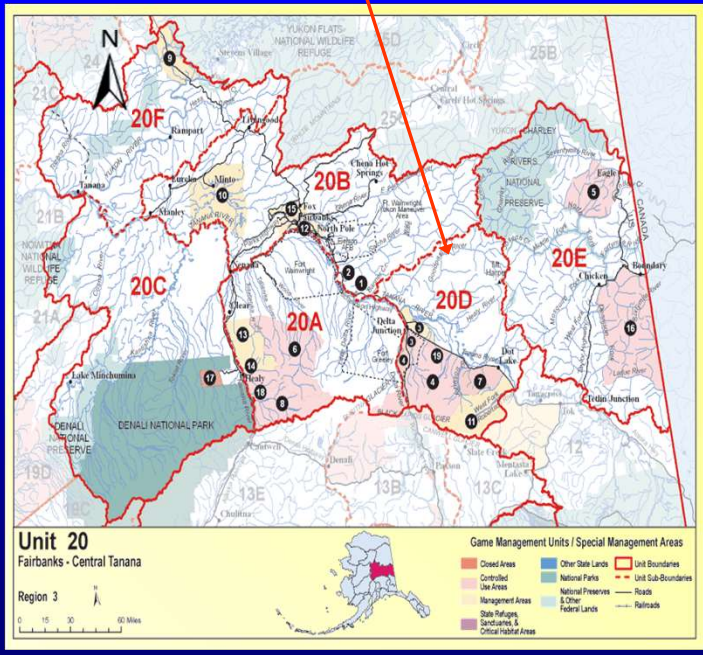


# 2024 Unit 20D Delta Area Overview



1

## Unit 20D



2

## Delta Area Office



3

## Delta Area ADF&G Staff



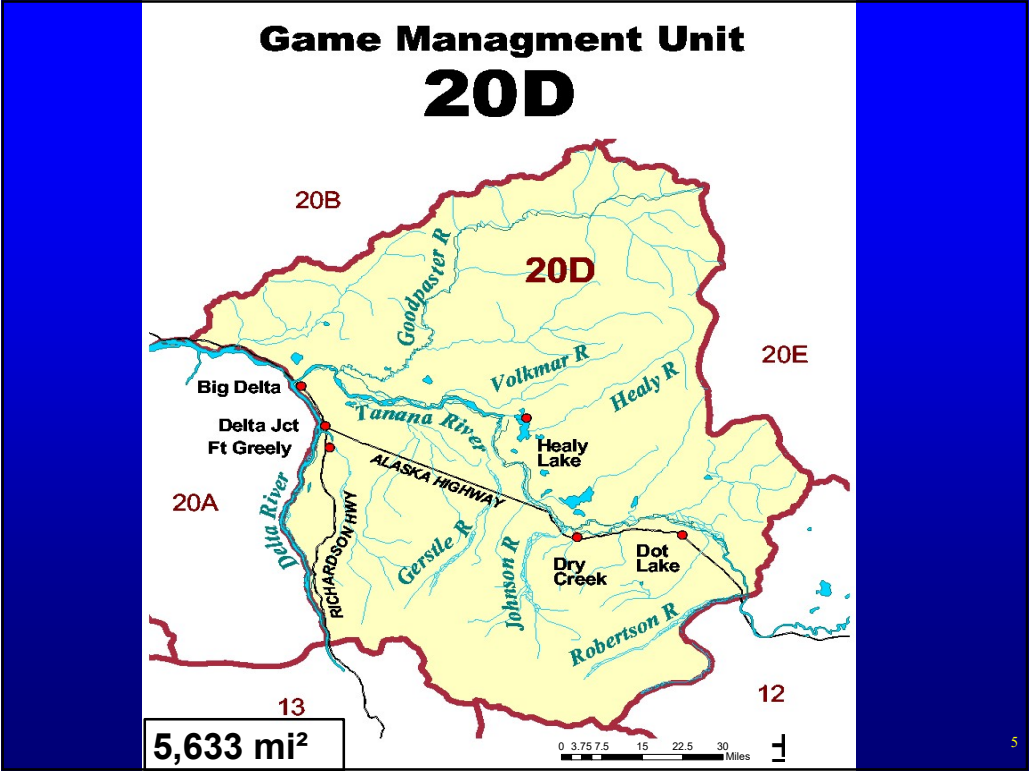
**Robert W. Schmidt**  
Area Biologist



