

Québec's 2020-2027

**BLACK BEAR
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Summary Document



IMPORTANT

Territories governed by the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA) and all beaver reserves maintain their status. Black bear hunting in zone 22 and trapping of fur-bearing animals throughout the territory are reserved exclusively for Aboriginal people.

Legal deposit

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Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs

Introduction

Context

The process of preparing and implementing a management plan provides an opportunity to review the situation of the species concerned and, where necessary, redefine what must be done to ensure that both it and its habitat are managed in the best possible way, and that its development is encouraged for the benefit of all Quebecers. Management plans present wildlife-related goals, identify species-related issues and propose actions and harvest methods that are adjusted to the prevailing situation in Québec's regions. A management plan is prepared in conjunction with provincial and regional stakeholders involved in or affected by the management of the species concerned.

The 2020-2027 Black Bear Management Plan, implemented in 2020 for a period of eight years, takes into account a number of new elements such as the increase in the number of black bears in some regions and issues relating to coexistence with citizens.

The plan preparation process was driven by the desire to provide attractive hunting and trapping products and to simplify the regulatory framework for users. Hunters and trappers now have more possibilities within the harvest potential, and this will have a positive impact on regional economic spinoffs.

A further aim of the management plan is to optimize black bear conservation and development, foster coexistence with citizens and improve knowledge of the species with a view to improving population management.



Black bears

Black bears live in forests in 32 American states and in every Canadian province except Prince Edward Island. In Québec, the species is present almost everywhere, but population size varies from one region to another and depending on habitat quality.

In Québec, black bears may be hunted and trapped, since the species is classified as both a large game species and a fur-bearing animal.

Black bears are much less productive than other large game species. Females reach sexual maturity later; and usually give birth once every two years to between two and four cubs which stay with their mother for a year and a half. Species management measures are applied carefully because of the specific population dynamics.

Black bear populations declined significantly in the 1990s. Since that time, management plans have been prepared for the species and populations have grown as a result in the last two decades.



Profile of Black Bear Harvesting in Québec

- Black bears are mainly harvested by hunting (Figure 1).
- Bear hunting has grown in popularity in the last few years. Harvest reached record levels in 2018, when more than 18,000 hunting licences were sold (Figure 1).
- At least 500 trappers harvest one or more bears each year.
- Most of the harvest takes place in the spring, for both hunting and trapping.
- Although the black bear harvest is spread throughout Québec, it tends to be concentrated more in the south and centre of the province (Figure 2), where population densities are higher.
- Black bear hunting and trapping generate significant economic spin-offs of roughly \$10 million in gross domestic product (GDP) and tax revenue for the Government.¹

