were caught. Five were released without incident at the capture sites while the other three were euthanized. None of the

released brown bears were recaptured. The Board of Game had authorized an allowance of 10 brown bears for this area.

The snaring program primarily utilized snares set in buckets several feet off the ground. As a result there was no incidental take of any other species.

Additional black bears are expected to be taken during the fall when predator control permittees will be baiting bears in Unit 16B. The efficacy of the foot-snaring program will be analyzed this winter before decisions are made on how to proceed next spring.

###