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**“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”**

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*“Hunting provides the principal incentive and revenue for conservation. Hence it is a force for conservation.”*

**Special To The Hunting Report**  
**World Conservation Force Bulletin**

by **John J. Jackson, III**

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● **Special Focus On Bears** ●

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Bear hunting is much more meaningful in human terms because of the spring season. Much is added to the hunting way of life to be in the wild soaking up nature while in pursuit of bear this time of the year. Conservation Force is vigorously engaged in defending the dwindling liberty to hunt in the spring and to hunt bear at all. In consideration of the season, this issue is devoted to bears.

**Black Bear Population Estimate**

■ For nearly two years Conservation Force has been surveying state, provincial and conservation organization authorities to complete the enclosed estimate (see page 4). It is a living document perpetually being updated. Over the past two years the populations have been stable or increasing, which was the reported trend when we began the project. Copies of the Estimate are available from Conservation Force upon request. Alternately, you can print it out from our website ([conservationforce.org](http://conservationforce.org)), where it can be found under the “Role and Value of Hunting” subtitle. A special thanks is due Dr. Dave Samuel for his invaluable input. Samuel is author of the new book, *Knowing Hunting*, and the “Know Hunting” column in *North American Hunting* magazine, as well as the Director of Conservation for Pope & Young. The material was originally gathered by Conservation Force to add North America’s 200,000 wild sheep, 105 million waterfowl and black bear to the National Shooting Sport Foundation’s Un-Endangered Species poster for the first time. That new poster is being readied for printing as this is written.

## All About Bears

### Maulings... Meetings... And More

**Alberta Maulings:** The Alberta Fish and Game Association reports that black bears mauled 19 humans and killed six people between 1974 and 1995. Almost 50 percent of these attacks occurred in or adjacent to three national parks where no hunting is allowed. Up to 200 incidents of bear predation on livestock are reported some years. The province has paid an average of \$406 (Canadian) per depredation claim. Reports show that 81 percent of the predation has been on cattle, nine percent on sheep and swine. Over 70 percent of the cattle killed were calves. One study showed that most offending bears were mature, male black bears. The population estimate is 45,000 black bears. The annual harvest is approximately 2,500, but provincial wildlife authorities “would like the harvest to be 4,000 annually.”

**Romania Maulings:** The President of the International Bear Association and other biologists report some enlightening facts about bear in Romania. “Since 1990, 18 people have been killed and 101 hospitalized due to bear attacks in Romania.” During the same period, 3,232 sheep; 1,003 cattle, donkeys and horses; and 183 pigs and goats were killed by brown bear. At the turn of the 20th century “there were only about 1,000 brown bears in the country.” Bear were given game animal status in 1953 and the associated protection. Then “the

population started to grow.” By 1990, the population reached 8,000 brown bears. Since then, the population goal has been kept at approximately 4,800 bears to reduce conflicts and damages. Now, the bears are harvested at the rate of four to five percent to maintain the population level at the population goal.

Romania is divided into 2,200 hunting areas, and each has a professional gamekeeper. The bears are found in 616 hunting areas. In those areas, bear increased in number from 860 in 1953 to 7,780 in 1988. Harvest is by shooting at baits (60 percent), driving (36 percent) and tracking (4 percent). Romania contains 13 percent of Europe’s bears; Russia has 75 percent; and the remaining 12 percent is divided among other countries. “Ninety-six percent of Europe’s estimated 50,000 bears live in Eastern Europe...(and) are still doing well, and the bear is valued as a game species.”

**India Maulings:** Officials in India recently reported that sloth bears in India “frequently attack people, causing a high number of casualties” in addition to other damage. “In 30 areas in India from 1989-1994, there were 745 human injuries of which 51 were fatal.” “The number of attacks is increasing, and the most dangerous time of the day seems to be early morning when sloth bears move from feeding to denning areas, pass-

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ing close by villages just when people start their activities.” “In Bilaspur, India, 37 human injuries occurred in 1998, mostly from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m.” “In 22 cases, bears charged spontaneously, attacking people on hind legs in 50 percent of cases.” “In six cases, bears ate the bodies.”

**Kodiak Fatality, Mauling and Other Attacks:** On November 2, 1999, a deer hunter on Kodiak Island was killed by a large, male brown bear. His friends watched him shoot and mark a deer. Apparently, he left and when he later returned to retrieve his deer, the bear had claimed it and mauled him. The hunter was not eaten. He was able to make it one-quarter mile to where his body was found two days later. It was the first bear-caused fatality on Kodiak in over 70 years, though that same week four other brown bears were killed charging hunters on other parts of the Kodiak archipelago, and one other hunter was seriously mauled, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

**IMAX FILM:** An IMAX film is being produced on bears by National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Productions and PRIMESCO. It is expected to be seen by more people than any other bear film. NWF in the past produced IMAX *Whales and Wolves*. The new bear IMAX is expected to be as popular.

