



“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”

“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**

□ **In the Black**

American Black Bear Success Story

A long awaited report was released in late April that puts an end to all misrepresentations and misconceptions about the status of black bear in North America. The 161-page report is the most comprehensive and conclusive analysis of the status of black bear in America ever completed. It includes the results of three successive surveys over the expanse of more than a decade, 1988, 1992 and 1996 (really 1997).

The report is appropriately entitled “In the Black, Status, Management, and Trade of the American Black Bear (Ursus Americanus) In North America,” Williamson, D.F. 2002. It leaves no doubt that the sportsmen-funded and sportsmen-founded American conservation system has succeeded again, this time with the American black bear. “Overall, TRAFFIC believes that the data presented here are encouraging . . . the species is generally robust and well managed in North America. “TRAFFIC found no evidence that domestic or international trade poses

a current threat to the species.” “The American black bear is the only bear species that can be considered thriving throughout most of its current range.” “Populations of the American black bear on the whole are very healthy in both the United States and



Canada. The species is broadly distributed, and the conservation and management efforts appear to be translating into a gradual but steady increase in numbers throughout most of its range.” “Fears expressed early in the 1990s that demand from the traditional

Asian medicine market might soon become a threat to the existence of US and Canadian black bear populations have not proven true. Rather, careful management efforts in both countries have resulted in large, healthy bear populations,” according to TRAFFIC. Our sentiment is, Hallelujah!

The report continues, “TRAFFIC surveys in 1989, 1992 and 1996 (mailed in Spring 1997) suggest a steady increase in estimated black bear numbers in both the United States and Canada over the period of about a decade. The first TRAFFIC survey produced a 1988 overall estimated black bear population of roughly 625,000 to 757,500. (Citations omitted but see the enclosed chart from the report that TRAFFIC North America has granted Conservation Force permission to reprint here). TRAFFIC’s 1992 survey produced an estimated 641,000 to 804,000 black bears in the United States and Canada. Responses from the 1996 survey indicated a total population of some 735,000 to 941,000 black

bears.” The black bear population in the United States alone “grew by some 25 to 35 percent during the overall survey period. . .” from a range of 253,000 to 375,000 in 1988 to 339,000 to 465,000 in 1996.

Like the United States, “Canada’s estimated black bear population also grew during the TRAFFIC survey period, from 372,200 to 382,200 reported in 1988 . . . to the range of 396,000 to 476,000 reported in 1996.” Thirty-two percent of the responding jurisdictions in the United States and Canada reported their populations were increasing, 29 percent reported populations stable or increasing and 39 percent reported their populations as stable. “No jurisdictions reported decreasing populations” in the 1996 TRAFFIC survey.

The report found that “[m]ost US states and almost all Canadian provinces and territories classify the black bear as a game animal.” There are well over 100,000 bear hunting licenses issued annually in the United States and the numbers are increasing. Another 140,000 resident and 22,000 nonresident licenses were issued in 1995 in Canada. That is over 250,000 hunting licenses per annum in this growing form of big game hunting. “Overall,” TRAFFIC concluded, “sales of black bear hunting and trapping licenses could provide significant resources for conservation of the species in many jurisdictions,” though TRAFFIC would like to see the expenditure of the revenue directed specifically to bears. TRAFFIC supports the game-animal treatment of the black bear even where there are no bears or hunting because of the legal protection afforded game animals. TRAFFIC supports some form of legal status assigned to black bears. Though this might be as a game animal, it might also be on a state-protected species list. TRAFFIC’s point is that bears need to be given some form of protected status to ensure that they don’t fall through a loophole in that state’s legal regime. They recommend that every state, province and territory enact legislation or regulation that covers black bears and trade, regardless of whether that state even has a bear population.

“The upward trend of black bear populations in many regions, and their stability throughout almost all of their range, would support the broad conclusion that poaching and illegal trade are not extensive enough to have anything more than a very local impact on black bear populations.”

The whole report can be viewed on the web site of TRAFFIC at <http://www.traffic.org/news/blackbear.html>. TRAFFIC is a joint program of WWF and IUCN to monitor trade of wild plants and animals. The network of regional TRAFFIC offices is the world’s largest wildlife trade monitoring program. Its offices cover most of the world. It works in close cooperation with the Secretariat of CITES. TRAFFIC North America, has an extensive history of research, reports and investigative bear work in North America that is probably unequaled.

We at Conservation Force have been expecting and awaiting this report for several years. In 1998, 1999 and 2000 we did our own report and chart of the estimated black bear numbers in North America to refute the misrepresentations being spread by animal rights groups in their campaign to eliminate regulated hunting of American black bear. We stuck our neck out in defense of hunting, but someone had to do it. That Conservation Force chart entitled “America’s Black Bears Are Thriving” can be seen on Conservation Force’s web site at www.conservationforce.org on the Role & Value of Hunting page. Our year 2002 estimate is approximately 100,000 bears or 10 percent above TRAFFIC’s 1996 survey estimate. Though most figures duplicate or coincide with TRAFFIC’s findings, Conservation Force’s are more recent. They reflect a continuing increase in black bears following the 1996 TRAFFIC survey in most areas. Nevertheless, the 100,000 difference between the charts is primarily due to two estimates. Our estimate is 50,000 higher in Ontario from a more recent survey that province has done and 50,000 higher in Alaska, which is also a more recent figure.

