UTAH BLACK BEAR
ANNUAL REPORT
2007

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State of Utah
Department of Natural Resources
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

An Equal Opportunity Employer

James F. Karpowitz
Director
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INTRODUCTION

The black bear harvest report presents black bear harvest and hunter effort trends across the state of Utah, based on data collected from bear hunters and compiled by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (Division). This report represents the black bear portion of Federal Aid Project W–65–M, segments 55 and 56, grant agreement periods October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007 and October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008, respectively. This Federal Aid project covers the 2007 hunting season. This report presents black bear statewide trends since the 1960s, as well as population trend indicators.

For purposes of effective management, the state of Utah is divided into 30 wildlife management units, which are the same for all hunted species. For black bears, some of these units were combined into larger units in order to provide hunters more opportunity, and a few units were open to pursuit only. Hunt units were managed through a limited entry permit system, where a hunter had to apply for and draw from a pool of limited permits. The hunter was allowed to hunt the entire season, or until the permit was filled. Applicants who drew a limited entry permit were required to wait two years before applying for another permit. The season limit was one bear, and females with cubs, or cubs, were not legal to harvest. An unlimited number of pursuit only permits, valid on any open unit statewide, were also available.

Season dates and management units for black bear harvest and pursuit, Utah 2007.

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<th># of open hunt units</th>
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<th>Hunt season dates Spring</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Pursuit season dates Spring Summer Fall</th>
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METHODS

All successful hunters were required to have their bear checked by a Division office or officer within 48 hours of harvest. At that time, tooth and hair samples were collected, and a permanent tag affixed. Bear harvest information was also collected at that time. Teeth were sectioned and cementum annuli counted by Matson’s Lab in Milltown, Montana, to estimate age of harvested bear. Survival rates were estimated using the Chapman-Robson estimator. Ages for bears harvested during the fall season covered in this annual report are not available at the time of publishing. Therefore, mean ages and survival rates are calculated using ages from bears harvested in the spring and the previous fall. Age data for depredation and other mortality are also not available at the time of publishing, so mean ages are calculated using ages from bears harvested from July of the previous year to June 30 of the current year. Age data and survival beginning with 2006 have been adjusted in this report to reflect this change in methods.

In past years, a black bear harvest mail questionnaire was sent each fall to all bear permit holders. This questionnaire was used to obtain hunter effort information from those who did not harvest a bear. Beginning with the 2000 bear season, this questionnaire was discontinued. As such, numbers of hunters afield each season and bears per hunter were no longer calculated. For the 2007 spring and summer pursuit seasons, a telephone survey was used to obtain bear pursuit data. No data was collected for the fall pursuit season in 2007.
Harvest data from depredating bears, or bears involved in human safety incidents, were taken from damage reports received from USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services and from bears taken by Division personnel. Livestock operators could kill damaging bears and were required to have the carcass checked by a Division officer within 48 hours. Harvest information was collected at that time.

In 2007, efforts were made to consolidate all historical black bear harvest information for the state of Utah into a single statewide database. As a result, small adjustments to past harvest numbers, statewide and unit-by-unit, were made to this annual report to reflect updated information. The 2007 Utah Black Bear Annual Report represents the most complete record of historical black bear harvest in Utah to date.

**RESULTS**

In 2007, a total of 262 limited entry black bear permits, including 14 conservation permits, were issued, and hunters harvested 127 bears, for a total of 48% of permits being filled. Of the 127 bears harvested, 79 were taken in spring and 48 in fall. The harvest increased by 41 bears from 2006. The percent permits filled also increased from 2006 and the historic average, which were 36% and 23%, respectively. The average age of bears harvested in 2007 was 5.6 and the estimated survival was 80%, which was slightly down from 2006. The percent of females in the harvest decreased from 36% in 2006 to 28% in 2007, which is well below the maximum percentage of females allowed in the harvest in order to maintain a sustainable population. A total of 78 bears were killed as a result of depredation or other mortality, which is the highest it has been since 2002. More detailed information describing the 2007 black bear harvest and black bear harvest trends can be found in the following tables and figures.

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*Beginning in 1999, a bear only pursuit permit was issued. Prior to 1999, cougar/bear pursuit permits were issued.*
Statewide black bear spring and fall sport harvest by unit / subunit, Utah 2007.

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*Mean age of harvest is based on bears harvested fall 2006 and spring 2007.*
Statewide black bear depredation and other mortality by unit / subunit, Utah 2007.

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*Other mortality includes highway mortality, poaching, and unknown mortality.


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*Spring 2002 includes Summer / Fall 2001 and Spring 2002
**Spring 2003 includes Summer / Fall 2002 and Spring 2003
***Summer/Fall 2007 only includes Summer 2007 season
## Statewide spring black bear pursuit statistics by unit / subunit, Utah 2007.

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Statewide total 120 329 3964 910 696 296 243 2145 0.54 6.52

*Totals for sample size and pursuers afield are not the sum of the columns because pursuers could pursue on multiple units.
**132 permit holders surveyed; 362 permits sold as of May 26, 2007; Projection factor = 2.74
***9% of permit holders did not pursue
Statewide summer black bear pursuit statistics by unit / subunit, Utah 2007.

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<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
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<th>Pursuit-days afield</th>
<th>Number of bears treed</th>
<th>Bears treed / pursuit-day</th>
<th>Bears treed / pursuer</th>
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Statewide total 57 157 1078 217 277 74 100 668 0.62 4.25

*Totals for sample size and pursuers afield are not the sum of the columns because pursuers could pursue on multiple units.
**132 permit holders surveyed; 363 permits sold in 2007; Projection factor = 2.75
***57% of permit holders did not pursue

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Bait</th>
<th>Dogs</th>
<th>Calls</th>
<th>Stalk</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<th>% hunters using guides</th>
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Adult black bear survival estimated with Chapman-Robson estimator, Utah 1996–2007.

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* Survival rates since 2001 are estimated using ages from bears harvested in the spring and the previous fall.

Proportion of black bears harvested by age class, Utah 2007.

APPENDIX A

HISTORIC STATEWIDE BLACK BEAR HARVEST

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Depredation / other mortality</th>
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APPENDIX B

HISTORIC BLACK BEAR HARVEST BY HUNT UNIT

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Fall</th>
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<th>Total</th>
<th>Harvest + mortality</th>
<th>% females</th>
<th>Mean age</th>
</tr>
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<td>% females</td>
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*Unit 2 was pursuit only in 2003.

**Unit 5 was added to units 2, 3, and 4 in 2004.
Black bear mortality for Units 6, 7, and 8a – Chalk Creek, Kamas, and North Slope, Summit, Utah 1990–2007.

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Black bear mortality for Unit 9 – South Slope (all subunits), Utah 1990–2001.

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