

Unit 26A Overview

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ADF&G

Barrow, Alaska

Board of Game Meeting

November 11-14, 2011





0 10 20 40 Kilometers

0 5 10 20 Miles

N



Annual Survey Area

Umiat

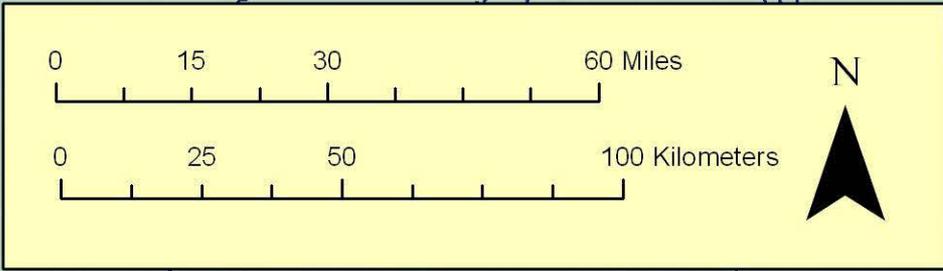


Colville River

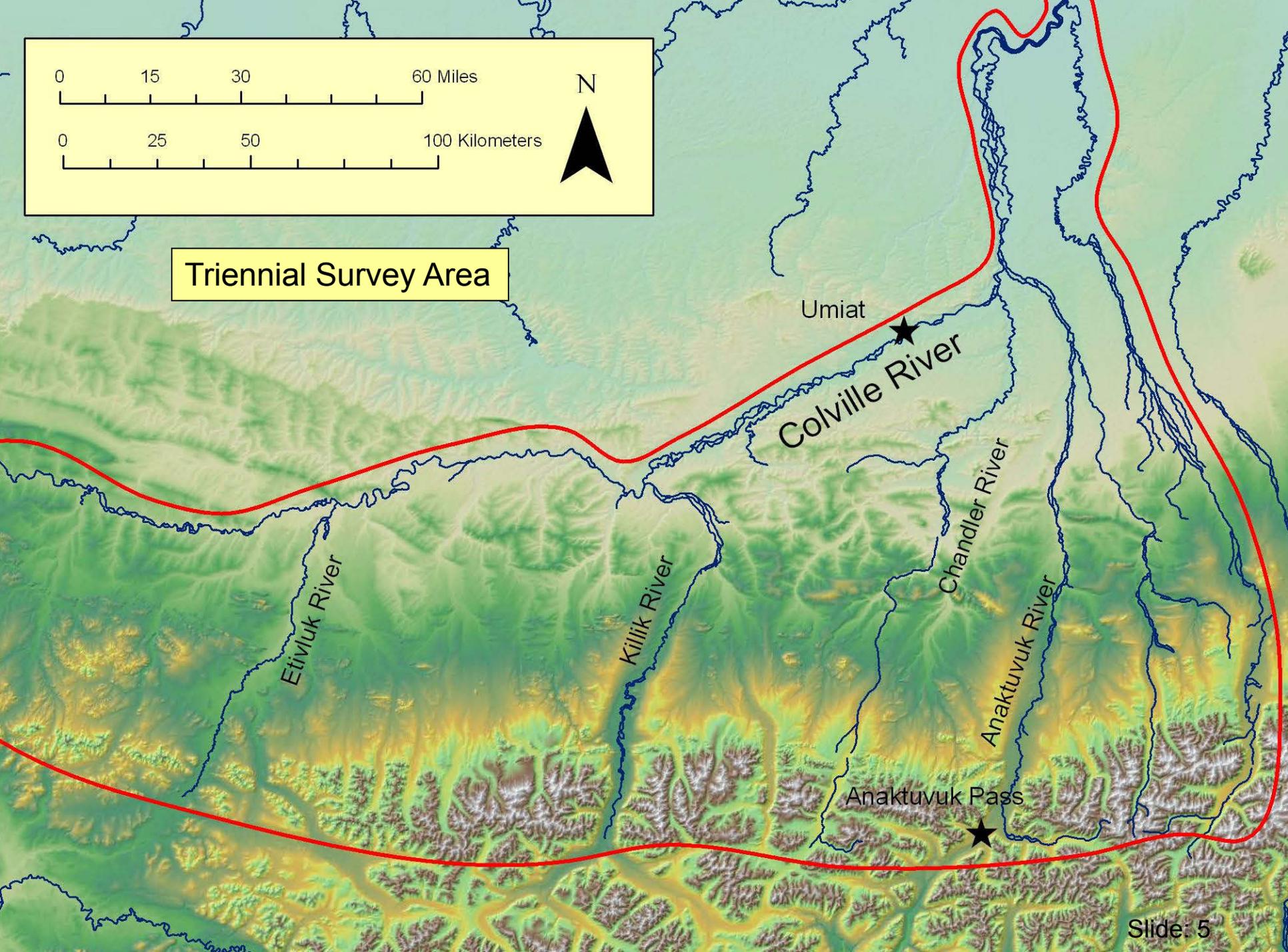
Chandler River

Anaktuvuk River

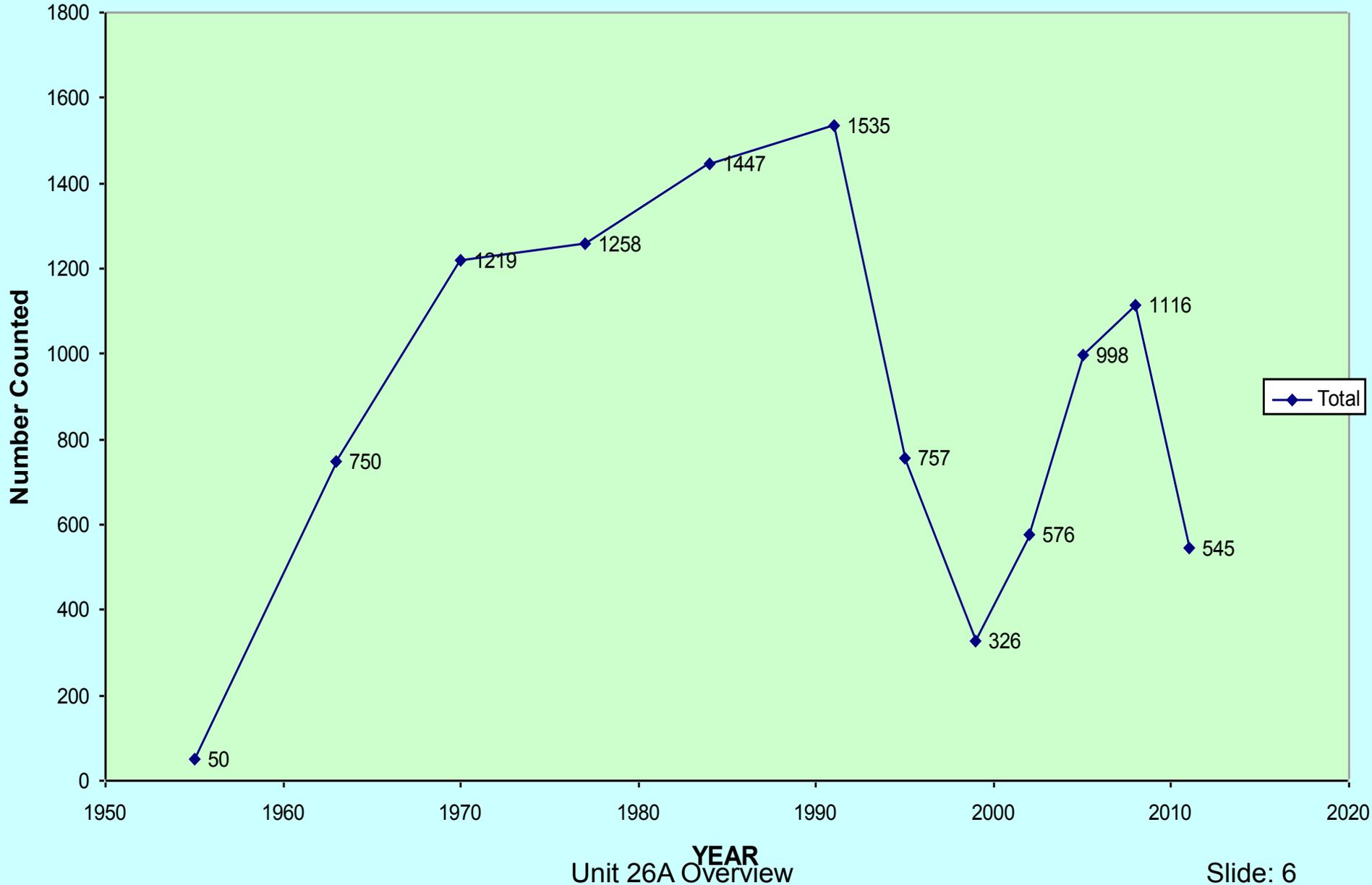
Kilik River



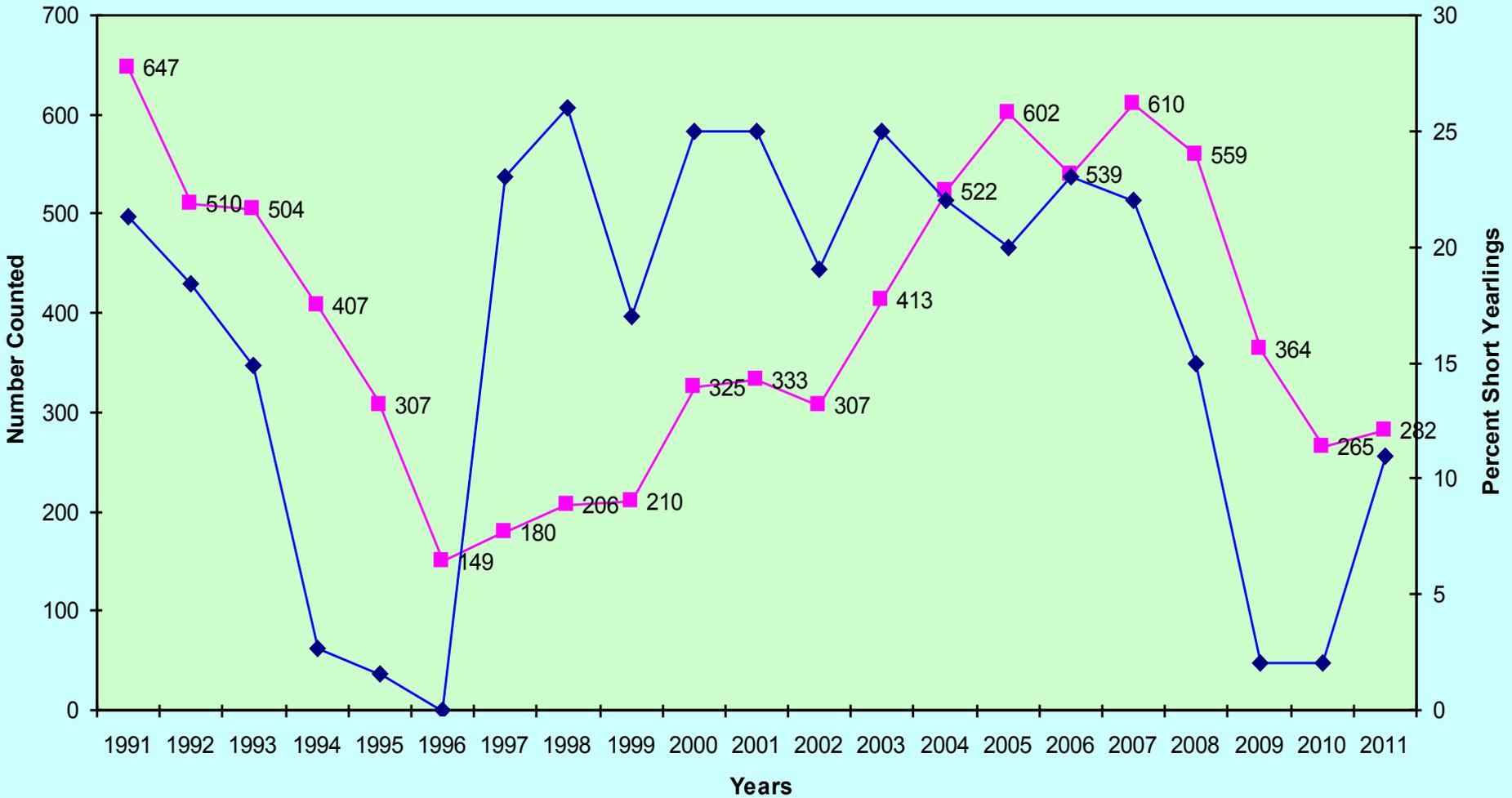