Independently of that 100,000 difference due to Alaska and Ontario,

JOHN J. JACKSON, III
Conservation Force



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“Serving The Hunter Who Travels”

Conservation Force’s files indicate that the black bear population in North America is continuing to increase by tens of thousands since TRAFFIC completed its 1996 survey (really mailed out in 1997). Our own estimate did not include the 40,000 to 50,000 bears in Alberta that were inadvertently

dropped by our staff from the chart and totals, but it includes estimates for the Yukon and state of Wyoming where none were obtained by TRAFFIC in 1996. By persistence, we were able to wrangle estimates from those two jurisdictions where none had existed before. Our consensus is that the mean

estimate for 2002 falls just short of 980,000 bear. Regardless, the trend data of TRAFFIC speaks loudly. “Overall, the roughly 10 years of data gathered by successive TRAFFIC surveys points out that the black bear can in many respects be considered a conservation success story.”

US and Canadian Black Bear Population Estimates, 1988-1996

(The United States)

State	1988	1992	1996	State	1988	1992	1996
Alabama	50	40	50	Montana	NA/NR	9,000-10,000	20,000
Alaska	100,000-200,000	100,000-200,000	100,000-200,000	Nebraska	0	0	0
Arizona	2,500	2,500-2,700	2,000-3,000	Nevada	300	200-400	200-400
Arkansas	1,700-2,000	2,300	3,000	New Hampshire	2,500	3,000	2,000-3,000
California	15,000	15,000-18,000	17,000-23,000	New Jersey	175-225	275-325	550+
Colorado	7,000-15,000	8,000-12,000	10,000-12,000	New Mexico	3,300	3,000	4,000†
Connecticut	30	15-30	30-60	New York	4,100	4,000-5,000	4,000-5,000
Delaware	0	0	0	North Carolina	3,000-4,000	5,500-6,250	8,500
Florida	1,000	1,000-1,500	1,000-1,500	North Dakota	0	50	>10
Georgia	1,500	1,700	1,800-2,000	Ohio	0	20	12-30
Hawaii	0	0	0	Oklahoma	NA/NR	200	100-150
Idaho	18,000-25,000	20,000-25,000	20,000-25,000	Oregon	20,000-25,000	25,000	25,000-30,000
Illinois	0	0	0	Pennsylvania	7,500	7,500	7,500
Indiana	0	0	0	Rhode Island	0	0-2	0-2
Iowa	0	0	0	South Carolina	100	300	275+
Kansas	0	0	0	South Dakota	0	0	Unknown
Kentucky	100	Unknown	25-75	Tennessee	1,500-2,000	1,000-2,000	900-1,200
Louisiana	100	300+	>300	Texas	NA/NR	50	75-100
Maine	21,192	19,000	22,000-23,000	Utah	750	800-1,000	800-1,300
Maryland	200	170	250-300	Vermont	2,000-2,500	2,100	2,500
Massachusetts	700-750	700-750	1,200-1,800	Virginia	2,500	3,000-3,500	3,000-3,500
Michigan	NA/NR	7,000-10,000	~12,000	Washington	19,000	27,000-30,000	~30,000
Minnesota	9,200	10,500-14,500	20,000	West Virginia	2,000	3,000	5,000-6,000
Mississippi	25	25	<50	Wisconsin	5,790	5,800	14,000
Missouri	50-100	50-150	100-200	Wyoming	NA/NR	Unknown	Unknown

(Canada)

Province	1988	1992	1996	Province	1988	1992	1996
Alberta	48,700	40,000	40,000	Northwest Territories	Not Available	5,000+	10,000
British Columbia	120,000	100,000-120,000	120,000-160,000	Ontario	65,000-75,000	75,000	75,000-100,000
Manitoba	30,000	25,000-30,000	25,000-30,000	PEI	0	0	0
New Brunswick	Not Available	Not Available	14,000	Quebec	60,000	60,000	60,000+
Newfoundland	6,000	6,000-10,000	6,000-10,000	Saskatchewan	30,000	24,000	24,000
Nova Scotia	2,500	3,000	~8,000	Yukon Territory	10,000	14,000-20,000	Unknown

	1988	1992	1996
U.S. Subtotal	252,862-375,312	289,095-416,662	339,000-465,000
Canada Subtotal	372,200-382,200	352,000-387,000	396,000-476,000
TOTAL:	625,000-757,500	641,000-804,000	735,000-941,000

We want to thank TRAFFIC of WWF for its continuing interest in the American black bear and for permission to reproduce this survey chart.

