

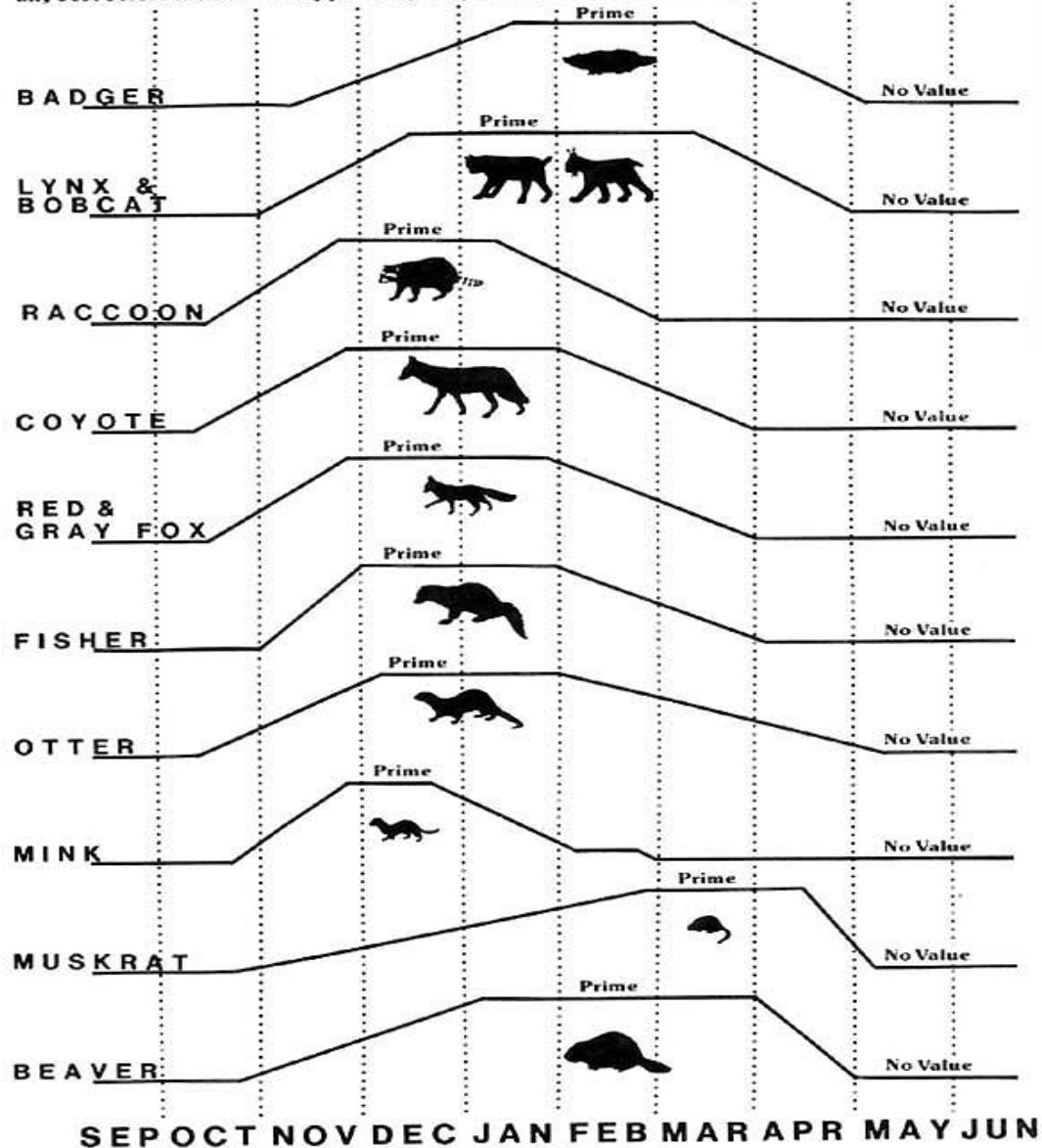
# Trapping

# Trapping

- Use of game as a commercial resource
- Able to sell hides that are taken legally
- Mostly recreational, hard to make a living at it
- Trapping seasons based on pelt primeness
  - When fur is the best quality
  - Fully grown winter pelts
  - Hair firmly set in hide

# Primeness chart

Approximate times of fur primeness for Minnesota furbearers. Most furbearers are "acceptably prime" before full primeness is reached, and for many their color and hair quality is actually best before the skin is fully prime. Quality declines rapidly after full primeness.



