

Scavenger Wolves Plaguing Pipeline Construction Camps

Scavenger wolves are plaguing at construction camps along the trans-Alaska pipeline route. At least two reports of workers being bitten by wolves have been received by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, reports the January issue of Alaska Magazine.

"A group of pet wolves lives at almost every pipeline construction camp north of the Yukon River," Fairbanks regional game supervisor Bob Hinman told Alaska Magazine's Outdoor Editor Jim Rearden.

There are as many as eight wolves near one camp, said Hinman, and their danger as potential carriers of rabies has not been

generally recognized.

"We know the men are feeding them, which is against regulations. They have been threatened with being fired for feeding wild animals," according to Hinman, "but the rule is ineffective because anyone fired for this reason apparently can be hired elsewhere on the project."

Hinman said that wildlife authorities anticipated bears and foxes would become used to the camps, and that these species, especially, would be attracted to food scraps. "We didn't dream that wolves would be a problem," he said.

The wolf population of Interior and Northern Alaska is high at this time, and the rabbit population is low. A number of incidents of wolf packs killing and eating chained dogs have been reported in the Ester-Goldstream area, about 10 miles from Fairbanks, and they are described in the item in the Alaska Sportsman section of the January issue of Alaska Magazine.

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