

**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
FEDERAL AID PERFORMANCE REPORT**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR.: W-27-5

PROJECT NR.: 6.0

WORK LOCATION: Statewide

PERIOD: 1 July 2001–30 June 2002

PROJECT LOCATIONS: Game Management Regions 2, 3, and 5

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

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This statewide performance report includes the three regions involved in Dall sheep survey and inventory activities. Statewide and regional activities are listed before specific activities by herd and game management unit.

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

Regionwide Activities

Activity 1: Prepare a sheep management report.

Dall sheep draft management reports were completed in spring 2002.

Activity 2: Write an annual survey and inventory performance report.

Activity 3: Provide information to the Board of Game on sheep management.

Provided information to the Board of Game as it addressed proposals regarding Dall sheep in Region 2 during its spring 2001 meeting.

Activity 4: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

Activity 5: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

Dall sheep surveys were conducted in portions of all mountain ranges in region 2 during this reporting period.

Activities by Mountain Range and Unit

Kenai Mountains (Unit 7)

Activity 1: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

The preliminary 2001–02 harvest for the general season was:

Rams 18 Ewes 0 Total 18

Length of longest horn for rams taken during the general season ranged from 29.5 to 39 inches and averaged 34.5. The mean base circumference was 12.8 and the age was 8.5 years.

The preliminary 2001–02 harvest for the permit hunts was:

Round Mountain Hunt # 152	Rams 0	Ewes 2	Total 2
Crescent Mountain Hunt # 154	Rams 0	Ewes 2	Total 2
Crescent Mountain Hunt # 156	Rams 2	Ewes 0	Total 2

Activity 2: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

Four count areas were surveyed resulting in the classification of 247 sheep. The composition was 70 rams, 142 ewes and small rams, and 35 lambs. Lamb percentage of the total classified was 14 percent.

South Wrangell Mountains (Unit 11)

Activity 1: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

Preliminary Harvest:

GMU 11	Number of Hunters	316
	Rams Harvested	114

Activity 2: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys in cooperation with the National Park Service to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

Survey results July 2001:

CA 10	65 ewes	31 rams	13 lambs	Total 109
CA 11	147 ewes	43 rams	32 lambs	Total 222
CA 12	185 ewes	77 rams	26 lambs	Total 288
CA 14	43 ewes	11 rams	6 lambs	Total 60
CA 22	176 ewes	55 rams	20 lambs	Total 251
CA 23	234 ewes	105 rams	36 lambs	Total 375

Chugach Mountains (Units 11, 13D, 14A, and 14C)

Activity 1: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

No surveys were flown in Units 14C or 14A due to inclement weather.

Partial surveys, including count areas 1–5 were flown in Unit 13D:

Rams 136 Ewes 276 Lambs 88 Total 500

Activity 2: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

The preliminary 2001–02 Chugach Mountains harvest was:

Rams 115 Ewes 22 Total 137

Activity 3: Provide information to the Board of Game on sheep management.

Region 2 sheep were not discussed by the Board of Game during the reporting period.

Talkeetna Mountains (Units 13A and E, 14A and B)

Activity 1: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

Talkeetna Mountains ram harvest = 41.

Activity 2: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

No surveys were conducted in 2001.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$17.9

Submitted by: Michael G. McDonald, Assistant Management Coordinator

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

Regionwide Activities

Activity 1: Write an annual survey and inventory performance report.

Wrote an annual survey and inventory report.

Activity 2: Prepare a draft sheep management report.

Prepared draft sheep management reports for all units.

Activity 2: Provide information to the Board of Game and advisory committees on sheep management.

Made presentations to the Board of Game and advisory committees as needed.

Activities by Mountain Range or Use Area

Mentasta, Nutzotin and northern Wrangell Mountains

Activity 1: Conduct an aerial survey to monitor population composition and trend.

Using a PA-18 supercub, we surveyed two traditional count areas in the Nutzotin Mountains and counted 1,520 sheep (56 rams and 18 lambs:100 ewes).

Activity 2: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts as well as harvest or permit reports and analyze harvest data.

Monitored harvest and hunter distribution by aerial survey, and through field contacts and review of harvest reports. In Unit 12, 284 hunters harvested 126 rams during the general season.

Tok Management Area

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyze harvest data.

