

**FEDERAL AID  
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
PO Box 25526  
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**DEER  
ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY  
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**STATE:** Alaska

**GRANT AND SEGMENT NR.:** W-33-9

**PROJECT NR.:** 2.0

**PERIOD:** 1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Statewide

**PROJECT TITLE:** The Status of Deer and Factors Influencing Their Populations

**REPORT DESCRIPTION:** This performance report describes Region 2 deer survey and inventory activities. Regionwide activities are listed before specific activities by herd and game management unit.

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**Region 1**

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Game Management Unit 8 – Kodiak Archipelago

**Regionwide Activities**

**ACTIVITY 1:** Determine harvest and population trends using a mail survey of deer hunters.

Mail-out harvest survey procedures changed in 2006 because of a cooperative agreement with the Forest Service to require all deer hunters in Unit 2 to submit harvest reports. Because of this, the USFS has invested hundreds of hours each year, trying to tally the harvest of as close to 100% of the hunters as they can.

Approximately 33% of all deer harvest ticket holders from Southeast (excluding those that hunted in Unit 2) were mailed a deer harvest survey under the state program. The communities of Wrangell, Kake and Petersburg were sampled at 100% to try and get better information on hunter effort and success due to low deer numbers in those areas. Information from these reports is still being data-entered and summary reports are in the process of being produced.

**ACTIVITY 2:** Conduct spring pellet-group surveys at selected locations throughout the region.

Pellet-group surveys were conducted in April - June 2011. The winter was relatively mild, allowing staff to access deer pellet transect sites fairly early. The traditional deer pellet transects have been reduced in favor of testing a new method using the DNA from deer pellets to estimate deer numbers in a given area.

Staff continued with a 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a new method of estimating deer density using pellets, by collecting pellets and analyzing them using DNA. We can then use DNA as a

mark/recapture tool in estimating deer density. This was conducted on Northeast Chichigof Island.

ACTIVITY 3: Conduct shoreline deer condition surveys on selected shoreline segments to further assess post-winter deer condition.

This was conducted in Unit 4, where 172 miles of beach were surveyed, and 344 deer were classified for body condition.

ACTIVITY 4: Analyze historical pellet survey data to examine correlates of deer-pellet density. No work was done on this activity.

ACTIVITY 5: Conduct mortality transects in key areas as needed and budgets allow.

Deer mortality transects were conducted in portions of Unit 4, but because the winter was so mild, and likely due to the low deer densities already, only a few deer carcasses were discovered. The mild winter probably allowed for a high survival of deer.

ACTIVITY 6: Monitor the harvest by communicating with hunters on an opportunistic basis.

Staffs noted anecdotal information from discussions with hunters throughout the RY 2010 deer hunting season.

**Submitted by:** Neil Barton

## **Region II**

### **Regionwide Activities**

Activity : Prepare a biennial deer management report.

A deer management report was submitted to Headquarters for publishing during the summer 2011.

Activity : Determine harvest and population trends using a mail questionnaire.

Questionnaires were mailed to a sample of deer hunters by location of where they obtained their harvest tickets. Information from questionnaires was compiled and reported in management reports.

Activity : Monitor the deer harvest through field observations and contacts with hunters.

### **Activities by Unit**

#### **Unit 6**

ACTIVITY 1: Spring shoreline survey indicated moderate to heavy snow conditions on islands in western Prince William Sound, including Montague Is., whereas Hinchinbrook and Hawkins Islands had moderate snow conditions.

ACTIVITY 2: Conducted annual pellet group surveys on 24 transects. Surveys indicated low but stable populations in most of the range, increasing populations on Hinchinbrook and Hawkins Islands.

ACTIVITY 3: Mail questionnaire survey indicated a harvest of 1,640 deer by about 1,150 hunters.

ACTIVITY 4: Submitted a Deer Management Report.

**Unit 8**

Activity 1: Assess winter mortality in standardized mortality count areas.

Results: The winter of 2010/11 had a moderate-low loss of deer. Reports from the public and deer mortality transects indicated a lower rate of deer mortality on the northern portion of the Kodiak Archipelago than had been noted in the previous 3 years.

Activity 2: Conduct a deer hunter mail questionnaire survey.

Results: We monitored hunting activities and harvest by a mail questionnaire. Preliminary extrapolated results indicated the 2010/11 harvest was 4,016 deer, including 75% males. Sixteen percent of the harvest was from Afognak, Raspberry, and Shuyak islands; 84% of the harvest was from Kodiak and small adjacent islands. Hunter residency was: Kodiak Island residents (39%), non-local Alaska residents (43%) and, non-residents (18%).

Activity 3: Evaluate improved procedures for assessing population status.

Results: No activity during this reporting period

**Submitted by:** Gino Del Frate

**Date:** 2 September 2011