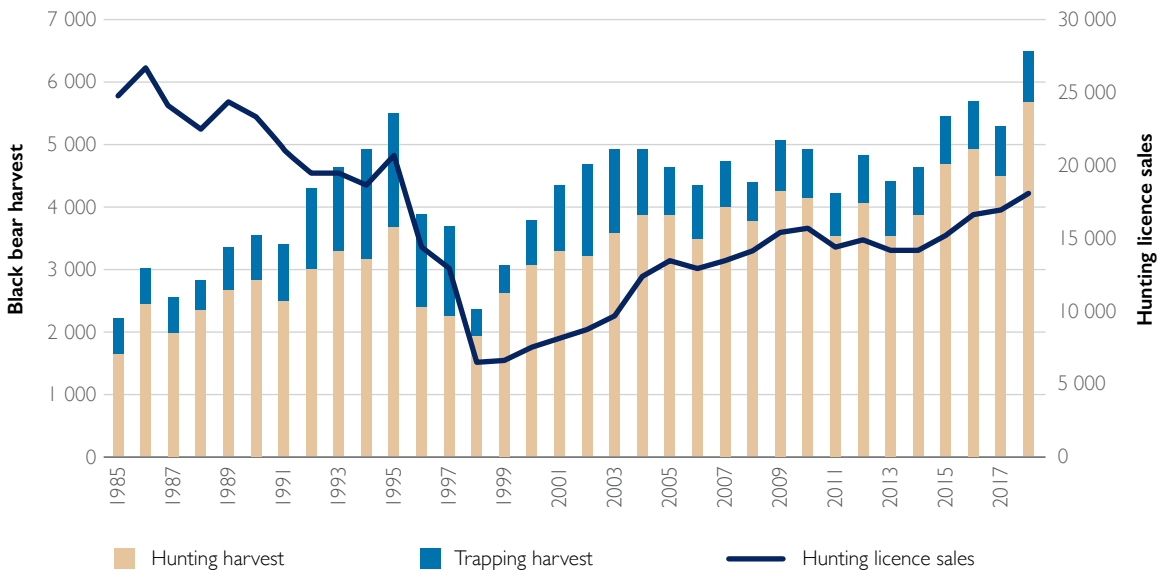


Figure 1: Evolution of black bear harvest and sale of hunting licences

¹ ÉCORESSOURCES (2014), L'industrie faunique comme moteur économique régional. Une étude ventillant par espèce et par région les retombées économiques engendrées par les chasseurs, les pêcheurs et les piégeurs québécois en 2012, report prepared for the ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, Écoressources, Québec, 71 p.

