

## Management Options

The "Bear Smart" Community program is a proactive conservation strategy that encourages efforts by communities, businesses and individuals to reduce bear/human conflicts. The goal of the program is to focus efforts on addressing the root causes of bear/human conflicts, reduce the number of conflicts and, ultimately, reduce the number of bears that have to be destroyed due to conflicts.

This program will be based on a series of criteria that communities must achieve in order to be designated as "Bear Smart". It is a co-operative venture and entirely voluntary on the part of communities. The responsibility to manage bear/human conflicts rests with everyone and it will require participation from the provincial government, municipal governments, and local citizens to successfully implement this program.

### Translocation

Translocation is one management option available. Bears are trapped, moved and released into the wild. Translocation, however, is rarely successful as often these bears return to their original home territory, or they become "problem" bears in other communities. In addition, translocated bears often fail to adapt to their new habitat - they likely starve to death or are killed by bears that already occupy the territory.

### Aversive Conditioning

"Bear Smart" Communities will have more management options to deal with bear conflicts such as hazing or aversive conditioning. This involves using deterrents to teach the bear to associate humans or human food with a scary or negative experience. Bear deterrents include: rubber bullets, plastic slugs, anti-riot batons, foul-tasting chemicals, electric shock, acoustic devices and trained bear dogs.

Hazing and aversive conditioning are most effective when they are used to prevent bears from becoming conditioned to human food. They are not considered effective once bears have already learned to associate food and people. Within "Bear Smart" Communities, however, fewer bears will be coming into conflict and those that do will not be receiving a readily accessible food reward. Therefore, hazing and aversive conditioning of bears will only be considered as options in communities that are designated as "Bear Smart".

# What is "Bear Smart"?

## Criteria for Communities to Achieve "Bear Smart" Status

1. Prepare a bear hazard assessment of the community and surrounding area.
2. Prepare a bear/human conflict management plan that is designed to address the bear hazards and land-use conflicts identified in the previous step.
3. Revise planning and decision-making documents to be consistent with the bear/human conflict management plan.
4. Implement a continuing education program directed at all sectors of the community.
5. Develop and maintain a bear-proof municipal solid waste management system.
6. Implement "Bear Smart" bylaws prohibiting the provision of food to bears as a result of intent, neglect, or irresponsible management of attractants.