

Wolf Management Report and Plan, Game Management Units 21B, 21C, and 21D:

Report Period 1 July 2010–30 June 2015, and
Plan Period 1 July 2015–30 June 2020

Nathan J. Pamperin



Wolf Management Report and Plan, Game Management Units 21B, 21C, and 21D:

Report Period 1 July 2010–30 June 2015, and

Plan Period 1 July 2015–30 June 2020

PREPARED BY:

Nathan J. Pamperin
Wildlife Biologist III

APPROVED BY:

Doreen I. Parker McNeill
Management Coordinator

REVIEWED BY:

Jackie J. Kephart
Assistant Management Coordinator

Laura A. McCarthy
Publications Specialist II

©2018 Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Wildlife Conservation
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526



Funding for survey and inventory project 14.0 was provided through the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration grant program. Hunters are important founders of the modern wildlife conservation movement. They, along with trappers and sport shooters, provided funding for this publication through payment of federal taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment, and through state hunting license and tag fees.

Species management reports and plans provide information about species that are hunted or trapped and management actions, goals, recommendations for those species, and plans for data collection. Detailed information is prepared for each species every 5 years by the area management biologist for game management units in their area, who also develops a plan for data collection and species management for the next 5 years. This type of report is not produced for species that are not managed for hunting or trapping or for areas where there is no current or anticipated activity. Unit reports are reviewed and approved for publication by regional management coordinators and are available to the public via the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's website.

This species management report and plan was reviewed and approved for publication by Doreen I. Parker McNeill, Region III Management Coordinator for the Division of Wildlife Conservation, Fairbanks.

Species management reports and plans are available via the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's website (www.adfg.alaska.gov) or by contacting Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation, PO Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526; phone: (907) 465-4190; email: dfg.dwc.publications@alaska.gov. The report may also be accessed through most libraries, via interlibrary loan from the Alaska State Library or the Alaska Resources Library and Information Services (www.arlis.org).

This document, published as a PDF only, should be cited as follows:

Pamperin, N. J. 2018. Wolf management report and plan, Game Management Units 21B, 21C, and 21D: Report period 1 July 2010–30 June 2015, and plan period 1 July 2015–30 June 2020. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Species Management Report and Plan ADF&G/DWC/SMR&P-2018-32, Juneau.

The State of Alaska is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Contact the Division of Wildlife Conservation at (907) 465-4190 for alternative formats of this publication.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not endorse or recommend any specific company or their products. Product names used in this publication are included for completeness but do not constitute product endorsement.

Contents

Purpose of this Report.....	1
I. RY10–RY14 Management Report	1
Management Area.....	1
Summary of Status, Trend, Management Activities, and History of Wolves in Units 21B, 21C, and 21D.....	1
Management Direction.....	2
Existing Wildlife Management Plans	2
Goal.....	2
Codified Objective.....	2
Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence Uses.....	2
Intensive Management	2
Management Objective	2
Management Activities	2
1. Population Status and Trend	2
2. Mortality–Harvest Monitoring and Regulations	3
3. Habitat Assessment–Enhancement	4
4. Public Participation and Outreach.....	4
Nonregulatory Management Problems or Needs.....	4
Data Recording and Archiving	4
Agreements	4
Permitting.....	4
Conclusions and Management Recommendations	4
II. Project Review and RY15–RY19 Plan	5
Review of Management Direction	5
Management Direction	5
Goal.....	5
Codified Objective.....	5
Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence Uses.....	5
Intensive Management	5
Management Objective	5
Review of Management Activities	5
1. Population Status and Trend	5
2. Mortality–Harvest Monitoring.....	6
3. Habitat Assessment–Enhancement	6
Nonregulatory Management Problems or Needs.....	6
Data Recording and Archiving	6
Agreements	6
Permitting.....	6
References Cited	6



Purpose of this Report

This report provides a record of survey and inventory management activities for wolves (*Canis lupus*) in Units 21B, 21C, and 21D for the previous 5 regulatory years (RY; RY10–RY14) and plans for survey and inventory management activities in the 5 years following the end of that period (RY15–RY19). A regulatory year begins 1 July and ends 30 June (e.g., RY10 = 1 July 2010–30 June 2011). This report is produced primarily to provide agency staff with data and analysis to help guide and record its own efforts but is also provided to the public to inform them of wildlife management activities. In 2016 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G) Division of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) launched this 5-year report to more efficiently report on trends and describe potential changes in data collection activities over the next 5 years. It replaces the wolf management reports of survey and inventory activities that were previously produced every 3 years and supersedes the 1976 draft Alaska wildlife management plans (ADF&G 1976).