Triennial Survey Area



Unit 26A Moose Minimum Population Estimate 1955 - 2011



Colville River Moose Trend Area Counts 1991 - 2011

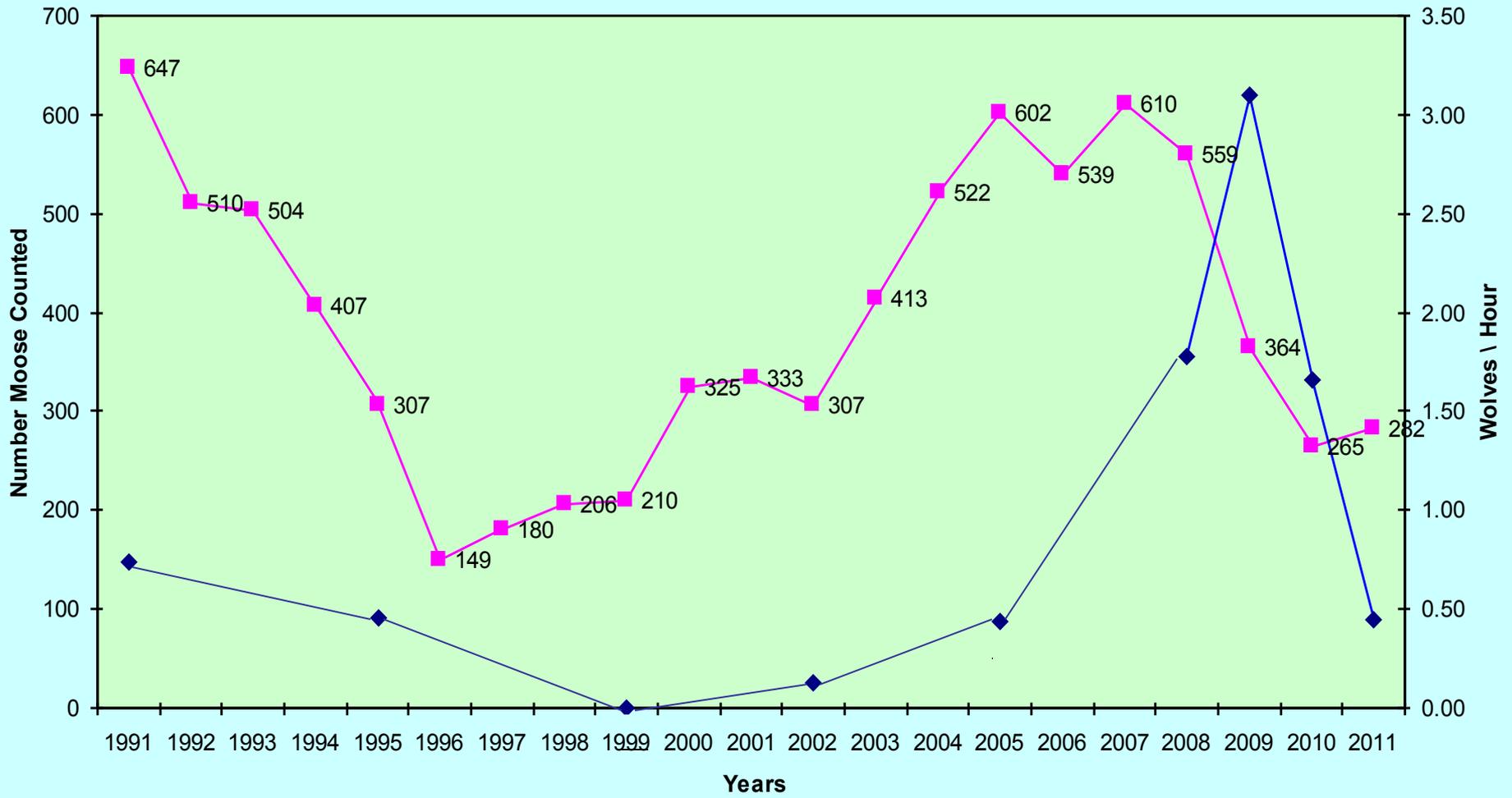


—■— TOTAL —◆— % SHORT YEARLING

Unit 26A – Moose / Results from Investigations

- **The population had nutritional problems. Spring weights of 10 month old calves were extremely low. Samples of bone marrow from several dead moose indicated starvation.**
- **Browsing surveys did not indicate over-browsing.**
- **Browse quality is being tested.**
- **None of the captured moose tested positive for brucellosis or other diseases that were present during the 1996 die-off.**
- **Weather didn't seem to be a large factor.**
- **The number of snowshoe hares is high and browsing by both species could be causing a reaction in plants**
- **Copper deficiency and moose living on the northern edge of possible moose habitat probably play a roll.**

