

Common sense approach to staying safe in outdoors

By Tri-County Newspapers

The California Department of Fish and Game reminds campers, anglers and hikers enjoying the outdoors to take precautions to limit black bear encounters. A key element to safe camping and recreating in bear country is to limit food odors that attract bears.

“Bears are constantly in search of easily obtainable food sources,” said Marc Kenyon, DFG statewide bear program coordinator. “A bear’s fate is almost always sealed once it associates human activity with potential food. It’s always unfortunate when a bear has to be killed because people either haven’t learned how to appropriately store food and trash, or simply don’t care.”

California’s growing black bear population is now estimated at more than 40,000. Black bears are located in most of the state where suitable habitat exists and bear/human encounters are not isolated to wilderness settings. For example, last year black bears stirred up trouble in one of California’s premier tourist destinations, as DFG staff logged more than 5,200 hours handling black bear nuisance issues in the Lake Tahoe region alone.

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