

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation



Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration  
Annual Performance Report  
Survey-Inventory Activities  
1 July 1999 - 30 June 2000

# ELK

Marx V Hicks, Editor



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1999-2000

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Grant W-27-3  
Study 13.0  
September 2000

**STATE OF ALASKA**

**Tony Knowles, Governor**

**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

**Frank Rue, Commissioner**

**DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

**Wayne L. Regelin, Director**

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**ARLIS**

**Alaska Resources  
Library & Information Services  
Anchorage, AK**

SK  
267.2  
.15  
1999-2000

**Project Title:** Southeast Elk Population Management

**Project Location:** Unit 3 (3000 mi<sup>2</sup>)

All islands west of Unit 1B, north of Unit 2, south of the centerline of Frederick Sound, and east of the centerline of Chatham Strait

**Project Objectives and Activities**

- Provide for growth of the translocated elk herd to 900–1000 animals.
- Provide for all beneficial uses of elk consistent with sustained-yield management when the herd population reaches 250 elk.

**Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period:** We issued 70 drawing permits and 1 public raffle permit for the October hunt. We monitored hunter camps on both Etolin and Zarembo Islands during the first week of the season. Teeth were collected from 14 of 16 harvested elk for aging, and we collected photographs of the antlers. Three of the harvested elk were 1-year-old, 9 were 5–9 years old, 1 was 10 years old, and 1 was 12.

In fall 1999 we inspected 2 15' x 15' vegetative exclosures constructed in 1998 at McHenry (Anchorage) to monitor forb use by elk and deer. We instituted investigations of blood-borne pathogens of hunter-killed elk and collected blood samples from 12 of 16 harvested elk. We submitted subsamples of these sera for laboratory analysis, and all were free of the diseases for which they were tested.

A June 23 aerial survey of the southern portion of Etolin Island indicates elk reproduction was very good this spring. A total of 19 adult cows were observed with 24 (3–4-week-old) calves. Five large adult bulls were observed along the upper reaches of Trout Creek, and several large solitary bulls were observed elsewhere on the island. The higher elevations were covered in snow, and no elk were observed in alpine areas.

**Progress Meeting Objectives:** The Unit 3 elk population is currently estimated at between 250–300 animals. Fifty-eight of 71 permittees who reported hunting elk in 1999 harvested a total of 16 bulls in 354 days afield, for a 28% success rate.

**Segment Period Project Costs**

	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Operating</u>	<u>Total</u>
Planned	8.1	6.5	14.6
Actual	15.2	4.5	19.7
Difference	-7.1	2.0	-5.1

*Explanation:* The management coordinator and the Ketchikan assistant area biologist traveled to several communities to present elk information and solicit public comments.

**Submitted by**

Bruce Dinneford  
Management Coordinator

**ARLIS**  
Alaska Resources Library & Information Service:  
Library Building, Suite 111  
3211 Providence Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99508-4614

**Project Title:** Southcentral Alaska Elk Management

**Project Location:** Unit 8 (5100 mi<sup>2</sup>)

**Project Objectives**

- Maintain a minimum population of at least 1000 elk for all user groups.
- Maintain harvests within sustainable-yield levels of the elk population.
- Develop population objectives for each major subherd.

**Work Accomplished During the Project Segment Period:** We completed aerial sex and age composition surveys for all herds and deployed 16 new radio collars on adult female elk in 1999. Survey results indicated declines in most of the herds, with the unit population estimated at 960 elk.

Mandatory permit reports returned by hunters provided statistics on hunting effort and harvest. We issued 646 drawing permits and 467 registration permits. Hunters reported harvesting 126 elk (77 males, 49 females). The harvest by permit hunt was as follows: Raspberry Island drawing permit hunt, 5 males and 3 females; southeastern Afognak drawing permit hunt, 26 males and 14 females; southeastern Afognak registration permit hunt, 19 males and 22 females; northern Afognak registration permit hunt, 28 males and 10 females.

We issued 1 emergency order to close a portion of registration hunt RE754 in 1999. The portion of that area between Paramanof and Malina Bays, which was occupied by the Marka Lake Herd, received greater pressure than usual due to increased hunter effort on lands not subject to newly imposed access fees on some Native-owned lands.

The total harvest from drawing and registration permit hunts by herd for Afognak Island was as follows: Duck Mountain - 11; Portage Lake - 14; Seal Bay - 10; Marka Lake - 23; Waterfall Lake - 10; Malina Lakes/Afognak Lake - 49.

**Progress Meeting Objectives:** The elk population declined substantially from 1400 animals in 1997 to 960 in 1999. The reported 1999 harvest of 126 elk was about 13% of the estimated population, a rate comparable to that noted in each of the previous 2 years. This was the first decline in the number of elk harvested after 5 consecutive years of increases.

