

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 25526
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**DALL SHEEP
ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR.: W-33-12

PROJECT NR.: 6.0

PERIOD: 1 July 2013 – 30 June 2014

PROJECT LOCATION: Statewide

PROJECT TITLE: The Status of Dall Sheep and Factors Influencing Their Populations

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This performance report describes Dall sheep survey and inventory activities. Regionwide activities are listed before specific activities by game management unit.

**The Status of Alaska Dall Sheep and Factors Influencing Their Populations in
Region II**

Regionwide:

ACTIVITY : Draft a triennial Dall sheep management report.

Dall sheep management report was prepared and submitted for publication during this period. Staff continued to collect information in preparation for drafting next report.

ACTIVITY: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

Information was collected during interviews with hunters and from information provided on harvest reports from permit hunts and general seasons. See area specific activities for additional information.

ACTIVITY: Provide information to state and federal regulatory processes on Dall sheep management. Collect data from sheep presented for sealing by hunters.

All full curl and some ewe sheep taken in Region II were presented to staff for measuring and sealing. In addition, approximately 25% of all rams taken in Alaska are sealed in Region II. See area specific activities for additional information. Staff routinely interact with federal staff and discuss management of Dall sheep relative to the respective regulatory systems. Staff prepared information for presentation to the state Board of Game meeting in 2015.

ACTIVITY: Survey selected sheep areas to determine distribution, sex and age.

Surveys were completed in selected hunt areas within individual GMUs. See Area specific activities.

Activities by Unit:

Units 7&15

ACTIVITY : Six rams were taken during the general season by 87 hunters. One additional ram was taken from the drawing permit hunts.

ACTIVITY : Nine count areas were surveyed during the performance period including Round Mountain, Twin Lakes, Fox river, Mills Creek, Cooper Landing Closed Area, Indian Creek, Grant Lake, and Bradley Lake. A total of 340 sheep were counted of which 18% were lambs. Sheep populations on the Kenai continue to show an overall declining trend.

Unit 14C

ACTIVITY : Sheep harvest was monitored through hunter harvest reports and sealing records. Harvest for GMU 14C was: 19 full curl rams and one ewe from permit hunts. Sheep horn size, sheep age and location of kill was collected from sheep horns and interviews with hunters at the time of sealing.

ACTIVITY : Sheep surveys were conducted from 23-25 July 2013. A total of 948 sheep were counted, including 334 rams, 523 ewes, 85 lambs, and 6 unidentified sheep.

ACTIVITY : Research was initiated in GMU 14C to determine productivity and mortality. Results will be reported under a separate project.

The Status of Dall Sheep

and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region III

Mountain Range or Use Area Activities

Tok Management Area

Mail a questionnaire to hunters to assess the level of satisfaction with the existing management program in the Tok Management Area .

Delta Controlled Use Area

Mail a questionnaire to hunters and quantify their satisfaction with aesthetics of Dall sheep hunting in the Delta Controlled Use Area. .

Regionwide Activities

ACTIVITY 1: Conduct aerial composition surveys to monitor population trends.

Conducted aerial composition surveys in the White Mountains, Tanana Hills, Delta Controlled Use Area, Central and Western Alaska Range, and Tok Management Area; observed approximately 6,035 sheep.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyze harvest data.

Monitored preliminary harvest of 565 sheep through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyzed harvest data.

ACTIVITY 3: Provide Dall sheep management information to State and Federal regulatory processes.

Provided information to 15 State fish and game advisory committees and 2 Federal regional advisory councils.

ACTIVITY 4: Prepare triennial Dall's sheep management reports.

Completed triennial sheep management reports.

Tok Management Area and Delta Controlled Use Area

ACTIVITY 1: Mail a questionnaire to hunters to assess the level of satisfaction with the existing management program in the Tok Management Area.

Questionnaires to assess hunter satisfaction were not mailed because a statewide effort was underway.

The Status of Dall Sheep and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region IV

Project Location: Game Management Units 11, 13, 14, and 16B

Regionwide:

ACTIVITY: Prepare triennial sheep management reports.

The triennial sheep management report were drafted and submitted to the region for review.