I. RY10–RY14 Management Report

Management Area

Units 21B, 21C, and 21D (total area = 25,083 mi²) are located in western Interior Alaska and encompass the Yukon River drainage upstream from Paimiut to the Tozitna River, including Koyukuk River up to Dulbi Slough and the Nowitna River drainage. Portions of 4 ecoregions found in Units 21B, 21C, and 21D include the Kuskokwim Mountains, Nulato Hills, Ray Mountains, and Yukon River lowlands ecoregions (Nowacki et al. 2001). Maps for Unit 21B, 21C, and 21D boundaries and special management areas are found at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=maps.main>.

Summary of Status, Trend, Management Activities, and History of Wolves in Units 21B, 21C, and 21D

Wolves occur throughout Units 21B, 21C, and 21D in all habitat types. Primary prey species in this area are moose (*Alces alces*) and caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*). Wolves are an important furbearer and big game species in Unit 21. Not all harvest is accounted for each year as some wolves are taken for personal use and not sealed; therefore, actual harvest is likely higher than reported on sealing certificates. Personal use includes, among other things, making wolf parka ruffs that local families present to others as gifts at traditional potlatches. Population surveys for wolves are rarely done in these units and current population trends are unknown. Aerial surveys have not been conducted in Unit 21B since 2001 or in Unit 21D since 1999. Unit 21C has never been surveyed (Pamperin 2012).

Management Direction

Existing Wildlife Management Plans

None presently specific to wolves in Units 21B, 21C, or 21D. Direction in the *Alaska wildlife management plans: Interior Alaska* (ADF&G 1976) has been modified by Alaska Board of Game regulatory actions over the years.

Goal

- Provide a sustained opportunity to participate in hunting and trapping wolves.

Codified Objective

Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence Uses

C1. Units 21B, 21C, and 21D have a positive customary and traditional use finding for wolves, as determined the Alaska Board of Game, with an amount necessary for subsistence uses 90% of the harvestable portion.

Intensive Management

None.

Management Objective

M1. Maintain a combined average annual harvest of at least 40 wolves from Units 21B, 21C, and 21D.

Management Activities

1. Population Status and Trend

ACTIVITY 1.1. Conduct surveys to estimate population size and density.

Data Needs

None.

Methods

Not applicable.

Results and Discussion

No surveys were conducted.

Recommendations for Activity 1.1

Discontinue.

2. Mortality–Harvest Monitoring and Regulations

ACTIVITY 2.1. Monitor harvest through sealing records.

Data Needs

Harvest and sealing data are needed to assess whether harvest objectives are being met.

Methods

We used queries of the harvest database accessible through ADF&G's Wildlife Information Network (WinfoNet) server (<http://winfonet.alaska.gov/index.cfm>) to construct summaries of reported harvest from fur sealing records.

Results and Discussion

Total reported harvest for Units 21B, 21C, and 21D averaged 51 wolves/year during RY10–RY14 (range = 37–85). Estimated unreported harvest is 20 wolves/year total from Units 21B, 21C, and 21D (Pamperin 2012).

Recommendations for Activity 2.1

Continue.

ACTIVITY 2.2. Monitor wolf numbers and population characteristics through interviews with trappers, hunters, pilots, and by evaluation of sealing documents.

Data Needs

Because of other priorities within the Galena management area, field surveys are not done to monitor wolf abundance in these areas at this time. Instead we will rely on our contacts with users and harvest data to monitor significant changes in the population.