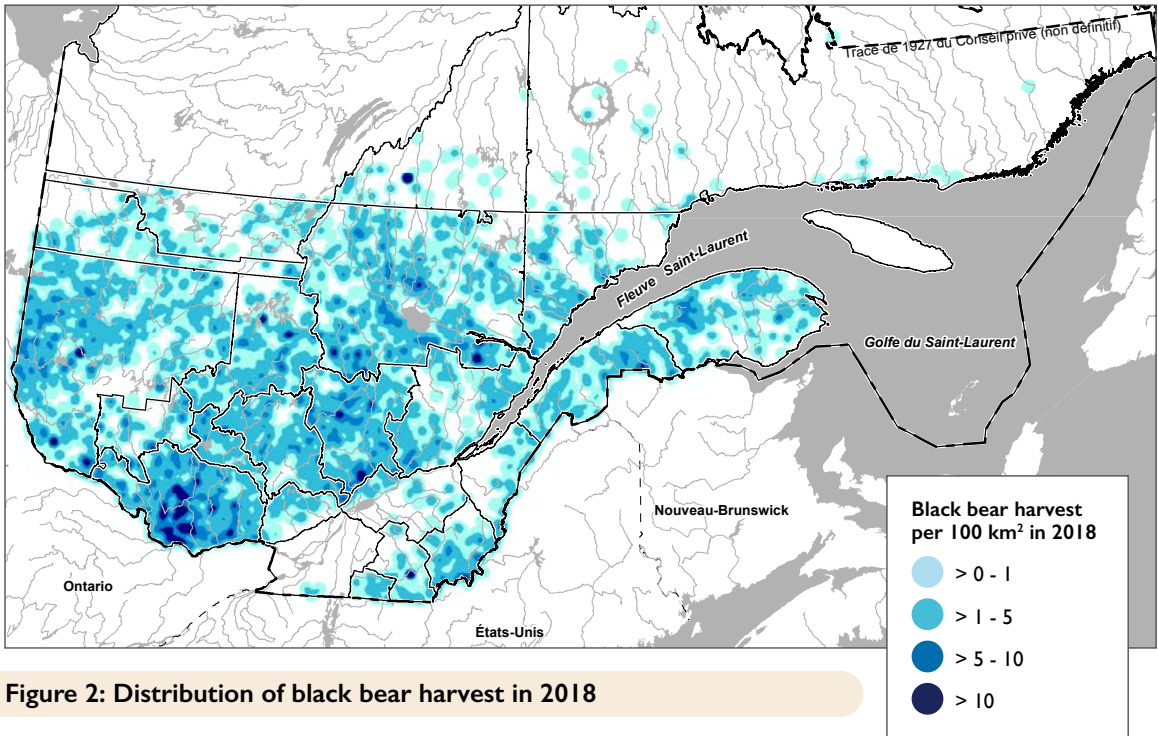


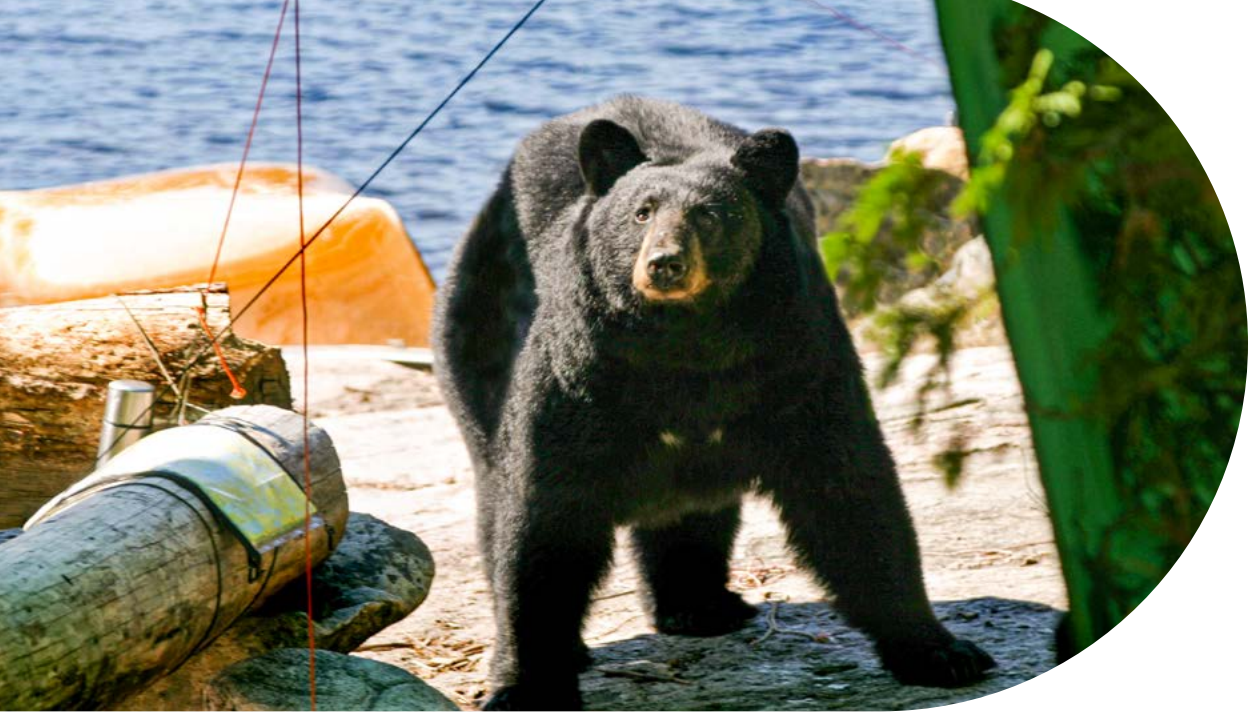
Figure 2: Distribution of black bear harvest in 2018

Highlights

- 75% of bears are harvested by resident hunters.
- 75% of bears are harvested in free territory by this same clientele.
- 85% of hunters hunt in only one zone and 90% of trappers trap in only one fur-bearing animal management unit (UGAF).²
- 86% of hunters are satisfied with their overall hunting experience, and 67% of trappers are satisfied with their overall trapping experience.
- 81% of hunters use a hunting blind and bait, and 96% of trappers use bait in their traps.

² Survey conducted by the ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs as part of the development of the 2020-2027 Black bear Management Plan.





Coexisting with black bears

Every year there are numerous reports of unwanted bears in Québec, but nearly one-third of these incidents do not require interventions by the Wildlife Protection Service.

Problems relating to coexistence with black bears are associated more with bears that become accustomed to human activity than with population density. In years where wild fruit crops are sparse (shortage), bears will travel longer distances to find food and become more opportunistic if food sources are made available by humans. The number of reports is always highest during periods of food shortage.

Management must aim to achieve a balance between wildlife resource development and the concerns of the general public and the owners or users of forests and farmland.

