

**FEDERAL AID  
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
PO Box 115526  
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**ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY**

**STATE:** Alaska

**GRANT AND SEGMENT NO.** W-33-10

**PROJECT NO.**

**PERIOD:** July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

**PROJECT LOCATION:** RI, RII, RIV

**PROJECT TITLE:** The Status of Alaska Mountain Goats and Factors Influencing Their Populations

**REPORT DESCRIPTION:** This performance report describes Mountain Goat survey and inventory activities. Activities are listed by game management unit.

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**Region I Activities**

**ACTIVITY 1:** Prepare biennial goat management reports. Management reports are in the process of being completed.

**ACTIVITY 2:** Conduct mountain goat surveys, including sex and age composition in key management areas within the region.

Unit 1A: The Ketchikan area staff were unable to conduct any mountain goat surveys

Unit 1B: The Petersburg staff conducted aerial surveys in 5 of 27 established trend-count areas during the report period. Fall aerial surveys were concentrated in those trend count areas that typically receive the highest levels of hunting pressure. A total of 98 goats were observed, including 77 adults and 21 kids.

Unit 1C: Staff conducted aerial surveys in several areas:  
North Tracy Arm (162 goats: 129 adults and 33 kids.),  
Between Tracy and Endicott Arms (302 goats: 256 adults and 46 kids),  
Mendenhall Glacier to Davies Creek (137 goats: 104 adults and 33 kids),  
Sweetheart Lake (9 goats: 8 adults and 1 kids).

Unit 1D: Staff conducted aerial surveys in seven count areas in this unit,  
Chilkoot River Valley to Ferebee Glacier: (206 goats: 172 adults and 34 kids),  
Halutu Ridge (55 goats: 52 adults and 3 kids),  
Nourse River (71 goats: 65 adults and 6 kids),  
Skagway Pie (31 goats: 27 adults and 4 kids),

Unit 4: The Sitka staff conducted aerial surveys in just a small portion of the goat range, near Green Lake. Forty seven goats were observed with 40 adults and 7 kids.

Unit 5: No surveys were conducted in this unit during this period.

ACTIVITY 3: Collect biological samples, horn measurements, and age data from harvested animals.

Unit 1A: 9 goats were harvested and most were sampled. .

Unit 1B: 15 goats were harvested and nine were sampled.

Unit 1C: 33goats were harvested, and approximately 50% were sampled.

Unit 1D: 27 goats were harvested and 95% were sampled.

Unit 4: 18 goats were harvested and all were sampled.

Unit 5: No goats were harvested.

ACTIVITY 4: Monitor results from registration permit hunts and analyze the data.

*Unit 1A*: The Ketchikan Area office collected hunter information through a mandatory registration permit report. Twenty three permittees participated in the hunt.

*Unit 1B*: Petersburg Area staff collected hunter information from goat hunters via a mandatory registration permit reporting requirement. The mandatory hunt reports include information on successful and/or unsuccessful hunt locations, method of transportation, days of effort and commercial services used. Thirty nine permittees participated in the hunt.

*Units 1C, 1D & 5*: The Douglas Area office collected hunter information through a mandatory registration permit report. Hunt report data included location of hunt, mode of access used, days hunted, and commercial services used. If the hunter was successful the report also queried the location of the kill. One hundred sixty three permittees participated in the hunts.

*Unit 4*: Hunt report data included location of hunt, mode of access used, days hunted, and commercial services used. If the hunter was successful the report also queried the location of the kill. Thirty four permittees participated in the hunt.

ACTIVITY 5: Update guideline harvest level objectives for selected goat herds based on a review of long-term harvest trends.

Efforts continue across the region to manage goats at finer scales dictated by hunter access. This has become necessary to prevent an overharvest at these access points.

ACTIVITY 6: Coordinate with the USFS permitting authorities to ensure the goat harvest associated with big game guiding activities remains within sustainable levels and maintains adequate harvest opportunity for local subsistence users.

Harvest guidelines were discussed among staff, with Forest Service personnel, and guides during the year. Units 1A, 1B, 1C, and 4 have all experienced a rising interest in goat hunting especially by commercial guides. This has intensified the department's efforts to minimize the harvest of females in order to avoid population level concerns due to loss in productivity.

Douglas Area Office staff worked with U.S. Forest Service commercial use permitting personnel to identify areas of high commercial use of mountain goats to prepare for a future prospectus regarding commercially guided mountain goat hunts; and to identify areas of interest to both ADFG and USFS, for aerial goat surveys in regulatory year 2012.

**Unit 1A:**

ACTIVITY: Monitor radio-collared goats on the Cleveland Peninsula to gather data on spatial and temporal habitat use, and to use collars to estimate sightability of goats during aerial surveys.

Several surveys were flown to monitor goats during this period.

**Unit 1B:**

ACTIVITY: Monitor the proposed Swan, Scenery and Ruth Lakes hydro project areas for mountain goat activity through site visits and aerial surveys. Use this data to recommend seasonal construction activities.

A single survey was flown in this area.

