

Values Associated With BC Wildlife, was featured in the 2005/2006 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis

VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH BC WILDLIFE

The value of wildlife in British Columbia includes a variety of economic values associated with wildlife related activities. These include consumptive activities such as hunting, angling, trapping and guiding as well as non-consumptive activities such as viewing, photography and field study. The economic value of wildlife is differentiated into three components: use value, option value and existence value.

- 1 **Use value** is the benefit from actual (consumptive or non-consumptive) use of the resource.
- 2 **Option value** is value the present generation may place on an option to use resources in future instead of the present. Option value may also include bequest value which is associated with conserving environmental resources such as wildlife for the use of future generations.
- 3 **Existence value** is the value people place on the satisfaction in knowing that a species continues to thrive in its natural habitat. This value is independent of any use values either in the present or the future. People may experience positive feelings and a sense of accomplishment in fulfilling what they feel is their obligation to conserve environ-

mental amenities. They can assign a positive value to the continued existence of natural habitats or species even though they may never visit such areas or see the species.

Hunting and guide outfitting contribute tourism revenues for BC while providing recreation opportunities for BC residents. In 2003, resident hunters spent about \$70 million dollars and non-resident hunters spent about \$46 million dollars. This is an important source of income for many rural B.C. residents. The expenditure value of resident and non-resident hunting activities can also be estimated by measuring the contribution to provincial Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment. In 2003, resident and non-resident hunters contributed about \$48 million to the province's GDP. Resident hunters generated the largest share of GDP with an estimated \$29 million attributable to their activities. GDP resulting from non-resident hunting was about \$19 million. Trapping generated just under \$1 million of the province's GDP. Hunting and trapping activities also generated employment for approximately 1,870 British Columbians with about 1,730 in hunting and 140 in trapping.

In the 2004-05 season, 84,003 resident hunting licences were sold. This represents an increase of 3% over the previous year and the first year in the last several there has been an increase in hunting license sales to residents. 5,931 non-resident hunting licences were sold and these have been steadily increasing over time. Government revenue from all hunting license sales was about \$7.5 million dollars.

Economic values for non-hunting related activities have also been estimated from survey data collected from B.C. residents. Direct wildlife activities (trips or outings where the main purpose is to watch, feed, photograph, or field study wildlife) and indirect wildlife activities (activities around the home cabin or cottage or where the main purpose was not related to wildlife) are estimated at \$737 million dollars per year. The economic value of these activities (the value people place on them over and above their expenditures) has been estimated to be about \$1 billion dollars annually.

Source: Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection and BC Stats.