Administered the drawing permit hunt (DS102). During RY01, 121 permits were issued, 101 hunters participated (83%), and 34 rams (34% success) were taken.

Continued to survey TMA hunters and Dall sheep biologists in Alaska and Yukon, Canada on better ways to manage for trophy rams and uncrowded hunting conditions.

Delta Controlled Use Area

Activity 1: Conduct an aerial survey to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival.

No aerial surveys were conducted during this reporting period.

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

Harvest was monitored during permit hunts DS203, with 23 sheep killed and DS204 with 32 sheep killed.

Activity 3: Complete hunter questionnaire.

Rather than mail the hunter questionnaire, we developed a web site for wildlife users in the Delta Controlled Use Area.

North Side of the Alaska Range East of the Nenana River, West of the Delta River and South of the Tanana River

Activity 1: Conduct an aerial survey to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival.

Conducted aerial surveys to estimate initial productivity (2001 = 31 lambs:100 ewes) and lamb survival (2001 survival rate = 0.57).

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

Analyzed harvest report information (RY01 reported harvest = 50 rams) for RY98-RY00 draft sheep management report.

White Mountains

Activity 1: Conduct an aerial survey to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival.

Conducted aerial surveys to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival (2002 = 43 lambs:100 ewes).

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

Analyzed harvest report information (RY01 = 7 rams) for RY98-RY00 draft sheep management report.

Tanana Hills

Activity 1: Conduct an aerial survey to monitor population composition and trend.

In cooperation with Bureau of Land Management, using a PA-18 supercub, compositioned 77 sheep in the Glacier Mt. Area (33 lambs and 35 rams:100 ewes) and 69 sheep in the Mt. Harper area (26 lambs and 71 rams:100 ewes).

Monitored general harvest and hunter distribution using aerial surveys, in field hunter contacts, and harvest reports. In Unit 20E, 20 hunters harvested 7 rams.

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

Administered the Mt. Harper drawing permit hunt (DS206). During RY01, 4 permits were issued, 4 hunters participated and 3 rams were harvested.

Monitored general harvest and hunter distribution using aerial surveys, in field hunter contacts, and harvest reports. In Unit 20E, 20 hunters harvested 7 rams.

Central Brooks Range West of the Dalton Highway Corridor to Howard Pass, including Gates of the Arctic National Park

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyze harvest data.

Monitored the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyzed harvest data.

Eastern Brooks Range

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyze harvest data.

Monitored the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyzed harvest data. A total of 146 rams were harvested in Units 25A, 26B and 26C.

Alaska Range West and South of Denali National Park and Preserve

Activity 1: Conduct an aerial survey to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival.

Conducted aerial surveys and found 29 lambs :100 ewes, with overall low numbers of adult rams.

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

Monitored hunter harvest. Hunter numbers have decreased in recent years with declines in legal ram numbers caused by low cohort recruitment in the early 1990's.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$42.9

Submitted by: Roy A. Nowlin, Management Coordinator

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

Regionwide Activities

Activity 1: Prepare a draft or finalize a sheep management report

Draft Dall sheep management reports for Units 23 and 26A were prepared Mar–Aug 2002 and submitted to HQ in early September 2002

Activity 2: Write an annual survey and inventory performance report.

Performance report for Units and 23 and 26A were prepared August 2002 and submitted to HQ early September 2002

Activity 3: Provide information to the Board of Game on sheep management.

Units 23 and 26A. Information was provided to the BOG regarding the population status of sheep in Units 23 and 26A as the board considered a housekeeping proposal to modify the opening date of fall general and subsistence sheep hunting in the De Long Mountains.

Mountain Range or Use Area Activities

DeLong Mountains

Activity 1: Conduct aerial sex and age composition surveys in established count areas.

The department did not conduct sheep surveys in the DeLong Mountains because of a conflict with the Western Arctic Caribou Herd photocensus and poor weather.

Activity 2: Monitor harvests through the harvest ticket system, permit hunts, community-based harvest assessments, public contacts and field observations.

No sheep were reported taken under state regulations in the De Long or Schwatka Mountains.

Activity 3: Develop updated population objectives in cooperation with the public and other agencies.

Population objectives were not discussed during this reporting period.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None.

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$4.2

Submitted by: Peter Bente, Wildlife Biologist III

Statewide Project Costs (in thousands):

State Share = \$16.25 Federal Share = \$48.75 Total Costs = \$65