Moose Trend Area Counts & Wolves Seen / Hour 1991 - 2011



■ TOTAL ◆ WOLVES/HOUR

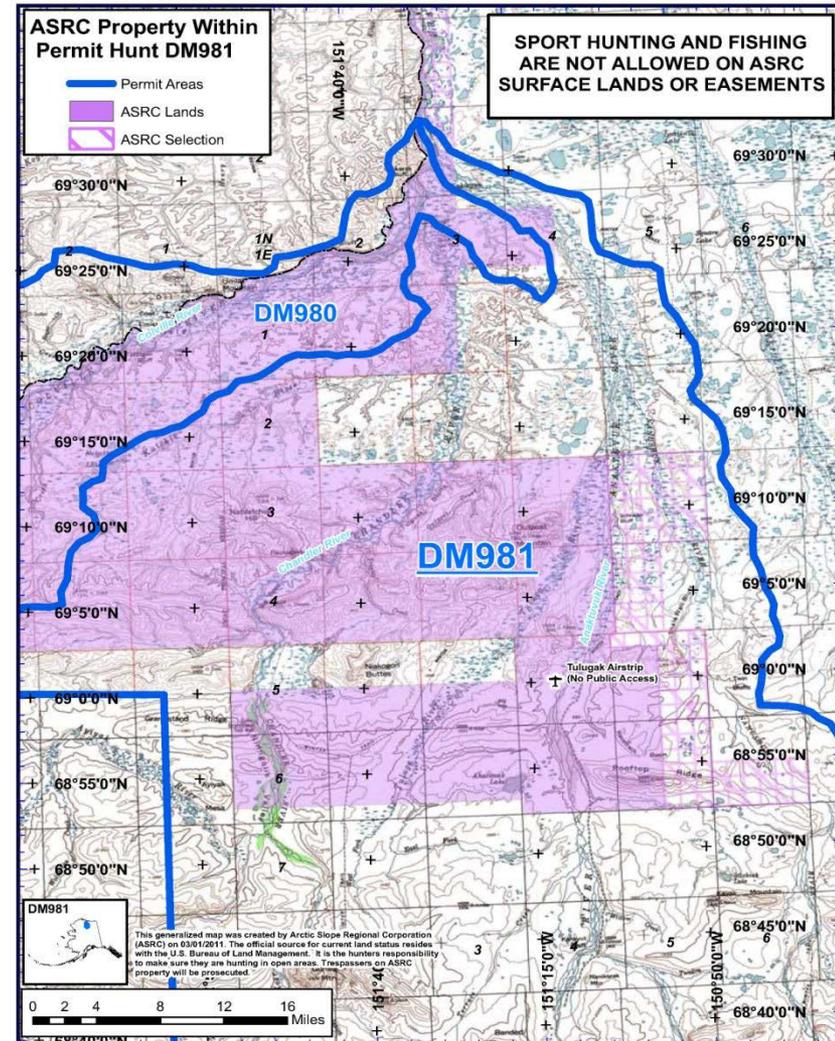
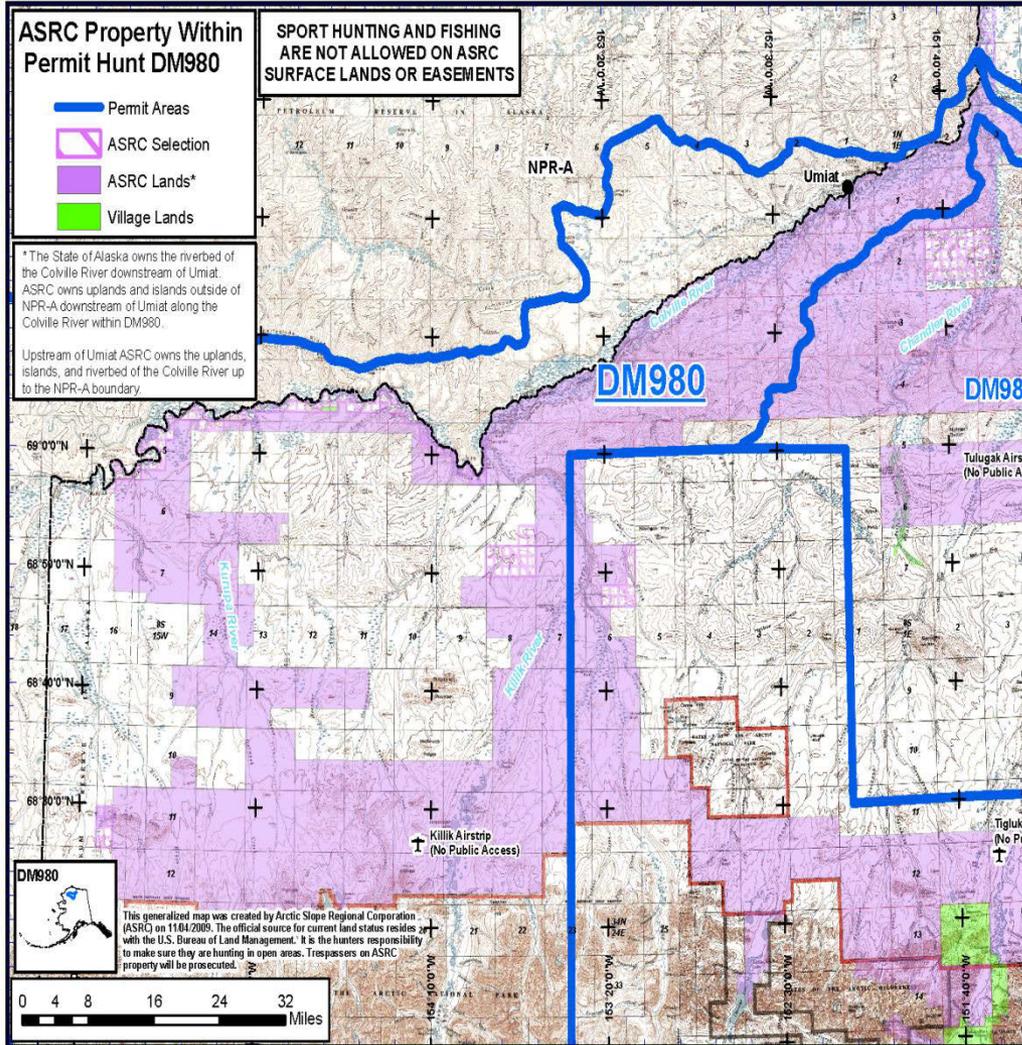


Unit 26A Moose Regulations

During the period of increasing population the Board passed proposals to increase hunting opportunity by:

- Extending the season and hunt area of the general hunt
- Opening a winter hunt
- Extending the summer hunt in the western part of unit 26A
- Creating a drawing permit hunt with up to 40 permits that allowed the use of aircraft with up to 20% of permits for nonresidents

Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Property Within Colville River Drainage (Moose hunt areas)