**Ellie Mason**  
FWT III

**Vacant**  
Bison Range  
Manager

4



5

### Unit 20D Communities

*Ft. Greely, Pop. ~500*

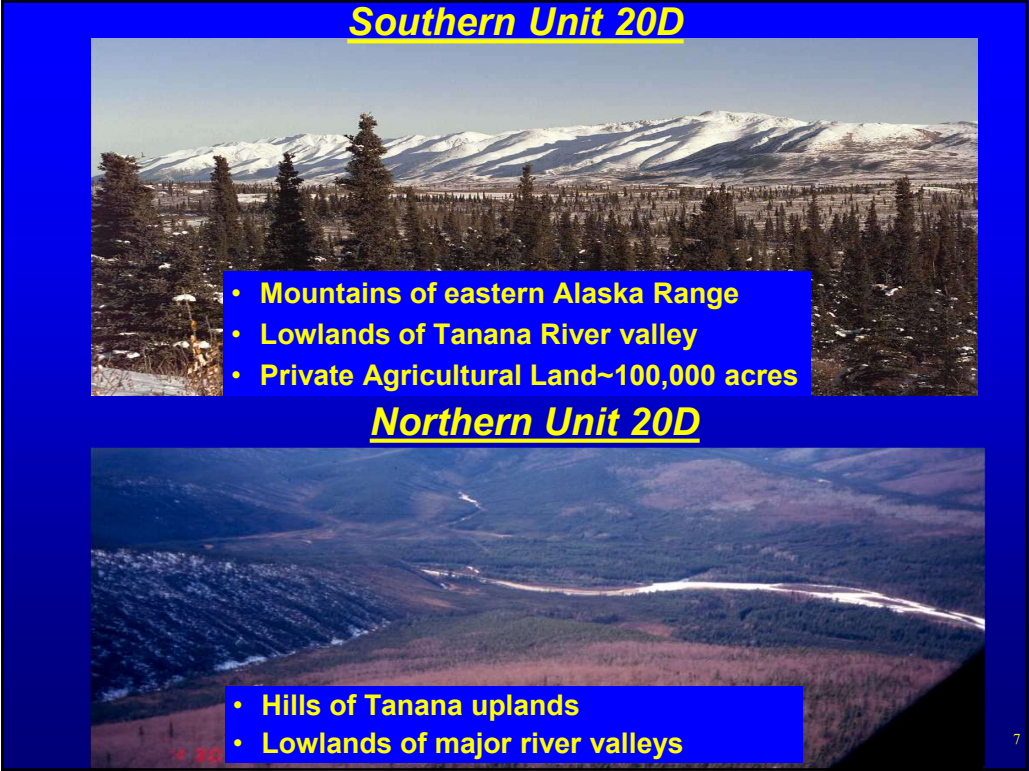
*Delta Jct., Big Delta, Deltana, pop. ~3,200*

