

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NO. W-33-11

PROJECT NO.: 12.0 Mountain Goat

PERIOD: 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013

PROJECT LOCATION: Statewide: Activities in Regions I, II, and IV

PROJECT TITLE: The Status of Alaska Mountain Goats and Factors Influencing Their Populations

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This performance report describes Mountain Goat survey and inventory activities. Activities are listed by region and game management unit.

Region I—Southeast Alaska

Regionwide Activities

ACTIVITY 1: Provide information to state and federal regulatory processes on mountain goat management.

Data from goat harvest and survey information was provided to the state of Alaska Board of Game during their spring 2013 SE meeting. Data was also provided to the federal managers during this reporting period to assist them with justification for goat season closures that we believed were important.

ACTIVITY 2: Conduct mountain goat surveys, including sex and age composition in key management areas within the region.

Unit 1A: The Ketchikan area staff were unable to conduct any mountain goat surveys

Unit 1B: The Petersburg staff conducted aerial surveys in 9 of 27 established trend-count areas during the report period. Fall aerial surveys were concentrated in those trend count areas that typically receive the highest levels of hunting pressure. A total of 398 goats were observed, including 345 adults and 53 kids.

Unit 1C: Staff conducted aerial surveys in several areas:

North Tracy Arm (159 goats: 134 adults and 25 kids.),
Between Tracy and Endicott Arms (229 goats: 191 adults and 38 kids),
Mount Klutchmen (32 goats: 26 adults and 7 kids),
Sweetheart Lake (8 goats: 7 adults and 1 kids).

Unit 1D: Staff conducted aerial surveys in eleven count areas in this unit,
Chilkoot River Valley to Ferebee Glacier: (173 goats: 136 adults and 37 kids),
Halutu Ridge (45 goats: 38 adults and 7 kids),
Nourse River (41 goats: 36 adults and 5 kids),
Upper Chilkat and Takshanuk (299 goats: 248 adults and 51 kids),
Takhin Ridge and Porcupine (194 goats: 149 adults and 45 kids).

Unit 4: The Sitka staff conducted aerial surveys in the northern half of the Baranof Island. Three hundred and three goats were observed with 272 adults and 31 kids. This represented a 6% decline in the number of kids observed from the previous year.

Unit 5: No surveys were conducted in this unit during this period.

ACTIVITY 3: Monitor results from registration permit hunts and analyze the data.

Unit 1A: The Ketchikan Area office collected hunter information through a mandatory registration permit report. Thirty permittees participated in the hunt.

Unit 1A: 23 goats were harvested and most were sampled from hunt RG001

Unit 1A: 15 goats were harvested and most were sampled from hunts DG005-007.

Unit 1B: Petersburg Area staff collected hunter information from goat hunters via a mandatory registration permit reporting requirement. The mandatory hunt reports include information on successful and/or unsuccessful hunt locations, method of transportation, days of effort and commercial services used. Thirty three permittees participated in the hunt.

Unit 1B: 10 goats were harvested and most were sampled.

Units 1C, 1D & 5: The Douglas Area office collected hunter information through a mandatory registration permit report. Hunt report data included location of hunt, mode of access used, days hunted, and commercial services used. If the hunter was successful the report also queried the location of the kill. One hundred forty-eight permittees participated in the hunts.

Unit 1C: 32 goats were harvested, and approximately 50% were sampled.

Unit 1D: 23 goats were harvested and 65% were sampled.

Unit 5: 1 goat was harvested and sampled.

Unit 4: Hunt report data included location of hunt, mode of access used, days hunted, and commercial services used. If the hunter was successful the report also queried the location of the kill. Fifty five permittees participated in the hunt.

Unit 4: 19 goats were harvested and all were sampled.

ACTIVITY 4: Update guideline harvest level objectives for selected goat herds based on a review of long-term harvest trends.

Efforts continue across the region to manage goats at finer scales dictated by hunter access. This has become necessary to prevent an overharvest at these access points.

ACTIVITY 5: Monitor cases of contagious ecthyma (ORF) and other diseases in goat populations.

This was conducted in the process of talking to hunters about their goat hunts, and while measuring horns and aging goats. We also maintain dialog with a number of commercial guides who spend a great deal of time in goat country and keep a look out for any oddities with goats. No cases of contagious ecthyma were identified during this report period.

ACTIVITY 6: Work with relevant agencies (USFS and BLM), community leaders and helicopter operators to address concerns about helicopter tourism on mountain goats.

These efforts continued during this reporting period, in particular, in the Haines and Skagway areas, and with the community of Haines.

Unit Specific Activities

Unit 1B

ACTIVITY 1: Identify discrete geographic areas for use as goat trend count areas.

This effort had been accomplished during previous report periods.

ACTIVITY 2: Conduct aerial surveys to establish the minimum number of goats needed to maintain harvest opportunities for the LeConte Bay management area.

Goat surveys were conducted in this area and sufficient goats were observed to maintain the present harvest opportunities.

ACTIVITY 3: Conduct aerial surveys to establish the minimum number of goats needed to maintain harvest opportunities for the Thomas Bay management area.

Goat surveys were conducted in this area and sufficient goats were observed to maintain the present harvest opportunities.

ACTIVITY 4: Conduct aerial surveys to establish the minimum number of goats needed to maintain harvest opportunities for the Cleveland Peninsula management area

Goat surveys were conducted in this area and sufficient goats were observed to maintain the present harvest opportunities.

Unit 1C

ACTIVITY 1: Identify discrete geographic areas for use as goat trend count areas.

