



News release

Officials continue to monitor grizzly bear activity

IQALUIT, Nunavut (July 13, 2001) – Sustainable Development Minister Olayuk Akesuk says officials within the department are closely monitoring the unusually high number of grizzly bears near the community of Baker Lake.

“We were advised that there seemed to be an unusually high number of grizzly bears in the Baker Lake area this year,” Minister Akesuk said. “The local wildlife officer has been monitoring the situation closely, and has been responding to reports of bears and bear damage.”

Since June 21 there have been at least seven conflicts between bears and people near the community, resulting in damage to several cabins, supplies being eaten, and four bears being destroyed. On July 7, a mother bear and two cubs were destroyed after repeatedly breaking into a cabin. They are suspected to be the same ones that broke into several other cabins in the area as well.

“They seemed to be the cause of much of the problem and quickly learned to associate the cabins with food,” Wildlife Officer Joe Niego said. “That poses a danger to campers and that’s why they were destroyed.”

Responding to residents concerns, the Municipal Council and Hunters and Trappers Association declared a temporary state of emergency on July 6. This state of emergency was lifted on July 11.

Minister Akesuk said he plans to meet with the mayor and HTA chairperson to discuss long-term solutions to avoid future grizzly bear/ human conflicts. He added departmental staff will continue to monitor the issue.

Travellers and tourists are reminded to stay alert for signs of bears and to keep their campsites clean to avoid attracting them.

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