**North American river otter, Kodiak**

*Lontra canadensis kodiacensis*

**Conservation Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heritage</th>
<th>Agency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G Rank: G5T4</td>
<td>USFWS/NOAA:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S Rank: S4</td>
<td>SOA:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Class:** Mammalia

**Order:** Carnivora

**Conservation Status**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>AA:</th>
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<tr>
<td>BLM:</td>
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<td>USFS:</td>
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**Final Rank**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status:</td>
<td>-20 to 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biological:</td>
<td>-50 to 50</td>
<td>-13</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>-40 to 40</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conservation category:** IV. Orange

IV = unknown status and high biological vulnerability and action need

**Status** - variables measure the trend in a taxon’s population status or distribution. Higher status scores denote taxa with known declining trends. Status scores range from -20 (increasing) to 20 (decreasing).

**Population Trend (-10 to 10)**  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not have trend information for river otters in the Kodiak Island game management unit (ADFG 2007f).

**Distribution Trend (-10 to 10)**  
The distribution trend is unknown. Logging has occurred on Afognak Island, but the impact on river otters has not been studied (ADFG 2007f).

**Biological** - variables measure aspects of a taxon’s distribution, abundance and life history. Higher biological scores suggest greater vulnerability to extirpation. Biological scores range from -50 (least vulnerable) to 50 (most vulnerable).

**Population Size (-10 to 10)**  
Abundance unknown. Clark (1958) stated that the Kodiak river otter was ‘often seen in salt water and is found in every part of the [Kodiak] island group’ and appeared to ‘maintain its numbers with little difficulty’ despite trapping.

**Range Size (-10 to 10)**  
Restricted to the Kodiak archipelago, which includes Kodiak Island and surrounding islands (MacDonald and Cook 2009).

**Population Concentration (-10 to 10)**  
River otters are often found in groups that consists of a family with a female and her pups, with or without the male, a family with a helper, a bachelor group of males, a male and female, or a litter of pups after separation from the rest of the family. Larger groups are only seen when multiple groups are temporarily associating with each other (Lariviere and Walton 1998, Solf and Golden 2008).

**Reproductive Potential**

**Age of First Reproduction (-5 to 5)**  
Females reproduce at age 2, males are sexually mature at age 2, but may not breed until age 5-7.

**Number of Young (-5 to 5)**  
2
Average litter size is 2-3. One litter per year.

Ecological Specialization

**Dietary (-5 to 5)**
-5
River otters are opportunistic feeders, eating fishes, including suckers, redhorses, squawfishes, trout, and salmon, frogs, mussels, insects, small mammals, and birds.

**Habitat (-5 to 5)**
1
River otters inhabit streams, lakes, ponds, swamps, marshes, estuaries, beaver flowages and exposed outer coast (NatureServe 2007b). Coastal river otters, such as on Kodiak, will utilize the narrow zone of timbered habitat adjacent to the coast (Larsen 1983, Woolington 1984)

**Action** - variables measure current state of knowledge or extent of conservation efforts directed toward a given taxon. Higher action scores denote greater information needs due to lack of knowledge or conservation action. Action scores range from -40 (lower needs) to 40 (greater needs).

**Management Needs (-10 to 10)**
10
Alaska Department of Fish and Game regulates the trapping season and bag limit. No other management to benefit this species.

**Monitoring Needs (-10 to 10)**
2
Only monitoring is through mandatory sealing program and trapper questionnaires (ADFG 2007f).

**Research Needs (-10 to 10)**
2
At the species level, harvest and habitat degradation are the two primary threats and have resulted in local and regional declines. Susceptible to pollution due to accumulation of mercury and organochlorine compounds (Francis and Bennett 1994, Halbrook et al. 1996) and there position at the top of the food chain (Lariviere and Walton 1998). The impacts of logging on Afognak Island are unknown (ADFG 2007f). Less abundant in clearcuts, heavily settled, polluted, or food poor areas (Toweill and Tabor 1982, Suring and Larsen 1991). Natural recolonization following local extirpations may be delayed due to low female dispersal rates. This, along with their metapopulation structure indicates the importance of connectivity between subpopulations to the preservation of genetic diversity (Blundell et al. 2002).

**Survey Needs (-10 to 10)**
2
Broad habitat associations understood and distribution information available from harvest data and generalized range map.

**Supplemental Information** - variables do not receive numerical scores. Instead, they that are used to sort taxa to answer specific biological or managerial questions.

**Harvest:** Substantial, regulations
**Seasonal Occurrence:** Year-round
**Taxonomic Significance:** Subspecies
**% Global Range in Alaska:** >10%
**% Global Population in Alaska:** >25%
**Peripheral:** No

**Range Map**
References


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