**Washington State Tree Damage:** Black Bears are reported to be peeling trees in forests in Washington State. The damage to private timberland alone is estimated as high as \$5 million.

**Kodiak Trust:** The Kodiak Trust reports that despite erroneous reports to the contrary, the new trust lands it has acquired with sportsmen’s dollars are not the refuge land being considered for closure to bear hunting. A different 100 square miles of the refuge are being considered for bear viewing.



Readers may remember that Conservation Force was the first to alert the sporthunting community to the need to participate in the Comprehensive Conservation Planning (CCP) on a refuge-by-refuge basis. The potential conflict

between bear watching and bear hunting on Kodiak demonstrates the point we made that hunters need to participate in the development of these 15-year plans across the nation in each refuge.

**Bitterroot Grizzly:** Fifty years have passed since the last official sighting of a grizzly bear in the Bitterroot ecosystem, according to the US Fish & Wildlife Service. By the time you read this, the final comment period will be over for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) the Service has issued for reintroducing the bear in the summer of 2001. The bears are expected to be reintroduced in the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church Wilderness areas of Idaho and Montana. The plan outlined in the EIS would reintroduce a minimum of 25 grizzly over five years. There are five other grizzly populations in the lower 48 states totaling approximately 1,000 to 1,100 bears in four Northwestern states.

**Bear Meetings:** The 7th Western Black Bear Workshop is scheduled for May 2-5, 2000 in Coos Bay Oregon. Contact Dave Immell of Oregon Department of Natural Resources at 541-440-3353. Another meeting, *Managing Bears in Forest Environments*, is to be held at Revelstoke, B.C., on 17-19 October, 2000. For information see: [www.cmiae.org](http://www.cmiae.org). Finally, the 13th International Conference on Bear Research and Management is scheduled for May 21-25, 2001 in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The contact is Dave Moody of Wyoming Game and Fish, email: [dmoody@state.wy.us](mailto:dmoody@state.wy.us) - *John J. Jackson, III.*

**Conservation Force Sponsor**

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International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife

**America’s Black Bears Are Thriving**  
**North American Black Bear Population Estimate, 1999\***

<u>State</u>	<u>Low Estimate</u>	<u>High Estimate</u>	<u>General Estimate</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Low Estimate</u>	<u>High Estimate</u>	<u>General Estimate</u>
Alabama	50	100	50-100	New Mexico	5,000	6,000	6,000
Alaska	150,000	250,000	-	New York	5,000	+6,000	-
Alberta	-	-	+45,000	New Brunswick	-	-	14,500
Arizona	5,000	6,000	-	New Foundland	-	-	10,000
Arkansas	-	-	3,000	North Carolina	9,000	10,000	-
British Columbia	120,000	160,000	160,000	North Dakota	25	50	25-50
California	17,000	23,000	-	NWT	-	-	10,000
Colorado	8,000	12,000	12,000	Nova Scotia	-	-	8,000
Connecticut	30	100	50-100	Ohio	20	60	-
Florida	-	-	3,000	Oklahoma	250	375	-
Georgia	1,700	2,150	2,150	Ontario	127,000	152,000	-
Idaho	20,000	25,000	25,000	Oregon	25,000	30,000	-
Kentucky	75	100	100	Pennsylvania	-	-	10,000
Louisiana	400	600	500-600	Quebec	-	-	60,000
Maine	22,000	23,000	23,000	Saskatchewan	-	-	30,000
Manitoba	25,000	30,000	30,000	South Carolina	-	-	300
Maryland	300	500	-	Tennessee	-	-	2,000
Massachusetts	1,750	1,800	1,800	Texas (West)	100	200	200
Michigan	-	-	14,000	Utah	800	1,200	1,200
Minnesota	-	-	30,000	Vermont	2,500	3,300	-
Mississippi	25	50	-	Virginia	3,000	4,500	-
Missouri	100	500	-	Washington	-	-	+30,000
Montana	15,000	20,000	15,000-20,000	West Virginia	-	-	8,000
Nevada	300	500	300-500	Wisconsin	13,750	14,000	14,000
New Hampshire	-	-	4,400	Wyoming	-	-	6,200
New Jersey	700	1,000	-	Yukon	-	-	10,000

**Totals:           Lowest Estimate: 877,227                   Highest Estimate: 1,082,385                   Mean Estimate: 979,730**

*(\*These figures are the best available information from state and provincial authorities. They were compiled by Conservation Force, Dr. David Samuel and Michael Schenck.)*