*Healy Lake, pop. ~20*

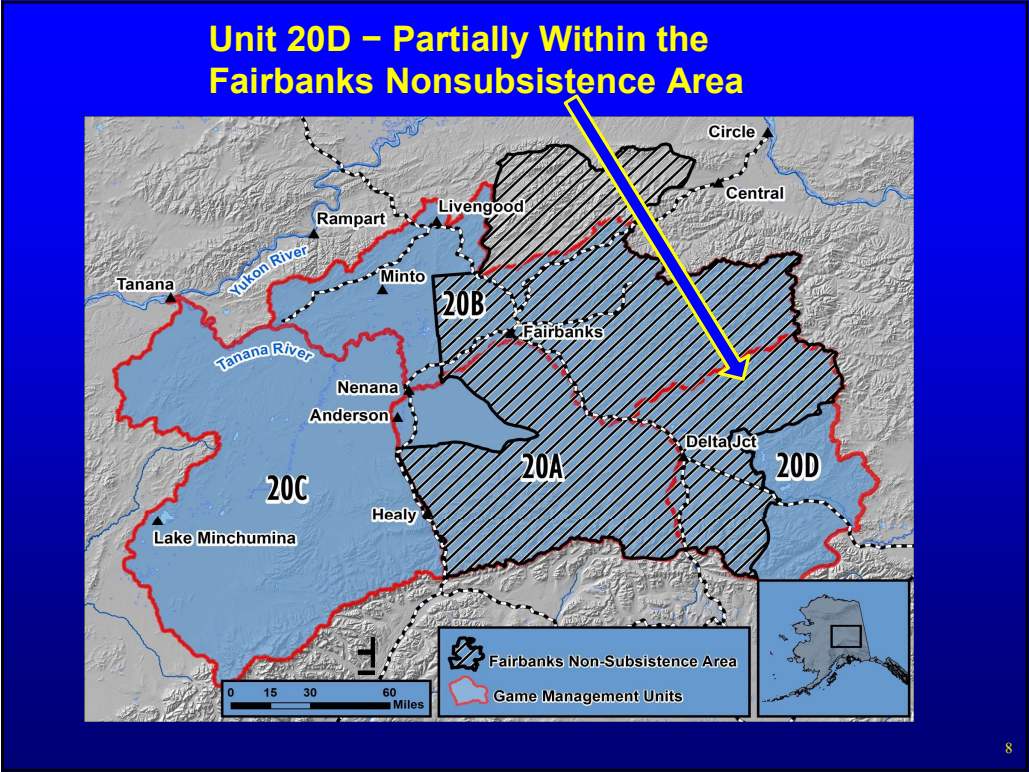
*Dry Creek, pop. ~100*

*Dot Lake, pop. ~80*

6



7



8

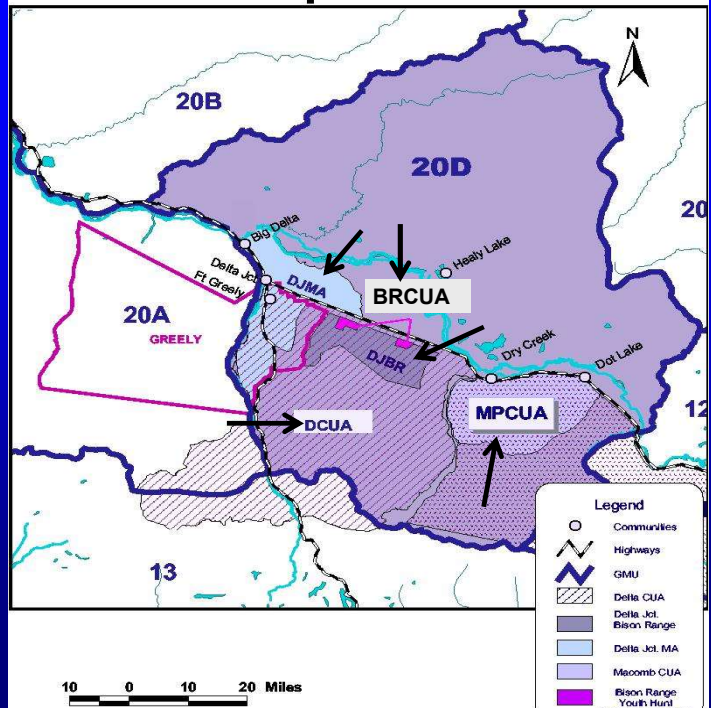
### Delta Fish and Game Advisory Committee



Delta AC serves Delta Jct., Ft. Greely, & Dry Creek

Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC serves Dot Lake & Healy Lake