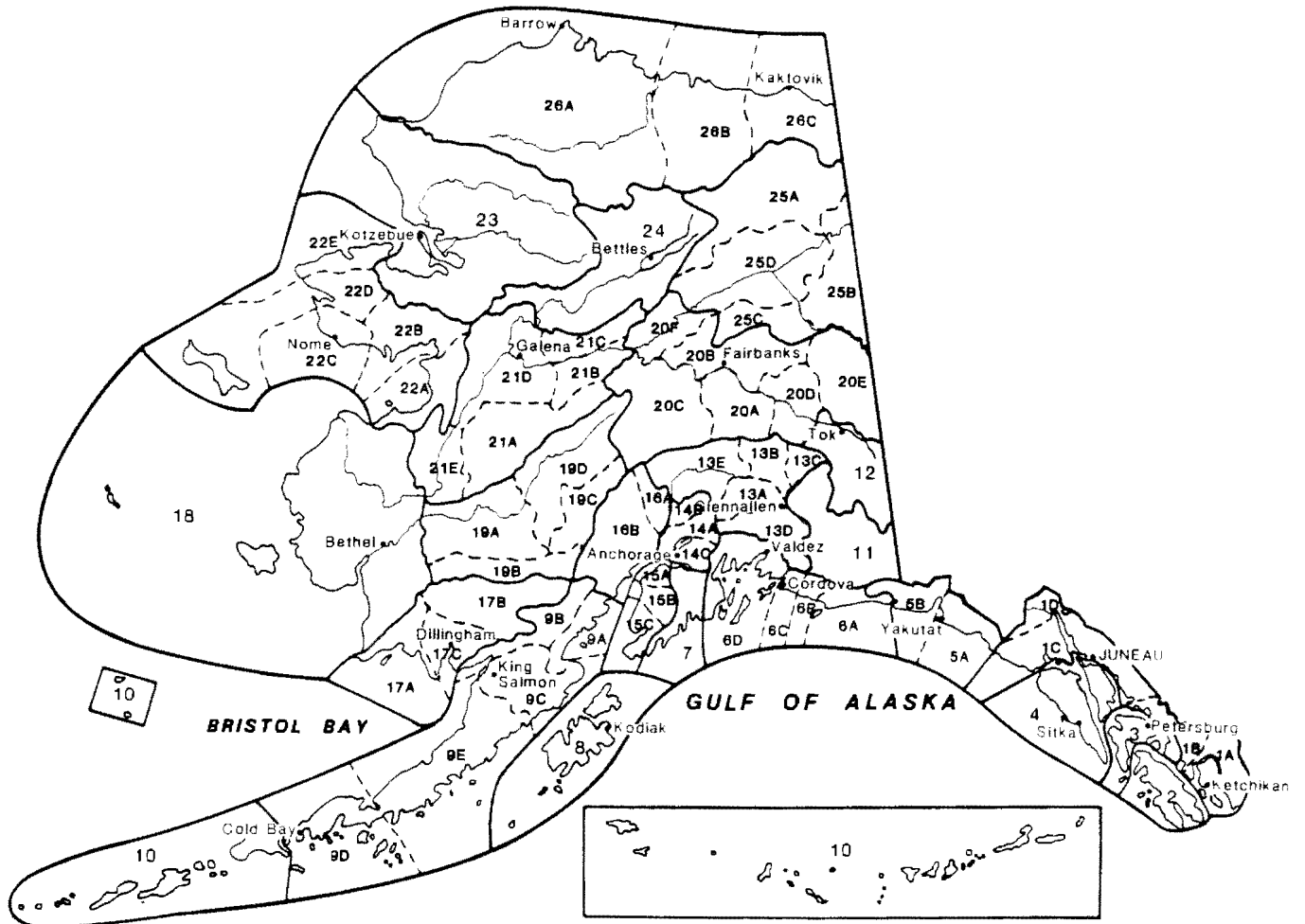
**Segment Period Project Costs**

	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Operating</u>	<u>Total</u>
Planned	17.4	5.0	22.4
Actual	17.4	5.0	22.4
Difference	0.0	0.0	0.0

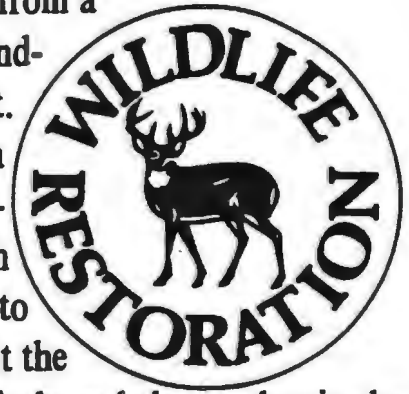
**Submitted by:**

Michael G. McDonald  
Assistant Management Coordinator

# Alaska's Game Management Units



The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program consists of funds from a 10% to 11% manufacturer's excise tax collected from the sales of handguns, sporting rifles, shotguns, ammunition, and archery equipment. The Federal Aid program allots funds back to states through a formula based on each state's geographic area and number of paid hunting license holders. Alaska receives a maximum 5% of revenues collected each year. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game uses federal aid funds to help restore, conserve, and manage wild birds and mammals to benefit the public. These funds are also used to educate hunters to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes for responsible hunting. Seventy-five percent of the funds for this report are from Federal Aid.



Len Rue Jr