

**BISON
ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR: W-33-2

WORK LOCATION: Statewide

PROJECT NR: 9.0

PERIOD: 1 July 2003 – June 2004

PROJECT LOCATION: Game Management Regions 2 and 3

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

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

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

Regionwide Activities

Activity: Prepare a regional bison management report.
Wrote a draft bison management report.

Activity: Provide information to the Board of Game on bison management.
The Board of Game meets on a two year cycle for the SC Alaska region and did not meet during this reporting period. As a result, there were no formal proposals developed. However, in preparation for the November 2004 meeting, regional staffs have met and discussed ideas may need to be addressed at the next meeting.

Unit 11 Chitina and Copper River Herds

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

Conducted aerial surveys in June 2004 with the following results:

Chitina Herd Survey:

25 total bison
23 adults
2 calves (8%)

Copper River Herd Survey:

125 total bison
99 Adults
26 Calves (21%)

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

Chitina:

Harvest:

1 bull

Hunter Effort:

1 of 2 permittees hunted
1.0 day per hunter

Copper River

Harvest:

7 bison
4 males (57%)

Hunter Effort:

14 of 20 permittees hunted
4.3 days per hunter

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None

Stewardship Investment items purchased: None

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$3.55

Submitted by: Bruce Bartley, Acting Assistant Management Coordinator

The Status of Bison and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region III

Regionwide Activities

Activity: Write a draft bison management report

Wrote draft bison management report.

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

Provided information on bison population status and management issues to the Board of Game and various advisory committees.

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

Coordinated with Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Army, Alaska Department of Natural Resources to assess and improve bison range. Managed and assessed bison forage on the Delta Junction Bison Range.

Activity: Monitor harvest from permit hunts and analyze harvest data.

Monitored harvest and analyzed harvest data of Delta Bison Herd (Unit 20D) and Farewell Bison Herd (Unit 19):

Unit 19: 20 bison harvested.

Unit 20D: 77 bison harvested.

Units 19C and 19D the Farewell Herd

Activity: Capture and radiocollar approximately 8 bison to assist in locating herds for monitoring and population composition surveys

No work was done on this activity during this period.

Activity: Conduct ground and/or aerial surveys to assess population size and sex and age composition.

Counted 109 bison during aerial surveys, but did not conduct sex and age composition counts because of insufficient personnel time.

Unit 20D the Delta Herd

Activity: Conduct ground and/or aerial surveys to assess population size and sex and age composition.

Conducted aerial surveys that resulted in a prehunt population estimate of 407 bison.

Conducted ground composition surveys that resulted in estimates of 60 bulls:100 cows and 45 calves:100 cows.

Activity: Replace radio collars used to locate bison during aerial and ground surveys that are no longer functional or about to go dead to maintain a sufficient sample of radiocollared bison to monitor the herd.

Replaced radio collars on 9 bison [on June 24](#). [No mortalities](#).

Activity: Monitor timing of bison movements from the summer range to the Delta Junction Bison Range and the Delta Agricultural Project.

Monitored timing of bison migratory movements and determined that bison began moving to the Delta Junction Bison Range approximately 16 July and to the Delta Agricultural Project about 18 August.

Activity: Continue investigation of methods and funding options to improve bison viewing opportunities.

Cooperated with Alaska Department of Transportation to install bison viewing sign on highway pullout.

Activity: Provide assistance to the public experiencing bison conflicts.

No work was done on this activity during this period.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None

Stewardship Investment items purchased:

\$9,758 boat purchased for bison management programs in conjunction with moose, brown bear, and black bear management in the McGrath Area.

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$44.9

Submitted by: Doreen Parker McNeill, Assistant Management Coordinator

Statewide Project Costs (in thousands):

State Share = \$12.11 Federal Share = \$36.34 Total Costs = \$48.45