Briefly Noted

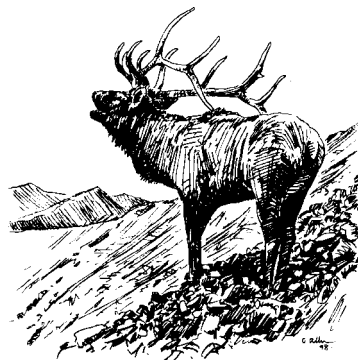
More Animal Extremist Hypocrisy:

The Center for Consumer Freedom reports that animal rightists have a twisted notion of Gandhian nonviolence. It cites PETA’s “vegan campaign coordinator” telling an animal rights crowd that “it would be great if all the fast-food outlets, slaughterhouses, these laboratories and the banks who fund them exploded tomorrow.” Then to cheers, he added: “Hallelujah to the people who are willing to do it.” The Center also reports from *The Economist* that the recent assassination of a Dutch politician was “apparently the work of ‘a militant vegan enraged by [the candidate’s] willingness to legalize mink farming’.”

Does the Gandhian Approach Work?

I’ve often wondered how wildlife and wildlife habitat fare in India given that country’s ideological stand against use of wildlife. Some insight was recently provided. The conservation status of blackbuck antelope in India was recently cited in a presentation by Indian biologist Kavita Isaron at the Texas Exotic Wildlife Association’s Annual General Membership meeting in Corpus Christi, Texas. She gave a presentation comparing the “very high conservation value” of exotic blackbucks on Texas ranches with its management predicament in India. The expert explained that the main problem for blackbucks in India is loss of habitat. Because it is not used or culled (controlled), it overpopulates and causes crop damage. The local people resent the presence and damage, so they eliminate the blackbucks. The local people also make war on blackbucks around the small protected areas that over-populate with the buck and destroy the crops on surrounding private lands. Because there is a “no-culling-or-control” policy, the buck overbrowse and are eliminated by the rural people in the night. Their “conservation value” and biological status is much higher in Texas where they are more abundant. Of course, they are fostered and secure on Texas lands be-

cause of their sustainable use as game. **London March:** The Countryside Alliance that has organized sportsmen and county folks in defense of their way of life has organized a march in London again. This march is expected to be the march of all marches and is scheduled for Sunday, September 22,



2002. We will be there and hope to see you there as well. The title of the March is “Liberty and Livelihood March.” The credo is “We demand that Government:

- Defends the right of rural people to live their lives responsibly in the way they choose

Conservation Force Sponsor

The Hunting Report and Conservation Force would like to thank International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife (IGF) for generously agreeing to pay all of the costs associated with the publishing of this bulletin. IGF was created by Weatherby Award Winner H.I.H Prince Abdorreza of Iran 25 years ago. Initially called The International Foundation for the Conservation of Game, IGF was already promoting sustainable use of wildlife and conservation of biodiversity 15 years before the UN Rio Conference, which brought these matters to widespread public attention. The foundation has agreed to sponsor *Conservation Force Bulletin* in order to help international hunters keep abreast of hunting-related wildlife news. Conservation Force’s John J. Jackson, III, is a member of the board of IGF and Bertrand des Clers, its director, is a member of the Board of Directors of Conservation Force.



International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife

- Safeguards rural people from prejudiced attacks on hunting with dogs and all other field sports
- Respects the values and customs of rural communities
- Ensures any laws directed at rural people have their consent
- Addresses the real problems of the countryside which are destroying its communities, its culture, and its children’s future.”

The principals advise “[a]nyone who does not subscribe to all five principals of our march - and these crucially include the right for people to decide for themselves whether they may hunt - will not be welcome on it.” For more details, the march web site is www.march-info.org.

PHASA Supports Conservation

Force: The Professional Hunters Association of South Africa (PHASA) has become the 79th organization to support Conservation Force. It has linked up with the International Professional Hunters Association (IPHA) in its support of Conservation Force. The two organizations share offices in The Republic of South Africa. RSA is the most popular hunting destination in all of Africa. It also has the greatest variety of game. In 2001, some 8,000 clients, including non-hunting companions, hunted in RSA, spending (US) \$80 million and taking 32,346 animals. RSA has 9,000 privately owned farms covering 17 million hectares of land. Thank you, PHASA, for helping make RSA the hunting wonderland that it is. We are proud to represent and be supported by the largest professional hunting association in the world. Other professional associations that support Conservation Force include the African Professional Hunters Association, the British Columbia Guide and Outfitters Association, Northern British Columbia Outfitters Association and Yukon Outfitters Association. The National Taxidermist association is another organization that supports (provides funding to) our work at Conservation Force. - *John J. Jackson, III.*

MEMO

To: Jim Young, Print N Mail
From: Leonardo Mocci, The Hunting Report
Re: June 2002 Issue of Conservation Force Supplement
Date: May 22, 2002

Jim,

Here's the June 2002 issue of the Conservation Force Supplement to be inserted in The Hunting Report. Don't forget to insert John Jackson's picture on page 2. Please fax "blue lines" for approval A.S.A.P.

Print run is 4,850. Ship overs to us as usual.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Leonardo

P.S. Please make sure that John Jackson gets his 25 copies.