# Demand for fur

- Depends on fashion and public sentiment
- Recent increase in demand
- Recent prices in Alaska
  - Otter = \$100-\$130
  - Red fox = \$40 (has varied from \$11-\$100 in last 30 years)
  - Wolf = \$225 (up to \$400-500)
  - Wolverine = \$250
  - Marten = \$40 (up to \$80)
  - Mink and beaver demand is down (mink ranching)



# Monitoring harvest

- Sealing
- Some species are required to be sealed by CITES regulations
- Requires trapper to present skins to ADF&G
- Data collected
  - Number killed, sex, method of take, transportation, date of take
  - Example

# Furbearers vs fur animals

- Furbearers can be taken with a trapping license (shoot, trap, snare)
  - Beaver, *muskrat*\*
  - Coyote
  - Foxes
  - Lynx
  - *Marten, mink, weasel*
  - *River otter*
  - Squirrel
  - Wolverine
  - wolf
- Fur animal (shoot only with hunting license)
  - Beaver
  - Coyote
  - Foxes
  - Lynx
  - Squirrels
- Big game
  - Wolf
  - Wolverine

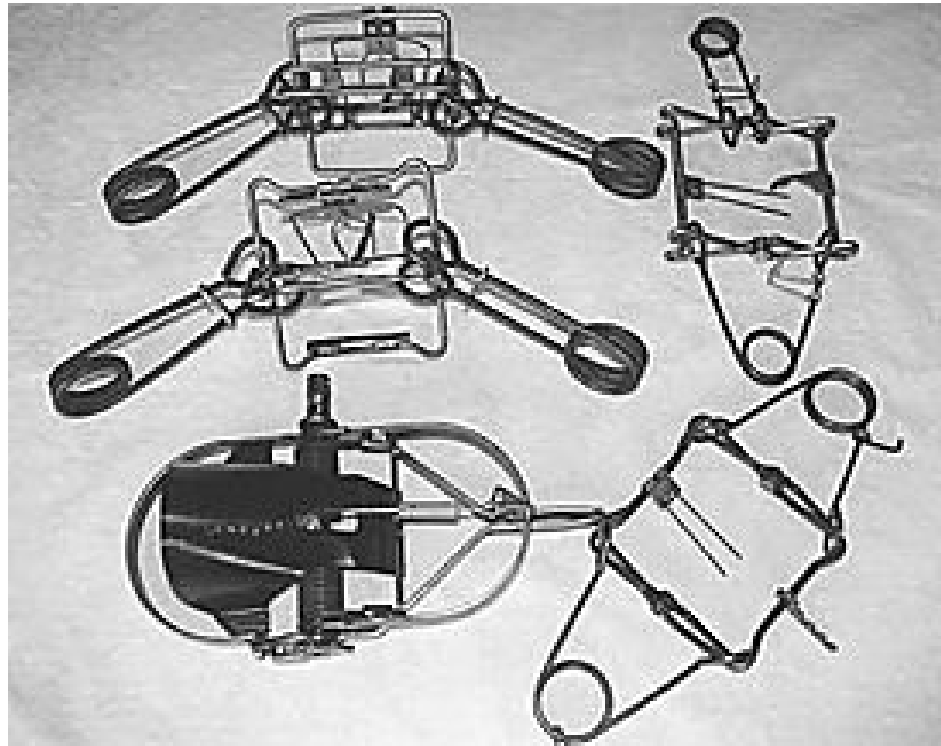
\*Animals in italics can only be taken with a trapping license

# Best Management Practices

- Leg-hold traps considered inhumane (AVMA)
- European Union banned use of the traps and importation of furs from countries using leg-hold traps (Canada, US, Greenland)
- Some US states outlawed leg-hold traps
  - Colorado
  - California
  - Florida
  - Rhode Island
  - New Jersey
  - Massachusetts
  - Washington
  - Arizona (on public land)
- Canada adapted by adopting “quick-kill” traps – 3 minute kill time



