

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 25526
Juneau, AK 99802-5526

**DEER
ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR: W-33-2

PROJECT NR: 2.0

WORK LOCATION: Statewide

PROJECT LOCATIONS: Game Management Regions 1 and 2

PERIOD: 1 July 2003–30 June 2004

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

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

**The Status of Deer
and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region I**

Regionwide Activities

Activity : Finalize a biennial deer management report.

Data for the deer management reports was collected during this reporting period; however, the next report is not due until 2005.

Activity : Provide information to the Board of Game regarding deer management.

The Board of Game meets on a two-year cycle for the SE Alaska region and did not meet during this reporting period. However, in preparation for the November 2004 meeting, regional staffs have met and discussed ideas may need to be addressed at the next meeting.

Activity : Determine harvest and population trends using a mail survey of deer hunters.

This was done via a region-wide survey.

Activity : Conduct spring pellet-group surveys at selected locations throughout the region.

This activity was done in April and May 2004. Field crews were able to complete 21 transects during this period.

Activity : Conduct mortality transects in key areas as needed and budgets allow.
Nine mortality transects were conducted in Unit 4 this year. See below.

Activity : Monitor the harvest by communicating with hunters on an opportunistic basis.
This was done throughout the region.

Activities by Unit

Unit 1A & 2

Activity : Conduct spotlighting surveys in key areas as needed and budgets allow.
No spotlighting surveys were conducted this year.

Activity : Operate hunter check station on Prince of Wales Island.
A deer hunter check station was not conducted during this performance period, pending reassessment of population monitoring and harvest monitoring programs.

Unit 4

Activity : Conduct deer mortality transects in key areas as needed.
Nine mortality transects were conducted in upper Tenakee Inlet, Peril Strait, North Arm of Hoonah Sound, and Middle Point – Baby Bear Bay.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None

Stewardship Investment items purchased: None

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$99.4

Submitted by: Dale L. Rabe – Region I Management Coordinator

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

Regionwide Activities

Activity 1: Provide information to the Board of Game on deer 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, regional staffs have met and discussed ideas may need to be addressed at the next meeting.

Activity 2: Determine harvest and population trends using a mail questionnaire.

Region 2 completed its annual mail deer questionnaire, and results are being compiled.

Activity 3: Monitor the deer harvest through field observations and contacts with hunters.

This was accomplished opportunistically throughout the hunting season.

Unit 6

Activity: Conduct aerial survey of Prince William Sound shoreline in spring to assess deer over-winter survival.

The absence of deer on beaches and moderate snow throughout most of the low-elevation range indicated good over-winter survival.

Activity: Conduct annual pellet group surveys.

We conducted deer pellet surveys at eight locations during May 17 – June 25. Preliminary results (pending repeated measures analysis) indicated density was similar to last year at 1.03 pellet groups per plot.

Activity: Assess snow conditions and establish a severity index.

Annual snow index was calculated, based on depth and duration of snowfall recorded at Port San Juan, resulting in a severity level of 5. The index is rated on a scale of 1 (mild winter) to 10 (severe).

Unit 8

Activity : Assess winter mortality in standardized mortality count areas.

The deer population continued to recover from the devastating winter mortality that occurred the 1998–99 winter. The winter of 2003–04 was within normal parameters for

snow and temperatures and over-winter mortality was light. A cold snap in the spring was responsible for an increased mortality of yearlings on the northern part of Kodiak.

A unit-wide effort to assess the presence and distribution of deer with chronic wasting disease was initiated in fall 2003. We collected and analyzed samples from 149 deer and no evidence of the disease was detected. The project will be continued through the 2004–05 season with a goal of sampling 500 deer from around the archipelago.

Activity: Evaluate improved procedures for assessing population status.

No work was done in this activity during this period.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project: None

Stewardship Investment items purchased: None

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$37.2

Submitted by: Bruce Bartley, Acting Assistant Management Coordinator

Statewide Project Costs (in thousands):

State Share = \$34.15 Federal Share = \$102.45 Total Costs = \$136.6