### GMU 20D Special Use Areas





11

**Delta Bison**

- Herd size managed by drawing hunt
- Population objective of 360 animals (pre-calving)
  - Based on the most recent recommendations from the now inactive Delta Bison Working Group (2012 Interim management plan)
- 40,000+ applications per year
- 80–140 permits per year

12

12

### Delta Bison

- **Management Activities**
  - Aerial surveys
  - Sex-age composition counts
  - Radio collars
  - Disease surveillance
  - Manage bison forage on DJBR
  - Administer drawing permit hunt
  - Genetics investigations
  - Working with Delta Ag community

13

13

### Delta Bison

- Avg. hunter success for past 10 years = 80%
- 1 regional proposal regarding bison (proxy hunting)
- **Issues**
  - Conflict with private Ag. Lands on the Delta Ag. Project
    - High tensile fencing
  - Exposure to domestic bison & other livestock
  - Military training on bison calving range

14

14

### Black Bear

- Extrapolated population estimate of 750
- Harvest objective; not to exceed 15 bears south of the Tanana & 35 bears north of the Tanana River
- Current Regulations:
  - ❖ HT required, sealing not required
  - ❖ 3 bear annual limit, no closed season
  - ❖ Baiting season April 15 – June 30
- 2022 Harvest = 19 bears
- Management Activities
  - ❖ Registering bait stations
  - ❖ Issuing harvest tickets
  - ❖ Responding to nuisance bear complaints
- No proposals regarding black bears
- Issues
  - ❖ Lack of population estimates

15

15

### Brown Bear

- Extrapolated population estimate of 181 – 210 bears
- Harvest objective = 5–15 per year, with no more than 45% female harvest
  - ❖ Harvest objective is being met, current harvest rate of 6 – 8%
  - ❖ New research (Brockman et al. 2020) suggests brown bears can be harvested at a higher rate
- Current Regulations:
  - ❖ No resident tag fees
  - ❖ Season = Aug 10 – Jun 30
  - ❖ Baiting allowed in Unit 20D North since RY 2017
  - ❖ Bag limit = 1 per year
  - ❖ Sealing required

16

16



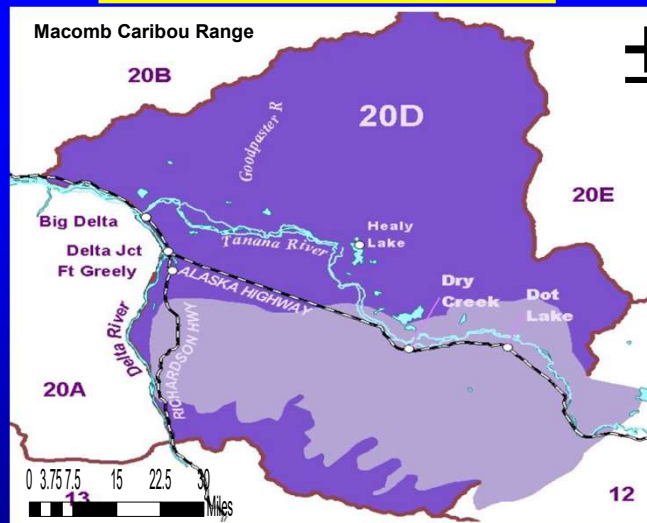
## Brown Bear

- **Management Activities**
  - ❖ Bear sealing
  - ❖ Responding to nuisance bear complaints
- **3 proposals regarding brown bear baiting & 2 regional brown bear proposals**
- **Issues**
  - ❖ Lack of population estimates
  - ❖ High hunting pressure coupled with ease of access in southern Unit 20D

17

17

## Macomb Caribou Herd



- **IM Pop. Obj. = 600 – 800 caribou**
  - 2019 = 802
  - 2021 = 604
  - 2023 = 555
- **ANS = 10 – 40**

18

18

### Macomb Caribou

The map displays the Macomb Caribou range in Alaska. It features two main Controlled Use Areas: the Delta Controlled Use Area (hatched red) and the Macomb Plateau Controlled Use Area (hatched green). The RC835 area is shown in solid green. Game Management Units are outlined in black. Key geographical features include the Delta Junction, Delta River, Yukon River, and the Alaska Highway. A legend in the top right corner defines the symbols for RC835, the two Controlled Use Areas, and Game Management Units. A scale bar indicates 0, 3, 6, and 12 miles.

