

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

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

**BISON
ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NO. W-33-8

PROJECT NO. 9.0

PERIOD: July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

PROJECT LOCATION: Statewide (Regions II and III)

PROJECT TITLE: Bison S&I

The Status of Bison and Factors Influencing Their Populations

Region II: GMU 11

Regionwide:

Activity: Prepare biennial bison management report.

Unit 11 & 13: Biennial bison management reports were drafted in 2010.

Activity: Monitor the harvest of bison from the permit hunts and analyze harvest data.

2009-2010 Harvest	Permittees	Hunters	males	Total harvest
Unit 11 Chitina River	2	2	0 (0%)	None
Unit 11 and 13D Copper River	24	18	4 (44%)	9 bison

Unit 11 the Chitina River and Copper River Herds:

Activity: Monitor the harvest of bison from the permit hunts and analyze harvest data.

Chitina River Herd: Two permittees hunted unsuccessfully.

Copper River Herd: 18 hunters (24 permittees) harvested 4 males and 5 females for a total of 9 bison.

Activity: Conduct aerial sex and age population composition surveys to determine status, trend productivity and mortality of bison.

Chitina River Herd - June 2010: 46 total bison, 39 adults and 7 calves (15%)

Copper River Herd - June 2010: the herd was flown multiple days, but a count was not be completed due to wide bison distribution

Submitted by: Mark Burch

Date: September 8, 2010

Region III:

Regionwide Activities

ACTIVITY 1: Provide bison management information to State and Federal regulatory processes.

Provided information to McGrath and Delta Fish and Game advisory committees and the Alaska Board of Game.

ACTIVITY 2: Assess range conditions and work with fire control agencies to improve habitat.

Assessed and improved range conditions by forage management activities for the Delta Bison Herd and by working with fire control agencies for the Farwell herd.

ACTIVITY 3: Monitor harvest from permit hunts and analyze harvest data.

Monitored and analyzed preliminary harvest of 68 bison from the Delta herd and 4 from the Farwell herd.

ACTIVITY 4: Maintain a sample of radiocollared bison to monitor the herd distribution and movements.

Radiocollared no bison because a sufficient number of animals already collared, and monitored distribution of existing collars.

Activities by Herd:

Units 19C and 19D the Farewell Herd:

ACTIVITY 1: Conduct ground or aerial surveys to assess population distribution, size and sex and age composition.

Conducted minimum population estimation surveys in July 2009 and found 164 bison including 26 calves; in August 2009 and found 179 bison including 15 calves; and in April 2010 and found 169 bison including 1 newborn calf.

ACTIVITY 2: Cooperate with state and federal agencies to plan and conduct prescribed burns to improve bison habitat.

Met informally with fire control agency personnel to discuss habitat improvement.

Unit 20D the Delta Herd:

ACTIVITY 1: Conduct ground or aerial surveys to assess population distribution, size and sex and age composition.

Conducted aerial surveys to estimate the herd size of 435 bison and conducted ground composition counts to estimate composition ratios of 60 bulls:100 cows and 44 calves:100 cows.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor timing of bison movements from the summer range to the Delta Junction Bison Range (DJBR) and Delta agricultural lands.

Monitored herd movements, showing that the first bison arrived on the Delta Junction Bison Range (DJBR) on July 28 and the first bison moved to private agricultural land on August 11.

ACTIVITY 3: Plant and fertilize preferred bison forage species and control invasive, non-desirable species within the DJBR.

Planted oats on approximately 600 acres and nugget bluegrass on 15 acres; fertilized 700 acres of perennial grasses; and mowed 300 acres of brush.

ACTIVITY 4: Provide trace mineral and water supplements within the DJBR.

Provided 20 trace element mineral blocks and kept stock tanks full of water (bison drank approximately 11,200 gallons of water).

ACTIVITY 5: Monitor forage quality within the DJBR

Collected and analyzed 7 forage samples for quality.

ACTIVITY 6: Conduct prescribed burns to improve bison habitat within the DJBR.

Conducted no prescribed burns.

ACTIVITY 7: Collect blood serum from hunter-killed bison to test for livestock diseases.

Collected no blood from hunter-killed bison.

Submitted by: Roy A. Nowlin, Region III Management Coordinator