Leghold traps



Body-gripping traps

# Trapping in Alaska

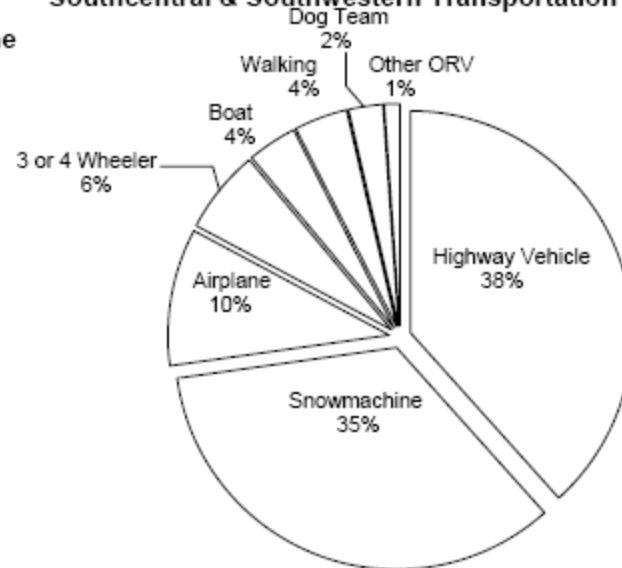
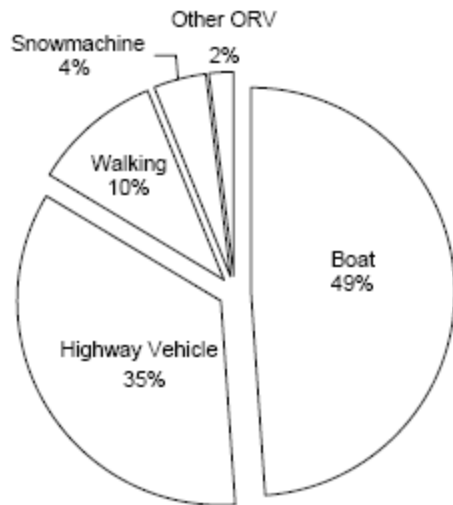
- Trapper questionnaire mailed out annually
- In 2004, 1759 surveys mailed, 397 responses
- Why do it?
- Only 4 species required to be sealed statewide
  - Wolf
  - Wolverine
  - Lynx
  - Otter
  - Marten and beaver in some areas

# Alaska trapper characteristics

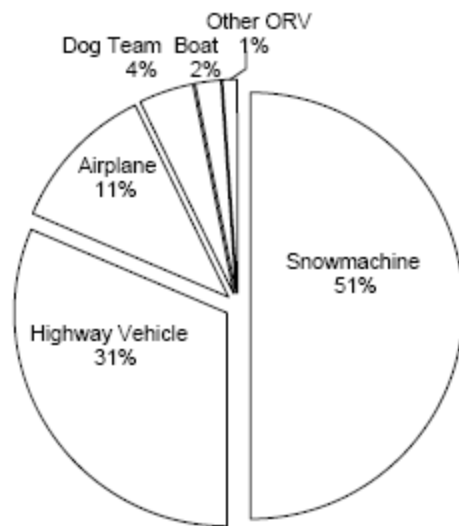
- Mean age of an Alaskan trapper = 47 years
- Mean years trapping experience = 24
- 11 of 397 (3%) respondents were  $\leq 16$
- Mean trapline distance = 30 miles (1-250)

### Southcentral & Southwestern Transportation To Trapline

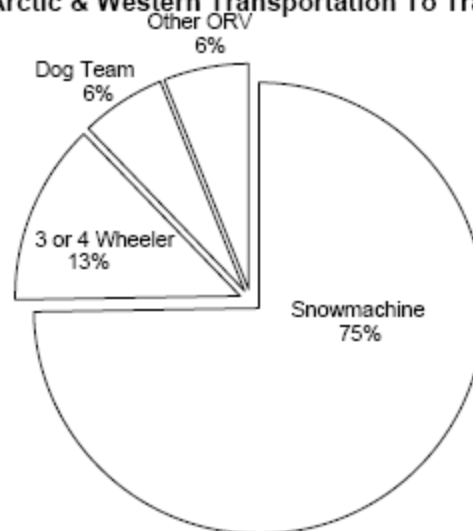
#### Southeast Transportation To Trapline