This effort had been accomplished during previous report periods.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor, as information becomes available while talking to people traveling in goat habitat, the impact of sightseeing helicopter flights on selected populations.

This is an informal effort that takes place spontaneously during discussions with goat hunters, hikers, campers, etc.

ACTIVITY 3: Monitor, as information becomes available the course of contagious ecthyma (ORF) in northern southeast populations in case we want to develop a separate research study.

We talked to many goat hunters during the season about this disease, but did not have any positive observations.

ACTIVITY 4: Monitoring and of populations in areas where road construction or mining development may occur.

We continue to work with our research staff to monitor goats in areas in northern Southeast Alaska where there is mining activity underway and where road construction is a possibility in the near future.

Unit 1D

ACTIVITY 1: Identify discrete geographic areas for use as goat trend count areas.

This effort had been accomplished during previous report periods.

ACTIVITY 2: Conduct aerial surveys to establish the minimum number of goats needed to provide harvest opportunities for the Skagway management area.

Aerial surveys were not conducted in this area during this report period.

ACTIVITY 3: Monitoring and some capturing and radio-collaring of populations in areas where road construction or mining development may occur.

Management staff assisted research staff in the capture and radio collaring of goats in several areas of northern Southeast Alaska where mining and pending road development are issues of concern.

Unit 4

ACTIVITY 1: Capture and radio-collar up to six goats on Baranof Island to study movements and habitat utilization.

This was accomplished.

Submitted by: Neil L. Barten, Region I Management Coordinator

Region II—Southcentral Alaska

Regionwide:

ACTIVITY : Prepare a biennial regional mountain goat management report.

Area staff continued to collect information for publication of next management report in 2014.

ACTIVITY : Conduct summer aerial sex and age population composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality.

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

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

These are standard activities accomplished in each office. See Area specific activities.

ACTIVITY : Provide information to state and federal regulatory processes on mountain goat management.

Staff routinely interact with federal staff and discuss management of mountain goats relative to the respective regulatory systems. Staff attended the state Board of Game meeting during this reporting period.

Activities by Unit:

Unit 6

ACTIVITY : No surveys were conducted because of particularly poor late-summer weather conditions and problems with pilot availability.

ACTIVITY : We issued 119 goat hunt permits. Harvest was 39 males, 12 females (23%), and 1 unknown goat for a total of 52 goats.

Units 7&15

ACTIVITY : Only eight areas were surveyed due to logistical constraints during the normal summer and fall survey period. Within these areas a total of 915 goats were counted of which 751 were adults and 164 were kids. Additionally, 7 areas were surveyed during April 2013 to look at winter/spring distribution and group composition in response to possible increase in winter/spring recreation activities within these units. 1200 goats counted (987 adults and 213 kids).

ACTIVITY : Fifty-five goats were harvested during the reporting period. Twenty-four percent of these were nannies, which is equal the percentage of nannies in the harvest in the previous reporting period and represents a decrease in the historic nanny harvest. Two hundred and eighty-four permits were issued of which 113 were hunted. Thirty-three percent of hunters were successful.

Unit 8

ACTIVITY : During August 2012, we surveyed about 50% of the goat habitat on Kodiak Island. We counted 1,265 goats, all of which were classified (1,041 adults, 224 kids). The kid: adult ratio (22:100) increased from the average ratio noted during the previous 5 years (21:100). These data suggest the island-wide goat productivity was stable during this reporting period, with localized declines and increases. The estimated island-wide goat population was 2,390 during this reporting period, down slightly from the 2011 estimate of 2,426 goats.

ACTIVITY : Expansion of goat populations into virtually all available habitats around Kodiak Island allowed us to increase hunter opportunity. The number of drawing permits increased slightly at 254. Five registration hunts occurred after the drawing hunt season. We issued 2 Emergency Orders to close hunt areas RG472 and RG473 prior to the hunts opening on November 1, 2012. Preliminary data indicate that in 2012-13 hunters harvested 155 goats (105 males, 48 females (31.4%) and 2 unknown), down from the 2011-12 harvest of 160 goats, and the 5-year average of 160.4 goats. We issued 254 drawing permits, 129 hunters went into the field, and hunter success was 48%. During the registration hunt, we issued 574 permits and 283 hunters went into the field, and hunter success was 33%. The harvest ranged from 4-82 goats for each of the 8 permit hunt areas.

Unit 14C

ACTIVITY : No goat surveys were conducted during this reporting period due to inclement weather.

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ACTIVITY : Goat harvest was monitored through harvest reports and contacts with hunters.
Goats Harvested included 26 billies and 6 nannies for 18 percent females.

Submitted by: Gino Del Frate

Date: 6 September 2013

Region IV—Southcentral and Southwestern Alaska

Project Location: Game Management Units 11, 13, and 14A

Regionwide:

ACTIVITY 1: Prepare biennial regional mountain goat management report.

Biennial goat reports were written and submitted to the region for editing.

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

Unit 11: Count area 22: 25 adults, 7 kids

Unit 11: Count area 23: 14 adults, 2 kids

Unit 14A: Chugach Mountains: 130 adults, 23 kids

ACTIVITY 3: Monitor the goat harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports, and contact with hunters.

<i>Unit</i>	Male	Female	Unknown	Total Harvest
<i>11:</i>	3	0	0	3
<i>13D:</i>	2	1	0	3
<i>14A:</i>	5	1	0	6

Submitted by: Lem Butler, Region IV Management Coordinator

Date: 15 August, 2013