Persistant Bear Shot in Midtown Neighborhood

Thursday, 21 March 2013

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

After a few days of failed attempts to scare the animal out of public areas, the Kodiak lone bear roaming around town was deemed a public safety threat and euthanized Thursday morning. Larry Van Daele is a wildlife biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and said the decision to euthanize came from the Kodiak Police Department, Alaska Wildlife Troopers and Fish and Game after days of monitoring the bear’s activity.

Starting at 7:50 a.m., Police Chief T.C. Kamai said reports of the bear came flooding in as the bear moved about areas of town.

At one point this morning the bear was lingering on Main Elementary School’s playground, forcing indoor morning recess for students. While walking to school, another student encountered the bear in the wooded area near the Baranof Park ice rink. Kamai said no one was hurt by the bear, but the animal kept showing up in busy areas and was surprisingly difficult to track. He said the bears are definitely starting to wake up, but hopefully this will be the first and only time a bear has to be killed.

In general, Van Daele said the times when a bear must be killed are fairly rare, and is only used as a last resort when a bear can't be trained to leave an area.

Kamai said part of ensuring this doesn’t happen again is making sure the community is being bear aware. He said now is the time to start being extra careful with garbage and waste, and really keeping in mind that even within city limits residents are still in bear country.