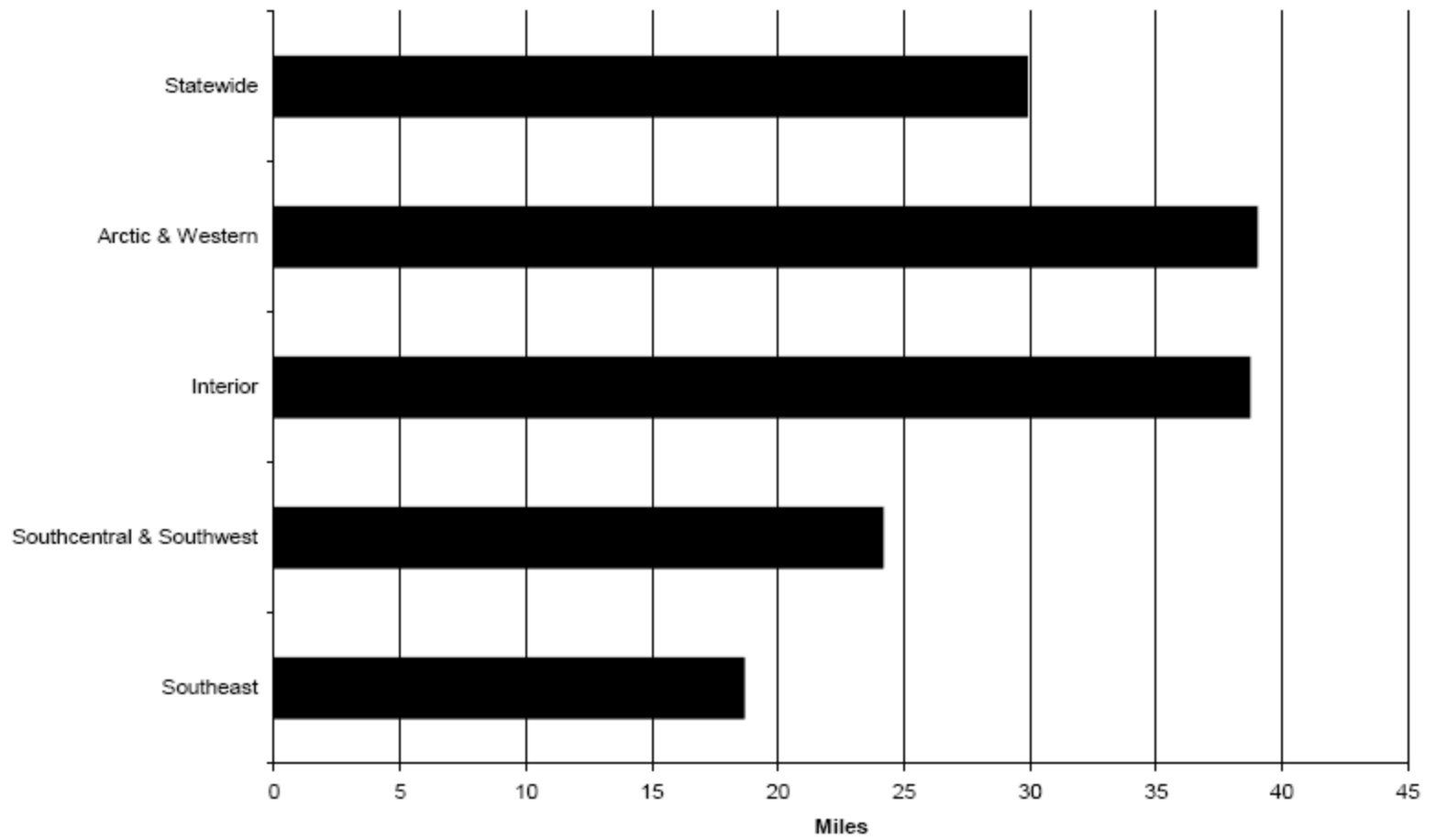
#### Interior Transportation To Trapline



