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Black Bear Management Issues and Concerns, 2000

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

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BLACK BEAR MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Raised by Working Group January 10, 2000

Population

- Currently, bears are managed based on research at three study areas. Need to develop a method for monitoring the population on a regional basis.

Habitat

- Concerns about habitat quality and beech management. Beech management is critical because bears are very dependant on this one food source.
- Beech mortality rates may be accelerated in Wildlife Management Districts (WMDs) 10, 18, and 19.

Management and Research

- Need to ensure that the Department has adequate staffing and funding for bear research and management.
- Need better information on predation. Some working group members expressed concern about bear predation on moose in WMDs 8, 9, 10, and 14, although no figures are available. Similar concerns expressed about bear predation on deer in downeast Maine.
- The Department should remain sensitive to bear predation in agricultural areas and continue to monitor and address conflicts as necessary.

Use Opportunity

- Promote traditional hunting and trapping methods and opportunities.
- Viewing bears is not a major issue like it is with moose, although people enjoy seeing bears.
- What population level optimizes hunting opportunity?

Black Bear Issues and Concerns

Outreach

- Need to promote, protect, and support traditional hunting and trapping methods (use of dogs, bait, etc.) as valid and preferred tools to manage Maine's bear population
- Outreach to promote public tolerance of bears.