**Unit 1C:**

ACTIVITY: Monitor the Lake Dorothy hydro project area for mountain goat activity through site visits and aerial surveys.

This project is complete, and no further surveys related to this activity are anticipated.

**Unit 1D:**

ACTIVITY 1: Work with USFS, Haines City and Borough, BLM, and helicopter operators to address concerns about helicopter tourism on mountain goats.

Efforts continued in this arena with continued communication with these entities to assure goat populations were considered when making decisions on helicopter skiing activities.

ACTIVITY 2: Radio collar mountain goats on Takhin Ridge in Unit 1D to assess spatial and temporal habitat use, and to monitor the goat population dynamics on Takhin Ridge. Use this data to help address concerns with helicopter skiing activity in this area.

Seven goats are currently collared on Takhin Ridge to address these concerns.

**Unit 4:**

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor the Blue Lake and Takatz Lakes hydro project area mountain goat activity through site visits and aerial surveys. Use this data to help guide seasonal construction activity.

An aerial survey was conducted during this period, and radio collared goats were monitored.

**Submitted by:** Neil L. Barten, Region I Management Coordinator

**Region II Activities:**

Activity: Prepare a biennial regional mountain goat management report.

Area staff completed and submitted management reports for publication in 2012.

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

Surveys were completed in selected hunt areas within individual GMUs. See Area specific activities.

Activity: Monitor the goat harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

These are standard activities accomplished in each office. See Area specific activities.

### **Activities by Unit:**

#### **Unit 6**

ACTIVITY 1: Conducted surveys in 1 survey unit only because of poor late-summer weather conditions.

ACTIVITY 2: We issued 280 goat hunt permits. Harvest was 62 males, 13 females, and 1 unknown goat for a total of 76 goats.

ACTIVITY 3: Prepared a mountain goat management report.

#### **Units 7&15**

ACTIVITY 1: Conduct summer aerial sex and age population composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality.

Thirteen areas were surveyed with 600 goats counted (492 adults and 108 kids). Kid to adult ratio was 22 per 100 adults.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor the goat harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

The preliminary harvest was 53 goats during the reporting period including 40 males, and 13 females.

ACTIVITY 3: Prepared a mountain goat management report.

#### **Unit 8**

ACTIVITY 1: During July and August 2011, we surveyed about 85% of the goat habitat on Kodiak Island. We counted 2,364 goats, all of which were classified (1,963 adults, 401 kids). The kid: adult ratio (20:100) decreased from the average ratio noted during the previous 5 years (22:100). These data suggest the islandwide goat population was stable during this reporting period at 2,426 up slightly from the 2010 estimate of 2,320 goats.

ACTIVITY 2: Expansion of goat populations into virtually all available habitats around Kodiak Island allowed us to increase hunter opportunity. The number of drawing permits remained stable at 240. Three registration hunts occurred after the drawing hunt season. We issued 4 Emergency Orders to close hunt areas RG472, RG473, RG476 and RG479 prior to the hunts opening on November 1, 2011. Registration hunt RG480 occurred during the drawing and registration hunting season. Preliminary data indicate that in 2011/12 hunters harvested 160 goats (113 males, 47 females). We issued 240 drawing permits, 144 hunters went into the field, and hunter success was 55%. During the registration hunt, we issued 504 permits and 232 hunters went into the field, and hunter success was 35%. The harvest ranged from 3-77 goats for each of the 8 permit hunt areas.

ACTIVITY 3: Prepared a mountain goat management report.

**Unit 14C**

ACTIVITY 1: Summer aerial sex and age population composition surveys were conducted with the following goats numbers reported: 637 adults and 137 kids with a kid to adult ratio of 21.5 per 100 adults.

ACTIVITY 2: Goat harvest was monitored through harvest reports and contacts with hunters. Goats Harvested: 29 billies, 6 nannies.

ACTIVITY 3: Prepared a mountain goat management report.

**Submitted by:** Gino Del Frate

**Date:** 1 September 2012

**Region IV Activities:**

**Project Location:** Game Management Units 11, 13, and 14A

ACTIVITY 1: Prepare biennial regional mountain goat management report.

Biennial goat reports were written and submitted to the region for editing.

ACTIVITY 2: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity, and mortality.

*Unit 11:* Count area 22: 48 adults, 13 kids (in combination with sheep survey)

*Unit 13D:* Count area 16: 16 adults, 3 kids (in combination with sheep survey)

*Unit 13D:* Count area 17: 8 adults, 0 kids (in combination with sheep survey)

*Unit 13D:* Count area 18: 61 adults, 14 kids (in combination with sheep survey)

*Unit 14A:* Chugach Mountains: 147 adults, 51 kids

ACTIVITY 3: Monitor the goat harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports, and contact with hunters.

<i>Unit</i>	Male	Female	Unknown	Total Harvest
<i>11:</i>	8	3	1	12
<i>13D:</i>	6	0	0	6
<i>14A:</i>	11	5	0	16

**Submitted by:** Lem Butler, Region IV Management Coordinator

**Date:** 15 August, 2012