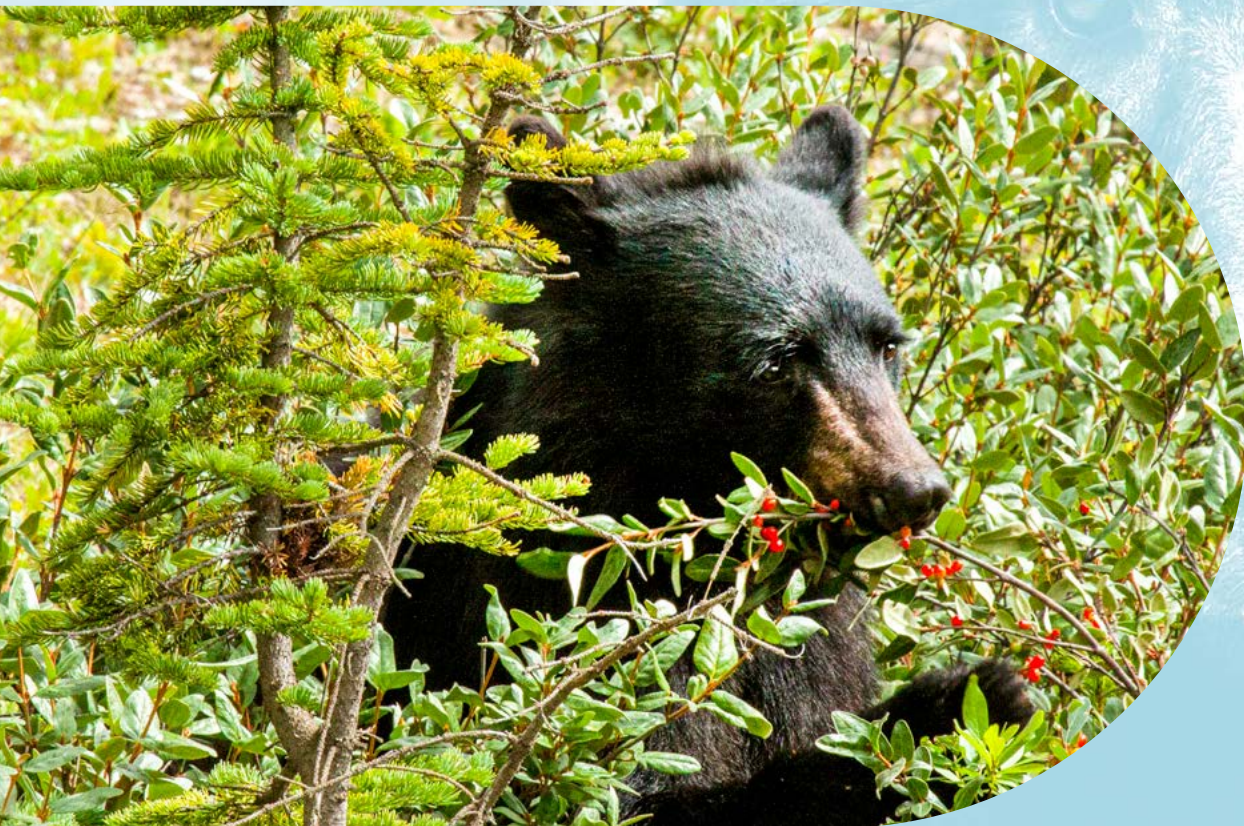
Issues, Orientations and Objectives of the 2020-2027 Black Bear Management Plan

