

**BLACK BEAR BAITING:
FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA 2008**
Amal Ajmi, Wildlife Biologist, Fort Wainwright, Alaska
November 2008
USAG-AK FWA Natural Resources Report 2008

This supplement reports the 2008 spring black bear baiting season for Fort Wainwright. All data were collected from the Fort Wainwright spring black bear baiting harvest reports. Supplemental information was obtained from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G).

FORT WAINWRIGHT

The spring black bear baiting harvest for the Tanana Flats Training Area (TFTA) and the Yukon Training Area (YTA) for 2008 and the preceding years is shown in Table 1. The 1997 and 1998 numbers incorporate bears taken by registered and unregistered hunters.

**TABLE 1: SPRING BLACK BEAR BAITING HARVEST 1997-2007
FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA**

YEAR	YTA		TFTA		TOTALS		TOTALS
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	
2008	3	0	4	1	7	1	8
2007	3	1	4	3	7	4	11
2006	0	3	1	4	1	7	8
2005	0	2	1	2	1	4	6**
2004	0	2	5	0	5	2	7
2003	5	0	1	2	6	2	8
2002	1	0	0	1	1	1	2
2001	3	2	4	6	7	8	15
2000	0	0	3	4	3	4	7
1999	3	1	9(5)	11(6)	12	12	24
1998	1	1	7	4	8	5	13
1997	5	5	4	3	9	8	17

* Numbers in parenthesis are bears taken by unregistered baiters. Source: ADF&G.

** One bear shot in YTA and not recovered.

2007 harvest of 11 black bears is the highest reported taken since 2001. The total number of registered hunters and bait stands set up in 2008 is shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2: KNOWN HUNTING PRESSURE ON FORT WAINWRIGHT:
BLACK BEAR BAITING, 1997-2008**

year	number of registered baiters	number of bait stands registered	number of bait stands set up	number of add. hunters using stands	total number hunters/stands YTA	total number hunters/stands TFTA
2008	33	31	31	1	18/17	16/14
2007	36	39	37	1	24/24	11/13
2006	27	31	31	12	21/18	18/13
2005	31	36	35	27	38/21	20/14
2004	36	36	33	16	34/21	18/12
2003	50	53	46	22	55/38	17/8
2002	43	49	18	8	17/12	8/6
2001	84	98	72	38	71/42	29/30
2000	91	102	74	37	69/47	35/27
1999	86	91	79	23	73/53	33/26
1998	69	95	88	24	54/58	28/30
1997	86	117	107	5+	53/69	25/38

The military affiliation of each person that hunted on Fort Wainwright is shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3: Hunter Military Affiliations: 1997-2008

Area Hunted	Civilian	Army	Air Force	Unknown	Total Hunters
YTA 08	0	6	3	9	18
YTA 07	8	11	2	4	25
YTA 06	1	3	6	6	16
YTA 05	7	3	12	0	22
YTA 04	5	4	10	6	25
YTA 03	11	9	15	5	40
YTA 02	2	9	4	1	16
YTA 01	4	22	42	1	69
YTA 00	8	19	42	0	69
YTA 99	1	32	31	9	73
YTA 98	8	20	22	4	54
YTA 97	13	17	30	0	60
TFTA 08	0	0	3	13	16
TFTA 07	5	1	2	2	10
TFTA 06	5	0	2	4	11
TFTA 05	7	1	1	0	9
TFTA 04	3	1	0	8	12
TFTA 03	3	2	4	1	10
TFTA 02	5	1	2	0	8
TFTA 01	13	9	6	1	29
TFTA 00	22	9	4	0	35
TFTA 99	10	11	1	11	33
TFTA 98	10	14	1	1	26
TFTA 97	17	9	0	0	26
Totals 08	0	6	6	22	34
Totals 07	13	12	4	6	35
Totals 06	6	3	8	10	27
Totals 05	14	4	13	0	31
Totals 04	8	5	10	14	37
Totals 03	14	11	19	6	50
Totals 02	7	10	6	1	24
Totals 01	17	31	48	2	98
Totals 00	30	28	46	0	104
Totals 99	11	43	32	20	106
Totals 98	18	34	23	5	80
Totals 97	30	26	30	0	86

DISCUSSION

Information suggests that there was an increase in both number of hunters and registered stands in TFTA, but a decrease in number of hunters and registered stands in YTA during the 2008 season. The decrease in YTA may be a result of increased training that took place in YTA during spring 2008. The increase in TFTA may be the result of spill over from YTA hunters as well as the continued return of many troops to Fort Wainwright, and their desire for hunting and recreation activities.

The information in this report is provided by known registered hunters. In 2008 the Natural Resource office was able to obtain a complete list of bear baiters registered with ADF&G. The baiters with stations on TFTA and YTA were contacted by the Natural Resource office for registration on ARMY lands. The 2008 data submitted in this report is complete and accurate to the best of current capabilities. In the past many hunters have failed to register bait stands on military lands with the Natural Resource office, and therefore, an accurate total number of hunters and bear taken over bait on military lands are not known prior to 2008. As a result, hunting pressure, and take on military lands prior to 2008 cannot be determined with any real exactitude.

2007 data obtained from ADF&G indicate that possibly 12 bait stations were set up in the TFTA and YTA, and perhaps 9 black bear were taken off military lands, 7 males and 2 females. Natural resource records show 39 stations were registered on Post and eleven bear were reported taken in 2007. Clearly, there have been issues of communication and education resulting in misinformation. In 2008, ADF&G provided detailed information to the Natural Resource office aiding in the registration of stations on military lands, and resulting in a better assessment of hunter use and harvest on military lands.

In 2008, all bear baiters submitted a hunter harvest report. Although 33 hunters registered bait stands, four baiters (12.1%) did not set up stands this year. A total of 30 people hunted over bait on Fort Wainwright; seventeen (56.7%) people hunted in the YTA and reported seeing black bear or their sign 7 times, and grizzly bears or their sign 27 times. Fourteen (46.7%) people hunted in the Tanana Flats and reported seeing black bear or their sign 29 times and grizzly bears or their sign 7 times.

Harvest numbers for TFTA fall within current estimated sustainable harvest goals for black bears as reported by ADF&G (Seaton, 2005). YTA falls under GMU 20B, and as a unit, harvests have exceeded the maximum sustainable exploitation rate for a number of years. However, ADF&G suggests that inaccuracies may exist in maximum harvest rate, and or density numbers, or that immigration rates from adjacent units are higher than expected. ADF&G will continue with current bag limits in GMU 20B (Seaton, 2005). Current bag limits are 3 black bears annually.

Fort Wainwright Natural Resources staff will continue to work with ADF&G to ensure sustainable harvest of black bears on the installation and surrounding lands.

LITERATURE CITED

Seaton, C.T. 2005. Units 20A, 20B, 20C, and 20F black bear management report. Pages 223-237 in C. Brown, editor. Black bear management report of survey and inventory activities 1 July 2001 – 30 June 2004. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Project 17.0. Juneau, Alaska.