

FISHER MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Raised by Working Group in 1985

Habitat

- Forest practices including large clearcuts, mechanized harvesting and herbicides have reduced prey and habitat, particularly in northern Maine. After clearcut, it takes 10-15 years to again become fisher habitat.
- Forests take longer to regrow after cuts due to nutrient loss.
- Forests are important both for cover and prey production.
- Forest inventory did not pick up a large increase in timber harvesting in WMU 2. Perception of our people as well as public is this is wrong.
- The effect of harvesting and herbicides needs to be explored.

Population

- Fisher population may be limited by parasites and disease.
- Keeping track of the sex and age ratio of fisher – more females are taken than males.
- The exact cause of population ups and downs is not known.
- Need better population estimates.

Harvest/Use Opportunity

- Increase in cutting has resulted in increased road access which has increased the harvest.
- Do not want all other trapping to revolve around fisher management.
- Development in southern Maine effects use-opportunity more than fisher populations.
- Leasing of land in unorganized areas may limit use opportunity.