Issues	Orientations	Objectives
Habitat	Ensure that knowledge is up-to-date.	Continue to collect information on black bear habitat and use of the territory, and ensure that it is up-to-date.
Balanced populations	Monitor black bear population trends using effective indicators.	<p>Implement a rigorous black bear monitoring system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consolidate tooth collection; • consolidate voluntary reporting; • update demographic parameters; • develop a province-wide approach to black bear inventories. <p>Establish black bear population and harvest objectives for each hunting zone.</p>
Coexistence	Aim for better coexistence between black bears and communities.	<p>Encourage the introduction of measures to minimize the disadvantages associated with the presence of black bears:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop prevention and awareness tools; • regulate the practice of feeding for observation purposes.
Management through sport hunting	Ensure optimal development through adapted management measures.	<p>Develop effective harvest methods by treating black bears as a high-value renewable resource:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give priority to hunting and trapping as harvest methods in the spring; • where fall hunting is permitted, synchronize it with cervid hunting; • encourage a fair division of the resource between hunting and trapping. <p>Consolidate and develop user interest.</p>
Healthy populations	Prevent, monitor and control diseases that are potentially harmful to black bears and that may spread to humans.	Continue to raise awareness of the impacts of trichinosis (the <i>Trichinella sp.</i> parasite) for humans and maintain surveillance of new diseases that may potentially affect the black bear population.

Harvesting rules – black bear

New hunting and trapping rules in force in the spring of 2020

Harvesting rules are established on the basis of population status, harvest rates and specific local situations. In areas where the harvest potential is sufficient to support additional development, the rules are more flexible than in areas where the potential has been reached. The rules are designed to ensure a fair division of the resource between hunters and trappers.



HUNTING

- The hunting licence gives access to:
 - a. Two bears/hunter/year, one in the spring and one in the fall, in zones 1, 4 to 6, 8 to 12, 15, 19, 23, 24, 26, 27 west and 29;
 - b. One bear/hunter/year, in spring only, in zones 2, 3, 7, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 27 east and 28.
 - > First transportation coupon: valid only in the spring hunting season, in all hunting zones.
 - > Second transportation coupon: valid only in the fall hunting season, in hunting zones where the bag limit is two bears/hunter.
- Standardized spring hunting season from May 15 to June 30 in all hunting zones.
- In hunting zones where a fall hunting season is permitted, it is synchronized with the cervid hunting season.
- Baiting periods have been changed according to harvesting seasons.

TRAPPING

- Black bear may be harvested as follows:
 - c. Four black bears in UGAFs 8 to 10, 12 to 15, 17 to 29, 33 to 41, 55 to 66, 70 to 74;
 - d. Three black bears in UGAFs 16, 80, 81, 83 to 86;
 - e. Two black bears in UGAFs 1 to 7, 11, 30 to 32, 42 to 54, 75 to 79, 82.
- Standardized spring season from May 15 to June 30 in all UGAFs.
- Fall season starting on October 18 or 25, depending on the UGAF, and ending on December 15 (opening synchronized with the canid trapping season).