ACTIVITY 1 & 2: Monitor sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters. Collect data from sheep presented for sealing by hunters.

| | Rams Harvested | Ewes Harvested | Unknown Sex Harvested |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Unit 11</i> | 45 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|----|---|---|
| <i>Unit 13A</i> | 19 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Unit 13B</i> | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Unit 13C</i> | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Unit 13D</i> | 17 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Unit 13E</i> | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Unit 11</i> | 45 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Unit 13A</i> | 19 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Unit 16B</i> | 11 | 0 | 0 |

ACTIVITY 3: Survey selected sheep areas to determine distribution, sex and age.

| | < Full Curl | Full Curl | Ewe- like | Lambs | Total |
|--|----------------|--------------|--------------|-------|-------|
| 2013 Summer Surveys | | | | | |
| <i>Unit 11 CA 3</i> | 85 | 11 | 207 | 27 | 330 |
| <i>Unit 11 CA 11</i> | 28 | 5 | 75 | 16 | 124 |
| <i>Unit 11 CA 12</i> | 69 | 19 | 144 | 26 | 258 |
| <i>Unit 11 CA 22</i> | 43 | 15 | 142 | 34 | 234 |
| <i>Unit 11 CA 23</i> | 68 | 14 | 146 | 22 | 250 |
| <i>Unit 13A Boulder Cr.</i> | 52 | 3 | 93 | 13 | 161 |
| <i>Unit 13A Chickaloon-East</i> | 49 | 5 | 62 | 9 | 125 |
| <i>Unit 13A Hicks Cr.</i> | 19 | 0 | 80 | 15 | 114 |
| <i>Unit 13A Caribou Cr.</i> | 142 | 3 | 235 | 79 | 459 |
| <i>Unit 13A Sheep Mtn.</i> | 10 | 1 | 32 | 7 | 50 |
| <i>Unit 14A Chugach Mtns.</i> | 157 | 11 | 320 | 65 | 553 |
| <i>Unit 14A&B Talkteetna Mtns.¹</i> | 37 | 2 | 54 | 10 | 103 |

¹ Only 1 survey unit in the Talkeetnas Mountains was completed during this performance period.

The Status of Alaska Dall Sheep and Factors Influencing their Populations in Region V

Regionwide:

Prepare regional triennial Dall sheep management reports.

A Dall sheep management report was prepared during this reporting period.

Provide information to state and federal regulatory processes on Dall sheep management.

Area management staff reviewed State and Federal regulatory proposals, attended regulatory process meetings, and presented Dall sheep information to the State Board of Game, State Fish and Game Advisory Committees, Federal Subsistence Board, and Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils.

Mountain Range or Use Area Activities:

Baird Mountains:

Conduct aerial sex and age composition surveys in established count areas.

No surveys were scheduled during the reporting period.

Monitor the population by conducting minimum counts or generating population estimates with survey data.

No surveys were conducted this year due to conflicts with the schedule established by NPS.

Monitor harvests through, federal permit hunts, Community-based Harvest Assessments, public contacts and field observations.

We collected reports from hunters on sheep body condition and abundance. Community harvest assessments were conducted in Deering and Kotzebue during the reporting period. Results will be summarized in a report prepared by Division of Subsistence later this year.

Update population objectives in cooperation with the public and other agencies.

Sheep information was reported at Advisory Committee meetings and additional review of population status was recommended by staff.

DeLong Mountains:

Conduct aerial sex and age composition surveys in established count areas.

No surveys were conducted in 2013.

Monitor the population by conducting minimum counts or generating population estimates with survey data.

No additional population estimates have been attempted. Surveys initiated at the end of the reporting period indicate a sharp decline in the population due to winter icing conditions.

Monitor harvests through the harvest ticket system, permit hunts, Community-based Harvest Assessments, public contacts and field observations.

Five drawing permits were issued to hunters for the fall 2013 hunting season, and one sheep was taken. One registered to hunt in Hunt RS388 and no sheep were taken. Forty-one federal sheep permits were issued, and 18 sheep were taken (16 rams, 2 ewes).

Update population objectives in cooperation with the public and other agencies.

Sheep information was reported at Advisory Committee meetings and additional review of population status was recommended by staff.

Schwatka Mountains:

Monitor harvests through the harvest ticket system, permit hunts, Community-based Harvest Assessments, public contacts and field observations.

No hunters registered for RS389 and no sheep were taken.