

FEASIBILITY STATEMENTS FOR RED FOX GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1985

Goal: Allow the red fox population to fluctuate naturally in all WMUs.

Abundance Objective: Monitor the red fox population but allow fox densities to fluctuate naturally in all WMUs through 1990.

Harvest Objective: Maintain current user opportunity (season length and timing) through 1990.

Desirability: This goal may be desirable to hunters and trappers because use opportunity will not be restricted; supply greatly outweighs demand.

Feasibility: This goal can be accomplished as current regulations and use of red fox do not significantly affect red fox densities.

Capability of Habitat: Red fox habitat throughout Maine is capable of supporting fox densities, which fluctuate naturally.

Possible Consequences: Red fox densities may reach carrying capacity if they are allowed to fluctuate naturally. If local fox populations do reach carrying capacity, transmittable diseases including sarcoptic mange and rabies may occur and cause substantial declines in fox numbers. An outbreak of rabies in foxes could result in public demand for a Departmental control program, which would be costly.