#### Arctic & Western Transportation To Trapline



Average Trapline Length



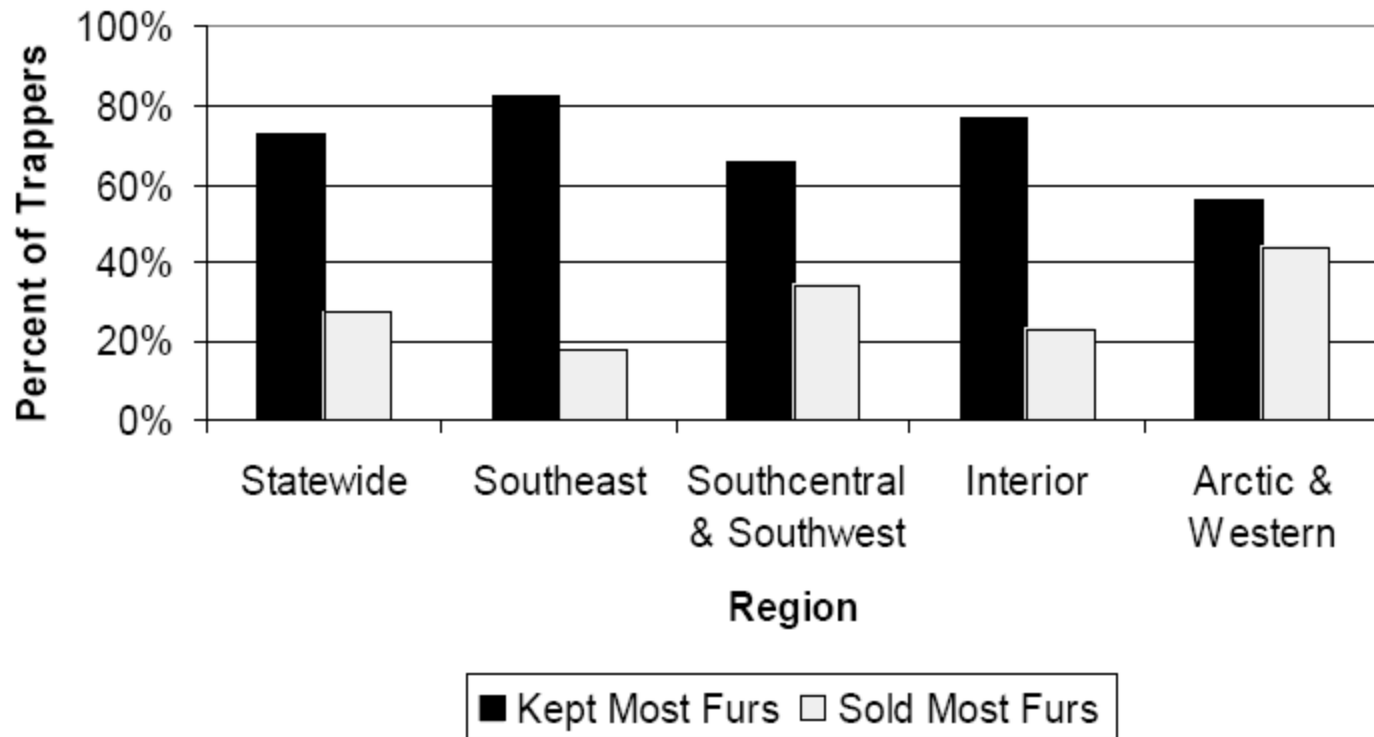
## Species

Region	Marten	Wolf	Beaver	River Otter	Lynx	Wolverine	Fox	Mink	Red Fox	Coyote	Ermine
<b>Statewide<sup>1</sup></b>	40%	20%	10%	9%	7%	5%	4%	2%	2%	1%	>1%
<b>Southeast</b>	54%	8%	4%	24%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	2%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	8%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>
<b>Southcentral &amp; Southwest</b>	31%	23%	13%	8%	5%	6%	5%	3%	4%	4%	N/A <sup>2</sup>
<b>Interior</b>	47%	25%	10%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	10%	4%	4%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>	1%
<b>Arctic/Western</b>	N/A <sup>2</sup>	20%	10%	9%	15%	10%	10%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	10%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Statewide percentages listed in descending order of indicated importance.

<sup>2</sup> N/A indicates no data available or no trapping effort.