General hunting rules for residents and non-residents

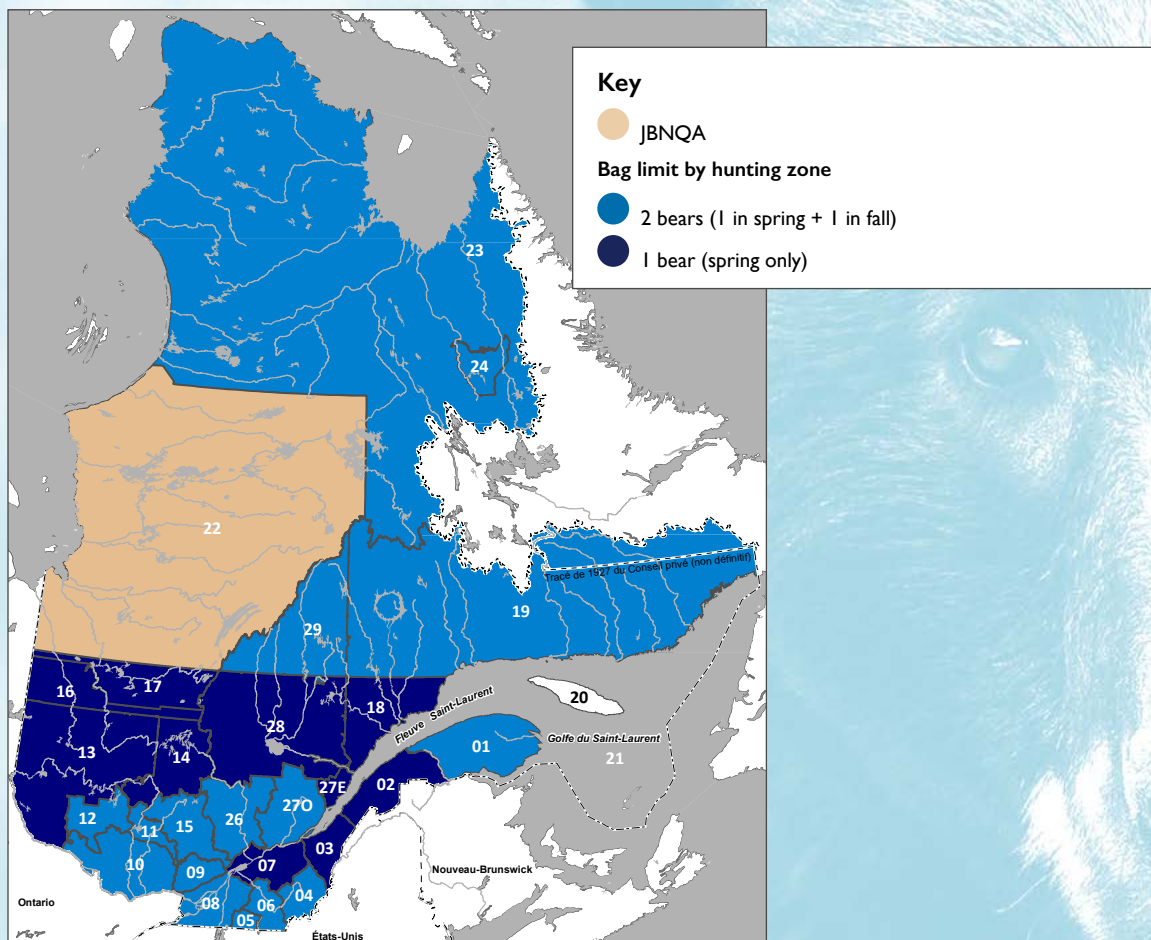


Figure 3: Bag limit (hunting)

