



MAINE CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

EXCELLENCE IN WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP THROUGH SCIENCE AND EDUCATION



POSITION STATEMENT ON THE 2014 BLACK BEAR REFERENDUM

The Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society (METWS) is a scientific and educational organization comprised of professional wildlife biologists from across Maine. The mission of the METWS is to foster excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education among wildlife professionals within Maine. METWS recognizes that:

- ▶ humans are part of a functioning environment, and human use of wildlife resources must be carried out in a responsible manner so that ecological processes can continue to function and sustain a diverse and healthy environment.
- ▶ participation in, or support of wildlife-related activities that do not have long-term detrimental impacts on wildlife populations or their habitats should be a matter of individual choice.
- ▶ human wildlife-related activities should enhance the overall value of wildlife resources, and that these enhanced values improve potential opportunities to protect and perpetuate wildlife, understand its habitat needs, and improve its economic, cultural, and social importance.
- ▶ options for wildlife management activities are developed by trained wildlife professionals and must be implemented and coordinated through resource management agencies that are legislatively mandated and empowered to do so.

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW), through its long-term black bear research program (1975-present) has some of the most extensive and comprehensive information on black bear populations in North America. Since 1968, MDIFW has used a public planning process that balances the sustainability of the resource with the desires of society to determine species goals and objectives. MDIFW has actively responded to changes in bear populations by manipulating season lengths, timing, and hunting methods to achieve species goals and objectives.

Be it resolved that the Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society opposes the referendum to ban the use of certain hunting techniques because:

- 1. it subverts the species planning process that has been successfully used to balance scientific management and societal goals for over 35 years, and**
- 2. it would limit regulated, responsible, safe, and sustainable human use of a highly valued species, and**
- 3. it may restrict the ability of the MDIFW to manage the black bear population at ecologically, and socially desirable levels.**