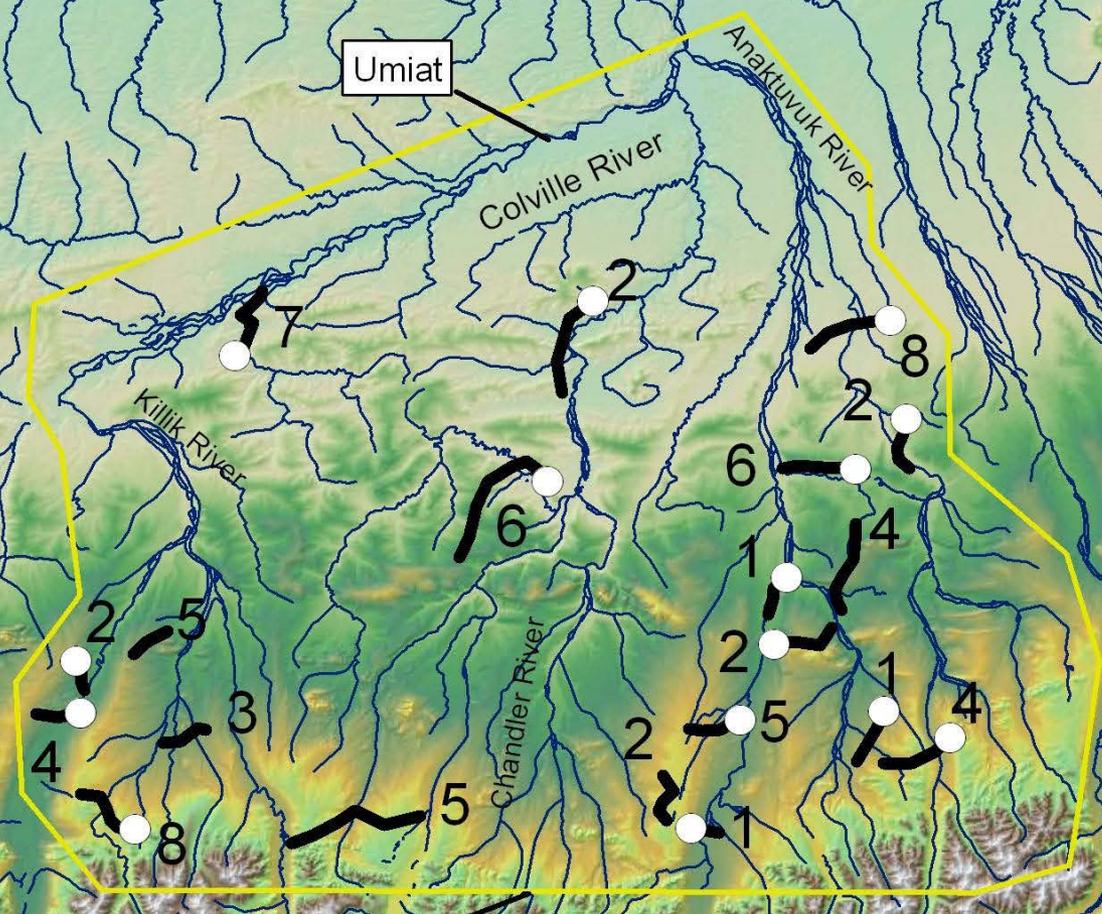
COLVILLE WOLF SURVEYS



2008 26A Wolf Survey (April 7-10)

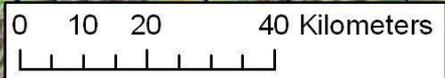
— TRACKS
○ VISUAL OBS.
— SURVEY AREA

Survey Area = 17,800 sq. km.
Density (visual only) = 3.3/1000 sq. km.
Density (visual + tracks) = 4.4/1000 sq. km.
The number of wolves observed or estimated through tracks is noted next to the dark line denoting the tracks