General trapping rules for residents and non-residents

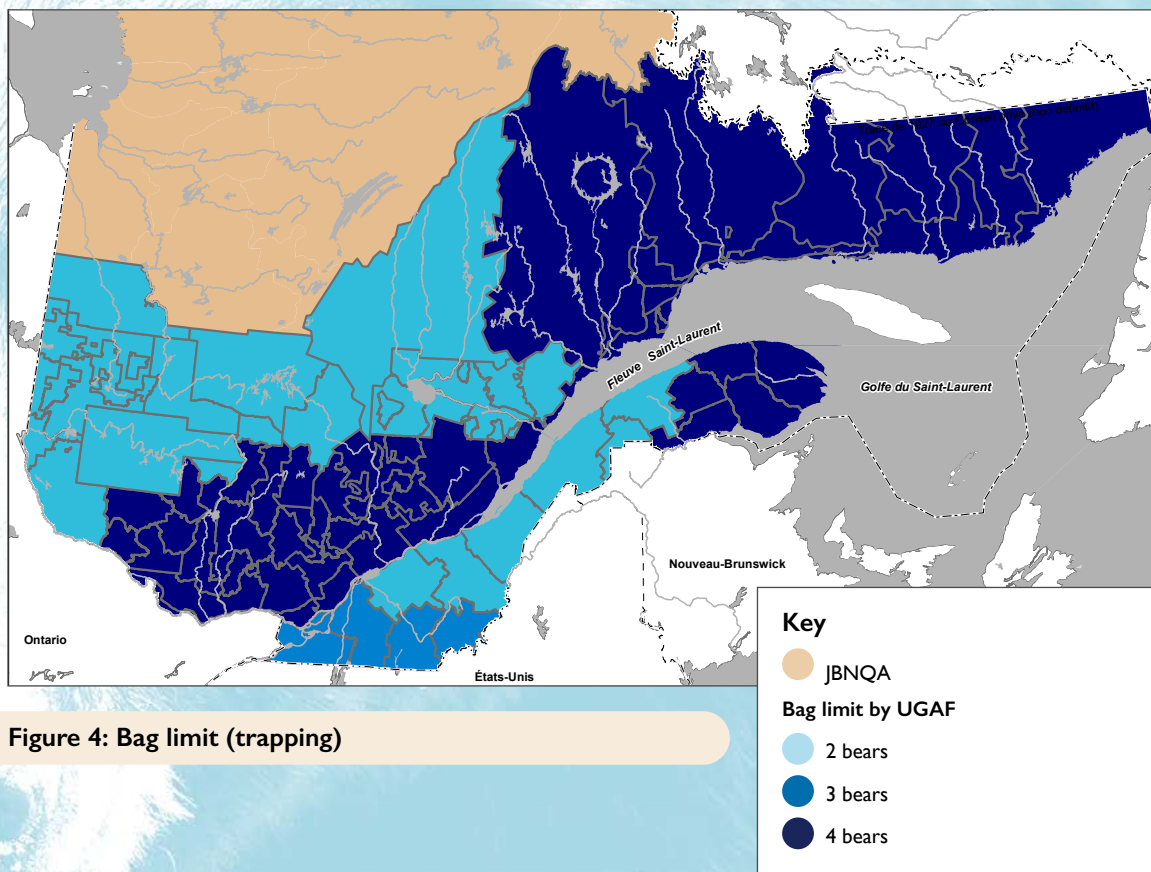


Figure 4: Bag limit (trapping)

**Standardized spring hunting and trapping season from May 15 to June 30
in all hunting zones and UGAFs**

Calendar of fall black bear hunting seasons by hunting

Hunting zones	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	
Zone 1			BOW-CB ←
Zone 4			
Zone 5			
Zone 6			
Zone 8			
Zone 9			
Zone 10			14 days →
Zone 11 E			
Zone 11 W			BOW-CB ←
Zone 12			BOW-CB ←
Zone 15**			BOW-CB ←
Zone 19 SW	BOW-CB	← 16 days	FA
Zone 19 SE	BOW-CB	← 16 days	
Zone 19 SNW	BOW-CB ← 12		FA
Zone 23-24**	← Starting date August 1 st		FA
Zone 26			BOW-CB ←
Zone 27 W		BOW-CB ← 16 days	
Zone 29	BOW-CB	← 16 days	FA

Légende

- Synchronized with deer hunting
- Synchronized with moose hunting
- New fall hunting season
- Fixed dates each year

- BOW-CB Bow and crossbow
- FA Firearms, bow and crossbow
- MLF Muzzle loading firearms, bow and crossbow
- SG Shotguns, muzzle loading firearms, bow and crossbow