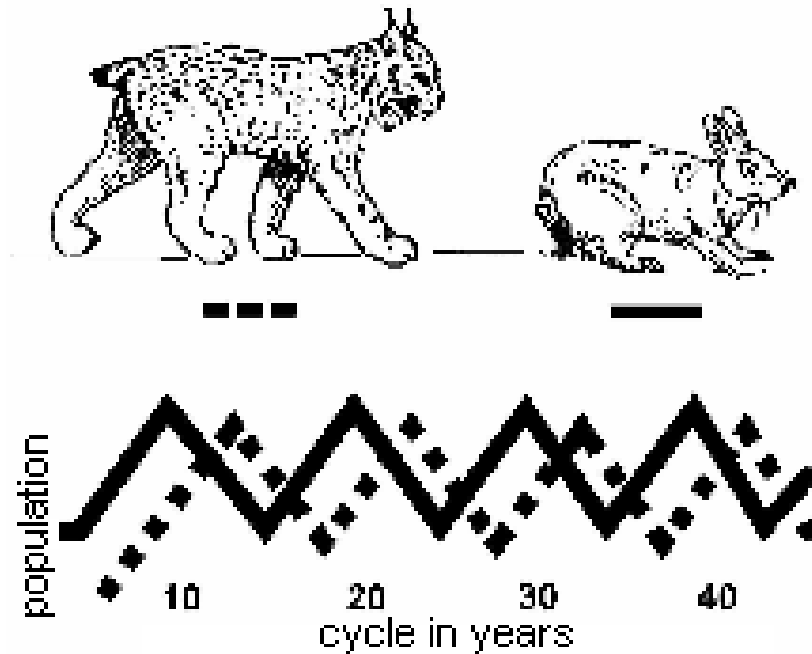
## Trappers Who Kept or Sold Most Furs



*Shipping furs out of Alaska requires a state permit*

# Uncertainty in lynx management

- Lynx are cyclic, depending on hare densities
- Cycles are not always predictable
- Creates uncertainty in management



# Lynx mortality

- Brand & Keith (1979) *Journal of Wildlife Management*
- Trapping mortality in lynx during the declining phase is *additive*
- Recommended cessation of trapping during declines
- Allows more survival of adults – more potential breeders when hares increase

# Rule-based management (expert system)

- Incorporates important biological factors plus human factors into management decisions
- Sets up rules in the form of “if ... then”
- Program asks questions of manager
- Answers are evaluated against rules and appropriate harvest strategy is recommended

# Factors to consider

- Hare and/or lynx population trends
- % kittens in harvest
- Period of pelt primeness
- Potential for orphaning kittens in early winter
- Potential for over-harvest at end of season due to increased lynx movements