Methods

We maintained contact with users and interviewed them as needed to gather information about the wolf populations in these areas.

Results and Discussion

No significant issues were identified with the wolf population in these areas as a result of our contacts with users.

Alaska Board of Game Actions and Emergency Orders

In March 2012 the Alaska Board of Game extended the hunting season for wolves in Unit 21 from 10 August–30 April to 10 August–31 May.

Recommendations for Activity 2.2

Continue.

3. Habitat Assessment–Enhancement

None.

4. Public Participation and Outreach

ACTIVITY 4.1. Conduct trapper education clinics.

Data Needs

Protect or improve consumptive use benefits to the public derived from wolves.

Methods

Increase public awareness of wolf population trends, effects on moose and caribou populations, management directions, and effective wolf trapping methods through trapper education clinics.

Results and Discussion

No trapper education clinics were conducted.

Recommendations for Activity 4.1

Discontinue.

Nonregulatory Management Problems or Needs

Data Recording and Archiving

Harvest data will be stored on an internal database housed on a server (<https://winfonet.alaska.gov/index.cfm>). Electronic copies of reports will be stored in the WinfoNet – Data Archive. Project Title: Wolf Management Program Units 21B, 21C, and 21D. Project ID: GMU 21BCD Wolves. Primary Region: Region III.

Agreements

None.

Permitting

None.

Conclusions and Management Recommendations

We achieved our management goal to provide a sustained opportunity to participate in hunting and trapping wolves. We met the management objective of maintaining an average annual harvest of at least 40 wolves (reported harvest) from Units 21B, 21C, and 21D during 2012–2014 when this objective was active. Population surveys and trapper education clinics were not conducted due to allocation of resources to other area priorities and we recommend

discontinuing these activities. We recommend continuing with the approach of monitoring annual reported harvest through sealing records and being attentive to public concerns.

II. Project Review and RY15–RY19 Plan

Review of Management Direction

Management Direction

There are no major changes in management direction. We will no longer pursue the activities of population surveys (activity 1.1) or trapper education clinics (activity 4.1), but we will continue to monitor annual harvest and listen to public concerns should any arise. The goal, objectives and activities will be as follows:

Goal

G1. Provide a sustained opportunity to participate in hunting and trapping wolves.

Codified Objective

Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence Uses

C1. Units 21B, 21C, and 21D have a positive customary and traditional use finding for wolves, as determined by the Alaska Board of Game, with an amount necessary for subsistence uses of 90% of the harvestable portion.

Intensive Management

None.

Management Objective

M1. Maintain a combined average annual harvest of at least 40 wolves from Units 21B, 21C, and 21D.

Review of Management Activities

1. Population Status and Trend

ACTIVITY 1.1. Monitor harvest through sealing records. (M1)

ACTIVITY 1.2. Monitor wolf numbers and population characteristics through interviews with trappers, hunters, pilots, and by evaluation of sealing documents. (M1)

2. Mortality–Harvest Monitoring

ACTIVITY 2.1. Monitor harvest through sealing records. (M1)

3. Habitat Assessment–Enhancement

None.

Nonregulatory Management Problems or Needs

Data Recording and Archiving

No change from report section.

Agreements

None.

Permitting

None.

References Cited

- ADF&G (Alaska Department of Fish and Game). 1976. Alaska wildlife management plans: Interior Alaska (draft proposal; subsequently approved by the Alaska Board of Game). Division of Game, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project W-17-R, Juneau.
- Nowacki, G., P. Spencer, T. Brock, M. Fleming, and T. Jorgenson. 2001. Ecoregions of Alaska and neighboring territory. USGS, Reston, Virginia.
<https://agdc.usgs.gov/data/projects/fhm/> (Accessed 11 May 2018).
- Pamperin, N. J. 2012. Units 21B, 21C and 21D wolf. Pages 212–219 [In] P. Harper, editor. Wolf management report of survey–inventory activities 1 July 2008–30 June 2011. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Species Management Report ADF&G/DWC/SMR-2012-4, Juneau.