** Crossbow prohibited in zones 15, 23 and 24

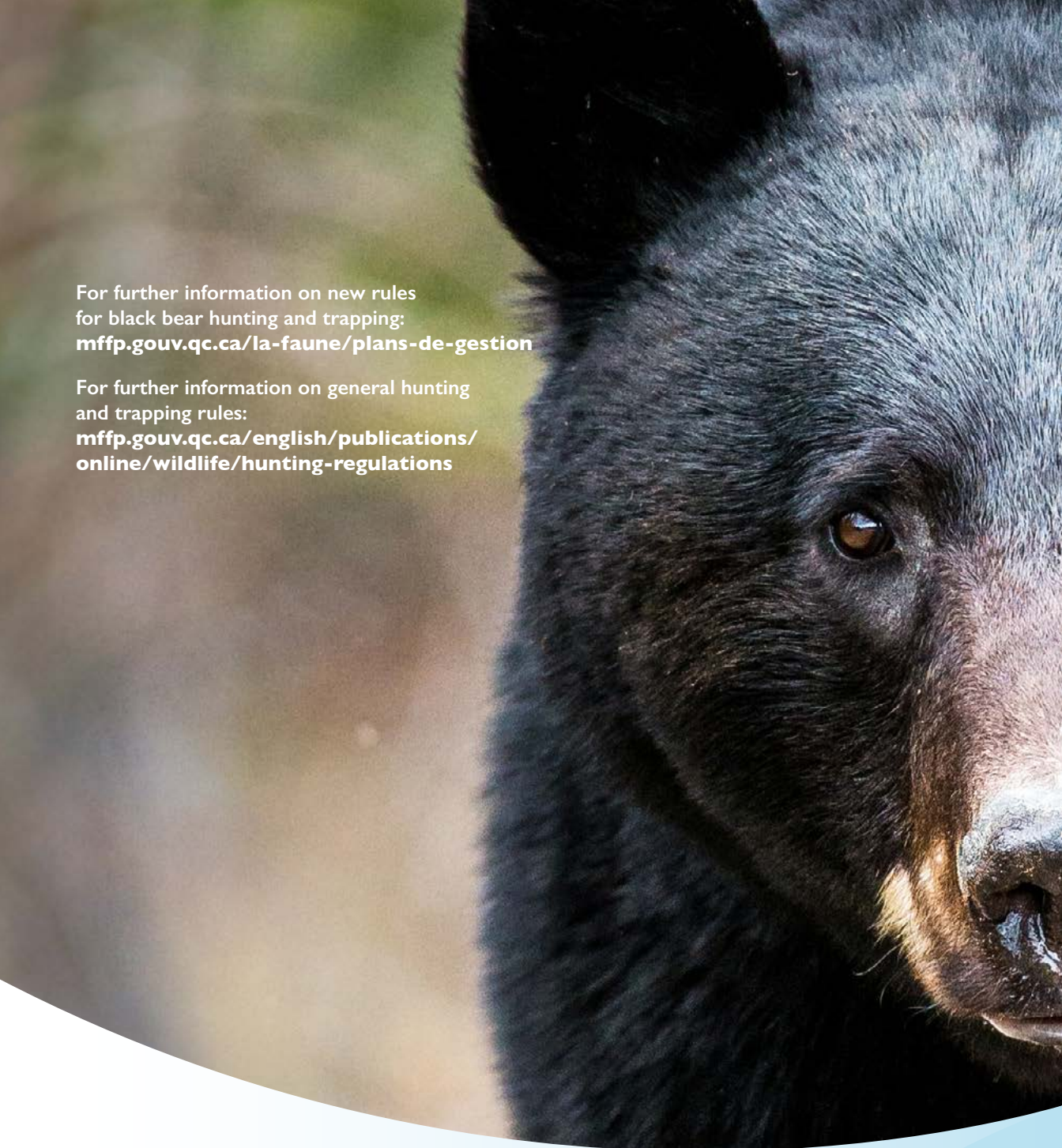
zone

OCTOBER			NOVEMBER		
9 days					
BOW-CB	← 14 days		16 days →		FA
BOW-CB	← 14 days		16 days →		FA
BOW-CB	← 14 days		16 days →		FA
BOW-CB	← 14 days		16 days →		FA
BOW-CB	← 14 days				
BOW-CB	MLF-SG	← 5 days	16 days →		FA
BOW-CB	← 16 days				
9 days					
16 days					
9 days					
← 30 days					
FA			← 44 days		
← 31 days					
← 76 days					
16 days	FA		← 16 days		
FA		← 16 days			
← 30 days					

Other management plan components

In addition to the new harvesting rules, the 2020-2027 Black Bear Management Plan contains actions designed to improve monitoring of the species and to develop the use of bear flesh.

* The bear hunting fall season dates vary from year to year. For information on specific dates, please see the following website: mffp.gouv.qc.ca/english/publications/online/wildlife/hunting-regulations

A close-up photograph of a black bear's face, showing its dark fur, brown eye, and snout. The bear is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus natural setting.

For further information on new rules
for black bear hunting and trapping:
mffp.gouv.qc.ca/la-faune/plans-de-gestion

For further information on general hunting
and trapping rules:
[mffp.gouv.qc.ca/english/publications/
online/wildlife/hunting-regulations](http://mffp.gouv.qc.ca/english/publications/online/wildlife/hunting-regulations)

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