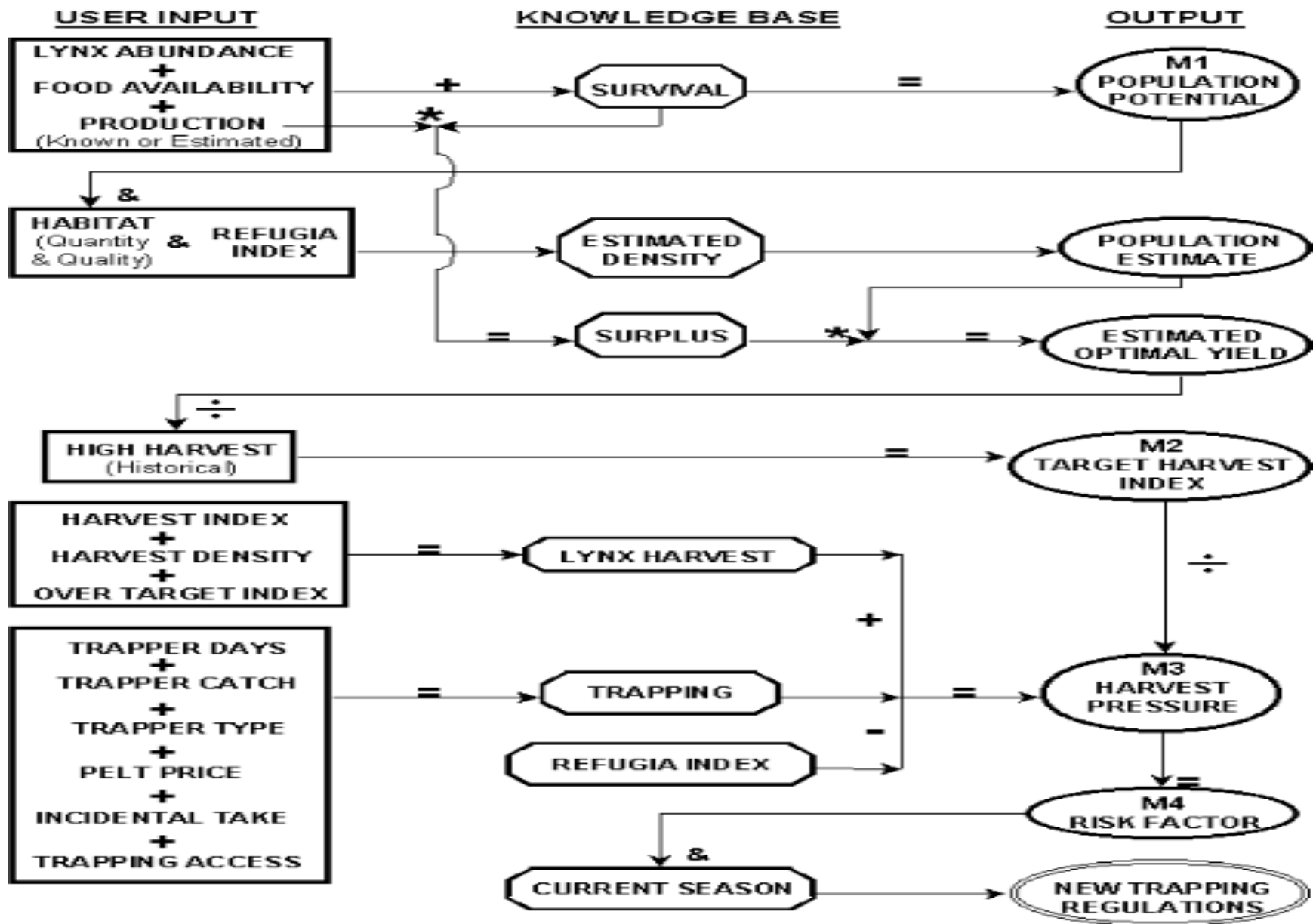


Table 3. Unit 11 lynx harvest, 1998–2002.

Regulatory Year	Reported Harvest				
	Adult	Juv. <sup>a</sup>	(%) <sup>a</sup>	Unk.	Total
1998–99	61	33	(35%)	5	99
1999–2000	89	23	(21%)	2	114
2000–01	176	17	(9%)	3	196
2001–02	28	3	(10%)	1	32
2002–03	1	1	(50%)	0	2

<sup>a</sup> Lynx  $\leq 35$ " in length.

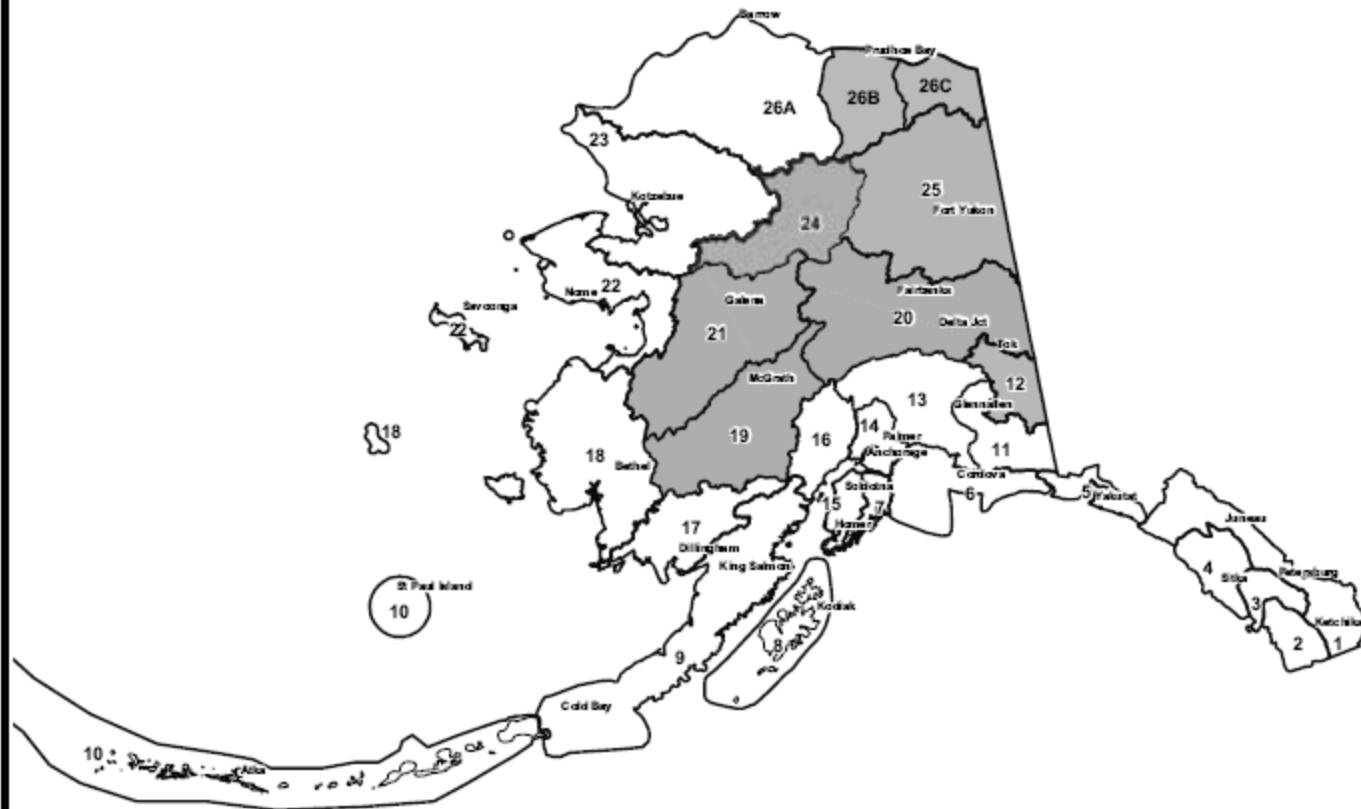
Table 4. Unit 13 lynx harvest, 1998–2002.