- IM Harvest objective = 30 – 50 per year
- Hunt by registration permit (RC835); August 10 – 27
- Harvest quota has ranged from 30 – 70 over past 10 years; season closed early by EO in 2016, 2017, 2020, and 2023

### Macomb Caribou

- Management Activities
  - Aerial population & composition surveys
  - Hunting season distribution survey
  - Radio collars (1<sup>st</sup> ever GPS collars deployed in 2023)
  - Registration permits
- No proposal regarding Macomb Caribou
- Issues
  - Avoiding overharvest of a small, road accessible herd
  - Protecting habitat

### Moose

**Hunt structure:**

- **Harvest Ticket**
  - Any bull (north)
  - SF/50/4 brow tines (south)
- **DM790 - DJMA**
- **DM795 - Purple heart / disabled veterans**
- **YM792 - Bison Range Youth Hunt**
- **DM791 - Antlerless**

21

21

### Moose

- **Identified as important for human consumption (IM)**
- **Intensive management adopted 1995**
- **Population objective = 8,000 – 10,000**
  - 7,615 estimated moose in Unit 20D
- **Harvest objective = 500 – 700 moose**
  - 240 average harvest (25% success)

22

22

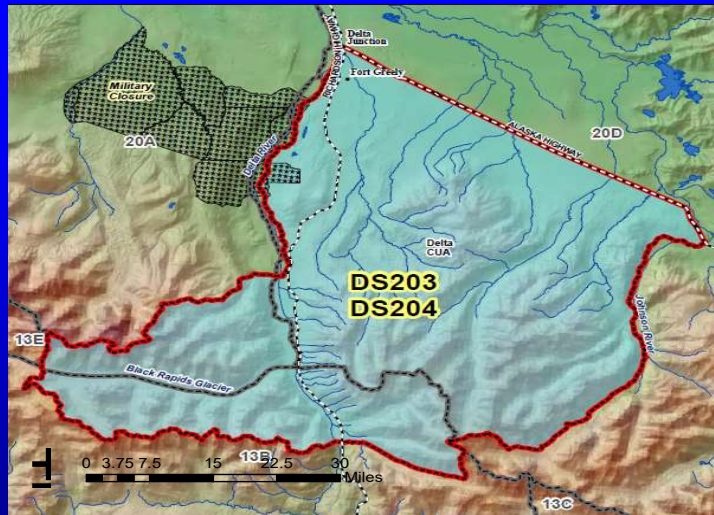
## Moose

- **Management Activities**
  - General hunting, drawing, & registration permit hunts
  - Annual GSPE population estimates
  - Annual aerial twinning surveys
  - Periodic browse surveys
  - Periodic short-yearling weights
  - Disease surveillance
  - Public meetings
- **4 proposal regarding moose**
- **Issues**
  - Balancing high moose populations with high hunting pressure, & controversial antler restrictions & antlerless hunting
  - Exposure to livestock diseases
  - Moose-human conflict

23

23

## Dall Sheep in DCUA



- Divided into 2 permit hunts, DS203 & DS204
- Average harvest = 39 per year (37% success)
- 2013 minimum count = 625 sheep
- 2020 minimum count = 951 sheep
- 2023 minimum count = 679 sheep

24

24

## Dall Sheep – Mt. Harper



- Portions of northern Unit 20D, 20B, & 20E
- ~240 mi<sup>2</sup> of sheep habitat
- 2005 min. count = 49 sheep, 2014 = 81 sheep, 2020 = 52 sheep, 2023 = 28 sheep
- 4 drawing permits for full-curl ram, 2 planned for 2024
- Last 5-yr average success = 25%

