

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

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

ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NO. W-33-10

PROJECT NO. 6.0

PERIOD: July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

PROJECT LOCATION: RII, RIII, RIV, RV

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

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This performance report describes Dall sheep survey and inventory activities. Activities are listed by game management unit.

Region II Activities:

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

Information was collected during interviews with hunters and from information provided on harvest tickets. See area specific activities for additional information.

ACTIVITY: Collect data from sheep presented for sealing by hunters.

All full curl and some ewe sheep taken in Region II were presented to staff for measuring and sealing. See area specific activities for additional information.

ACTIVITY: Survey selected sheep areas to determine distribution, sex and age.

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

ACTIVITY: A new full time position will work with area biologists to determine research needs in the region.

In addition to research commitments the Sheep biologist works with and advises Area staff with sheep related management decisions. Research biologist prepared and presented information to Board of Game relative to regional sheep management.

ACTIVITY : Draft a triennial Dall sheep management report.

Dall sheep management report was not due during this period. Staff continued to collect information in preparation for drafting next report.

Activities by Unit:

Units 7&15

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

Eleven rams were taken during the general season with 44 people reported hunting. Two additional rams were taken during drawing permit hunts.

ACTIVITY: Collect data from sheep presented for sealing by hunters.

All sheep taken were presented for measuring and sealing. For general season hunts the average horn length was 35.8 inches (range 34.25-38.25) and the average age was 8.6 years (range 7-10). Two sheep only measured 7/8 curl, but they were both 9 years old.

ACTIVITY 2: Survey selected sheep areas to determine distribution, sex and age.

Eight count areas were surveyed resulting in the classification of 205 sheep. The composition was 56 rams, 111 ewes and small rams, and 38 lambs.

Unit 14C

ACTIVITY 1: Sheep harvest was monitored through hunter harvest reports and sealing records.

Harvest for GMU 14C was: 16 full curl rams. Sheep horn size, sheep age and location of kill was collected from sheep horns and interviews with hunters at the time of sealing.

ACTIVITY 2: Sheep surveys were conducted throughout most sheep habitat in GMU 14C. We counted 1,050 sheep including 42 full curl rams, 289 < full curl rams, 4 unclassified rams, 599 ewes, and 116 lambs.

ACTIVITY 3: Research was initiated in GMU 14C to determine productivity and mortality. Results will be reported under a separate project.

Submitted by: Gino Del Frate

Date: 2 September 2012

Region III Activities

ACTIVITY 1: Conduct aerial composition surveys to monitor population trends.

Conducted aerial composition surveys in the White Mountains, Tanana Hills, Delta Controlled Use Area, Central Alaska Range, Tok Management Area and observed approximately 4,500 sheep.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyze harvest data.

Monitored preliminary harvest of 598 sheep through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports and analyzed harvest data.

ACTIVITY 3: Provide Dall sheep management information to State and Federal regulatory processes.

Provided information to 15 State fish and game advisory committees and 2 Federal regional advisory councils.

ACTIVITY 3: Prepare Dall sheep management reports.

Prepared Dall sheep management reports.

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

Region IV Activities:

Project Location: Game Management Units 11, 13, 14, and 16B

ACTIVITY: Prepare triennial sheep management reports.

The next triennial sheep management report is due to DWC – HQ in the spring of 2014.

ACTIVITY 1 & 2: Monitor sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters. Collect data from sheep presented for sealing by hunters.

	Rams Harvested	Ewes Harvested	Unknown Sex Harvested
<i>Unit 11</i>	48	0	1
<i>Unit 13A</i>	17	0	0
<i>Unit 13B</i>	3	0	0
<i>Unit 13C</i>	3	0	0
<i>Unit 13D</i>	27	0	0
<i>Unit 13E</i>	15	0	0
<i>Unit 14A</i>	9	0	2
<i>Unit 14B</i>	9	0	0
<i>Unit 16B</i>	6	0	0

ACTIVITY 3: Survey selected sheep areas to determine distribution, sex and age.

	< Full Curl	Full Curl	Ewe- like	Lambs	Total
2011 Summer Surveys					
<i>Unit 11 CA 11</i>	7	34	131	35	207
<i>Unit 11 CA 12</i>	13	55	152	47	267
<i>Unit 11 CA 22</i>	20	51	124	51	246
<i>Unit 13A Boulder Cr.</i>	9	78	198	85	370
<i>Unit 13A Chickaloon-East</i>	4	46	46	28	124
<i>Unit 13A Hicks Cr.</i>	0	17	130	51	198
<i>Unit 13A Caribou Cr.</i>	3	58	230	76	367
<i>Unit 13A Sheep Mtn.</i>	0	8	62	16	86
<i>Unit 13A Watana Hills</i>	0	15	35	12	62
<i>Unit 13D CA 16</i>	1	12	49	13	75
<i>Unit 13D CA 17</i>	3	28	46	9	86
<i>Unit 13D CA 18</i>	11	45	166	48	270
<i>Unit 14A Chugach Mtns.</i>	157	16	329	59	561
<i>Unit 14A&B Talkteetna Mtns.</i>	112	2	218	59	391

ACTIVITY 4: A new full time position will work with area biologists to determine research needs.

Region II hired a new sheep research biologist in 2009 to work with area biologists in Region II and Region IV.

Submitted by: Lem Butler, Region IV Management Coordinator

Date: 15 August, 2012

Region V Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Provide information to State and Federal regulatory processes on Dall sheep management.

Area management staff reviewed State and Federal regulatory proposals, attended regulatory process meetings, and presented Dall sheep information to the State Board of Game, State Fish and Game Advisory Committees, Federal Subsistence Board, and Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils.

Mountain Range or Use Area Activities:

Baird Mountains:

ACTIVITY 1: Assist NPS with aerial surveys in established count areas as needed.

No surveys were scheduled during the reporting period. Surveys were conducted by NPS in July 2011 using a distance sampling technique but conflicting fieldwork prevented ADF&G involvement.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor the population by conducting minimum counts or generating population estimates with survey data.

No surveys were conducted this year due to conflicts with the schedule established by NPS.

DeLong Mountains:

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor harvests through the harvest ticket system, permit hunts, Community-based Harvest Assessments, public contacts and field observations.

Eleven drawing permits were issued to hunters for the fall 2011 hunting season; eventually all reported their activity; 3 rams were taken in the drawing hunt. Fifteen hunters registered to hunt in Hunt RS388 and 1 sheep was taken (1 ewe). No harvest information was available from federal sheep hunts.

ACTIVITY 2: Assist NPS with aerial surveys as needed.

Surveys were conducted by NPS in July 2011 (after the reporting period) using a distance sampling technique but conflicting fieldwork prevented ADF&G involvement. No surveys were conducted in 2012.

ACTIVITY 3: Monitor the population by conducting minimum counts or generating population estimates with survey data.

The data collected in 2011 by the NPS generated an estimate of 592 sheep \pm about 200 sheep. Using that point estimate, the sheep population is down 35% from the minimum count in 2009. However, it's important to note that the two survey techniques are not comparable.

ACTIVITY 4: Assess population and composition in years when NPS is not surveying the area.

No additional surveys were conducted this year.

Schwatka Mountains:

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ACTIVITY 1: Monitor harvests through the harvest ticket system, permit hunts, community-based harvest assessments, public contacts and field observations.

No sheep were taken by registration permit hunt RS389 or in the general season hunt. No harvest information was available from federal sheep hunts.

Submitted by: Peter Bente, Survey and Inventory Coordinator, Region V

Date: 1 September 2012