Regulatory Year	Reported Harvest				
	Adult	Juv. <sup>a</sup>	(%) <sup>a</sup>	Unk.	Total
1998–99	167	79	(32%)	1	247
1999–2000	307	107	(26%)	11	425
2000–01	386	80	(17%)	31	497
2001–02	158	22	(12%)	15	195
2002–03	33	7	(18%)	2	42

<sup>a</sup> Lynx  $\leq 35$ " in length.

# INTERIOR ALASKA

## Units 12, 19-21, 24, 25, 26B & 26C



# LYNX

- *Seasons for Units 20A,B,C,D, and F, and 25C may be closed by emergency order. Seasons will be reviewed and possibly modified annually.*
- *Lynx must be sealed within 30 days after the season in the unit where they were taken closes.*
- *You may shoot a lynx on the same day that you have flown in an airplane if the lynx is either caught in a trap or snare or you are more than 300 feet from the airplane.*

AREA	OPEN SEASON	LIMIT
Units 12 and 20E .....	Nov. 1 - Nov. 30 .....	5
	Dec. 1 - Feb. 28.....	No limit
Units 19, 20F, 21, 24, 25, and remainder of Unit 20C .....	Nov. 1 - Feb. 28.....	No limit
Units 20A, 20B, 20D, and that portion of 20C east of the Teklanika River .....	Dec. 15 - Jan. 31 .....	No limit
Units 26B and 26C .....	Nov. 1 - Apr. 15 .....	No limit

# SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

## UNITS 6-17



# LYNX

- *Lynx must be sealed within 30 days after the season in the unit where they were taken closes.*
- *You may shoot a lynx on the same day that you have flown in an airplane if the lynx is either caught in a trap or snare or you are more than 300 feet from the airplane.*
- *Seasons for Units 6, 7, and 11, 13-16 may be closed by emergency order. Seasons will be reviewed and possibly modified annually.*

AREA	OPEN SEASON	LIMIT
Units 6, 7 and 15 .....		No open season
Units 8 and 10 .....		No open season
Unit 9 .....	Nov. 10 - Feb. 28.....	No limit
Units 11 and 13.....	Dec. 1 - Jan. 31 .....	No limit
Unit 12 .....	Nov. 1 - Nov. 30.....	5
	Dec. 1 - Feb. 28.....	No limit
Units 14 and 16 .....	Jan. 1 - Jan. 31.....	No limit
Unit 17 .....	Nov. 10 - Mar. 31 .....	No limit

Table 5 Summary of lynx harvest on Kenai Peninsula by game management units, 1998–2003

Regulatory year	Unit	Adults	Kittens (%)	Unclass	Total Harvest
1998–99	7	17	4	0	21
	15A	66	19	0	85
	15B	11	2	1	4
	15C	23	6	1	30
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>32 (21)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>151</b>
1999–00	7	12	4	0	16
	15A	67	12	6	85
	15B	13	2	0	15
	15C	21	1	8	30
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>19 (14)</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>146</b>
2000–01	7	12	4	0	16
	15A	23	9	2	34
	15B	17	5	0	22
	15C	21	5	0	26
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>23 (24)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>98</b>
2001–02	7	13	1	1	15
	15A	28	4	1	33
	15B	14	0	1	15
	15C	10	1	0	11
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6 (9)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>74</b>
2002–03	7	0	0	1	1
	15A	2	0	2	4
	15B	0	1	0	1
	15C	2	0	1	3
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1 (25)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>

All data has been updated from the ADF&G online database: WildlifeInfoNet