25

25

## Dall Sheep

- **Management Activities**
  - Seal horns
  - Conduct aerial surveys
  - Disease surveillance
- 6 proposals regarding sheep (4 for DCUA & 2 for Mt. Harper)
- Also 4 regional proposals that could affect sheep management and hunting in Unit 20D
- **Issues**
  - Protecting habitat
  - Severe winter weather impacting sheep populations
  - Disease concern between domestic sheep/goats and Dall Sheep

26

26

**Small Game**

- **Species:**
  - Ruffed grouse
  - Sharp-tailed grouse
  - Spruce grouse
  - Snowshoe hare
  - 3 species of ptarmigan
  - Waterfowl
- **Popular small game hunting area for hunters from across the state & nonresidents**



27

**Small Game**

- **Management Activities**
  - Sharp-tailed and ruffed grouse populations monitored annually
    - Ruffed grouse numbers are increasing within their 10-year cycle
  - Ruffed grouse habitat management in SW Unit 20D; mainly on DJBR
  - Small populations of willow and rock ptarmigan monitored annually
  - Hare numbers monitored annually
    - At lower end of cycle
  - Assist ADF&G waterfowl program with banding efforts and assist USDA with Avian Influenza sampling
- **No proposals regarding small game**
- **Issues**
  - High hunting pressure coupled with ease of access

28

28

## Wolf

- Unit 20D population objective = 15–125
- 2018 population est. ~ 105 in 30 packs, population likely increasing
- Portions of northern 20D in Upper Yukon –Tanana wolf control area



29

29

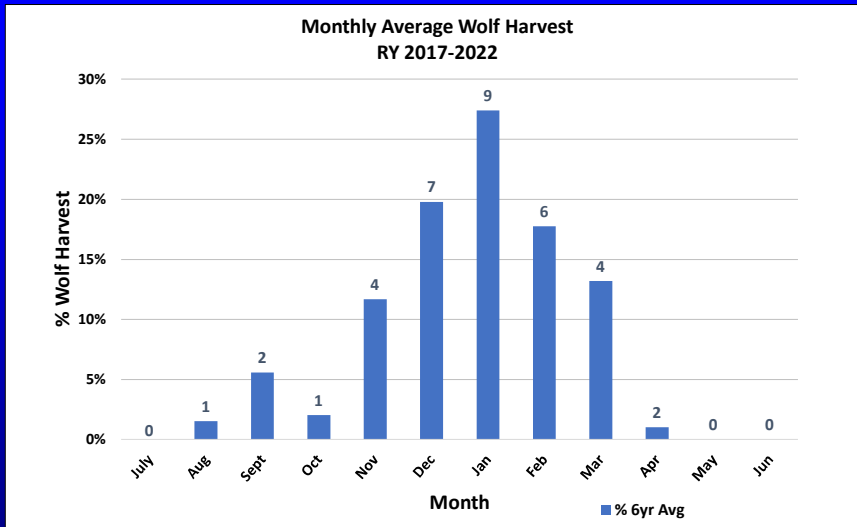
## Wolf

- **Management Activities**
  - Seal pelts
  - Aerial surveys
  - Trapper interviews to estimate population size & distribution
- **No proposals regarding wolves specifically**
- **Issues**
  - Role of wolves in Unit 20D intensive management

30

30

## Unit 20D Wolf Harvest



- Harvest average = 35 per year
  - Hunting season = Aug 10 – April 30; average of 7 wolves
  - Trapping season = Oct 15 – Apr 30; average of 28 wolves

31

31

## Furbearers

- Emphasized species in fur harvest: beaver, coyote, lynx, marten, red fox, & wolverine
- Management Activities
  - sealing furs
  - trapper questionnaire
  - Furbearer-human conflict (beaver)
- 3 proposal regarding furbearers (Regionwide)
- No issues regarding furbearers

32

32



The End



Questions?

33