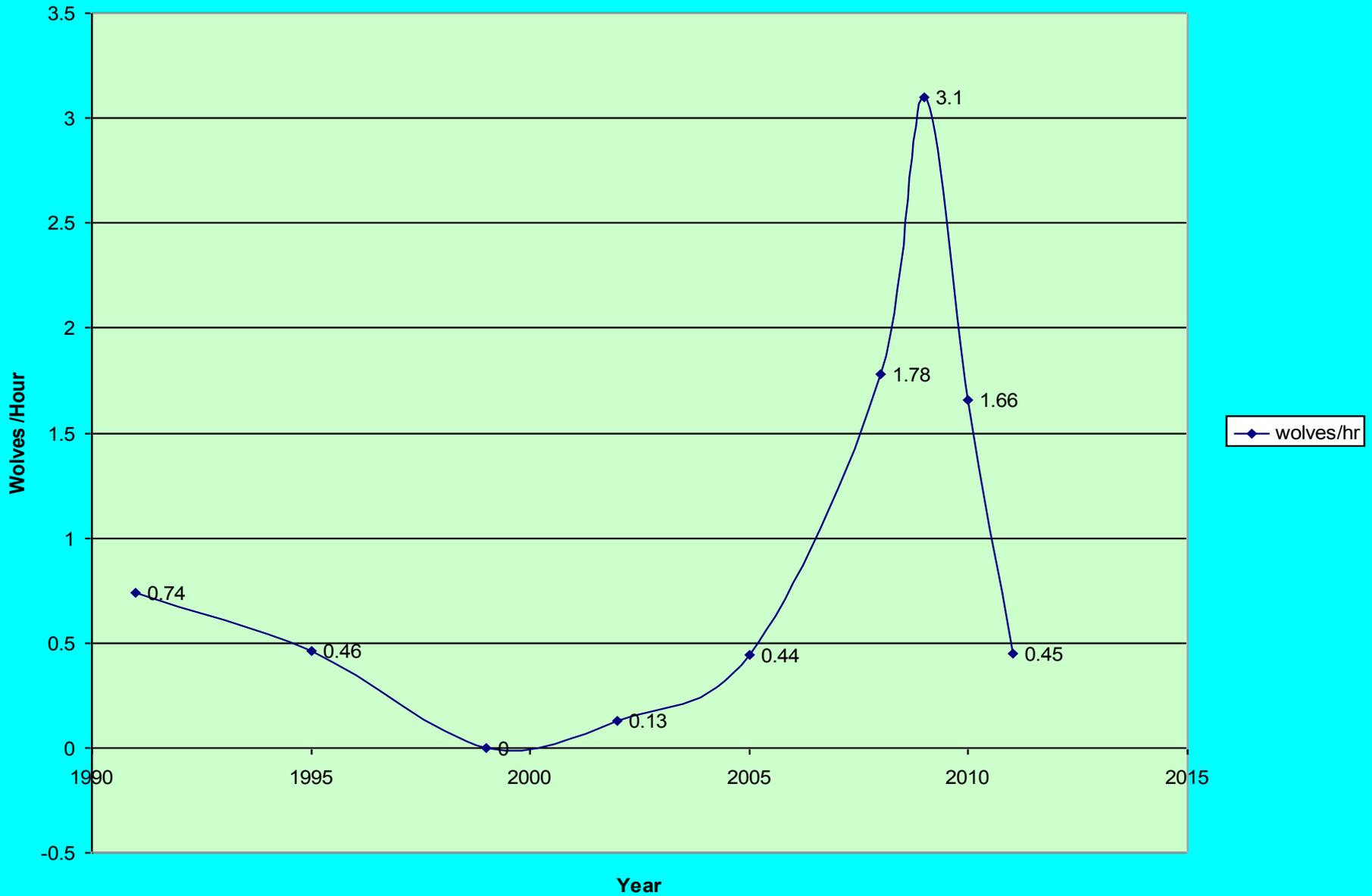


68 Degrees 17 Minutes

Anaktuvuk Pass



Wolves/hr Seen During Moose Surveys



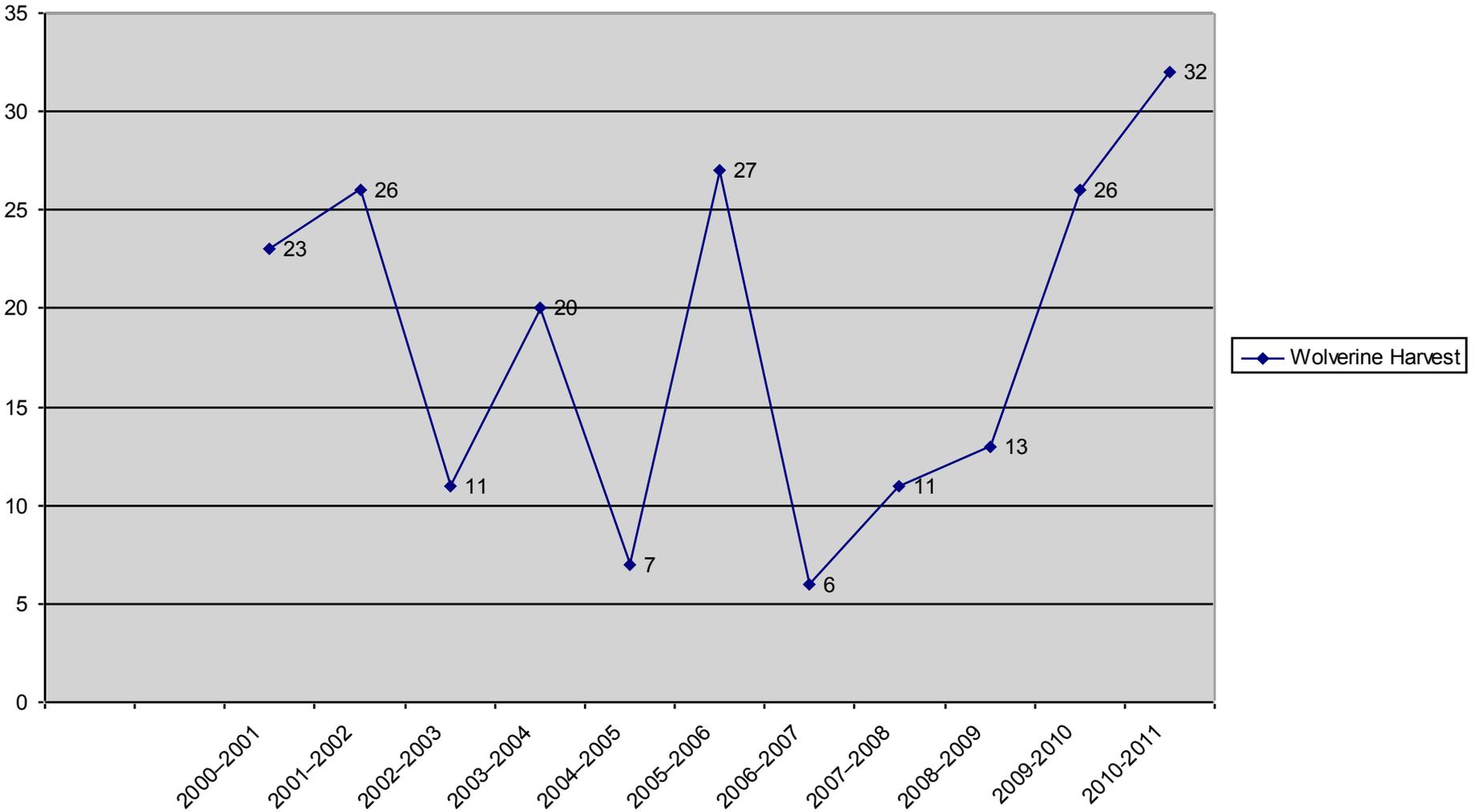


Reported Bear Harvest - Unit 26A

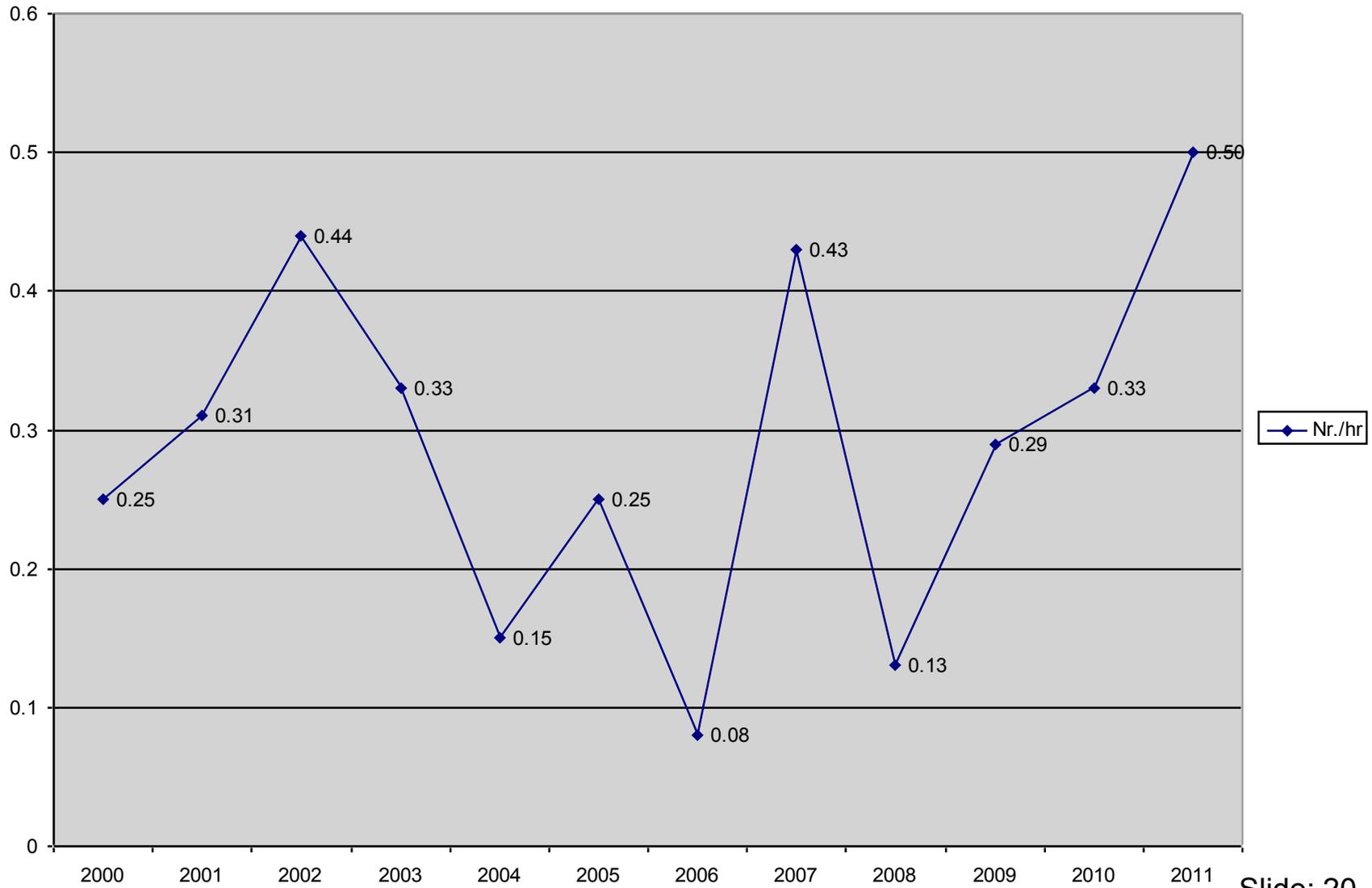
Unit	26A West	26A East	Total	Fall Harvest	Spring Harvest
Estimated Pop Size	400	500-720	900-1120		
5% Harvest Rate	20	25-36	45-56		
2000-2001	6	12	18	16	2
2001-2002	0	13	13	13	0
2002-2003	4	10	14	12	2
2003-2004	4	12	16	14	2
2004-2005	0	15	15	15	0
2005-2006	0	2	2	2	0
2006-2007	3	10	13	11	2
2007-2008	3	6	9	8	1
2008-2009	3	17	20	15	4
2009-2010	3	16	19	15	4
2010-2011	2	8	11	9	2



Wolverine Harvest



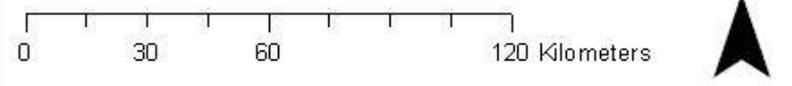
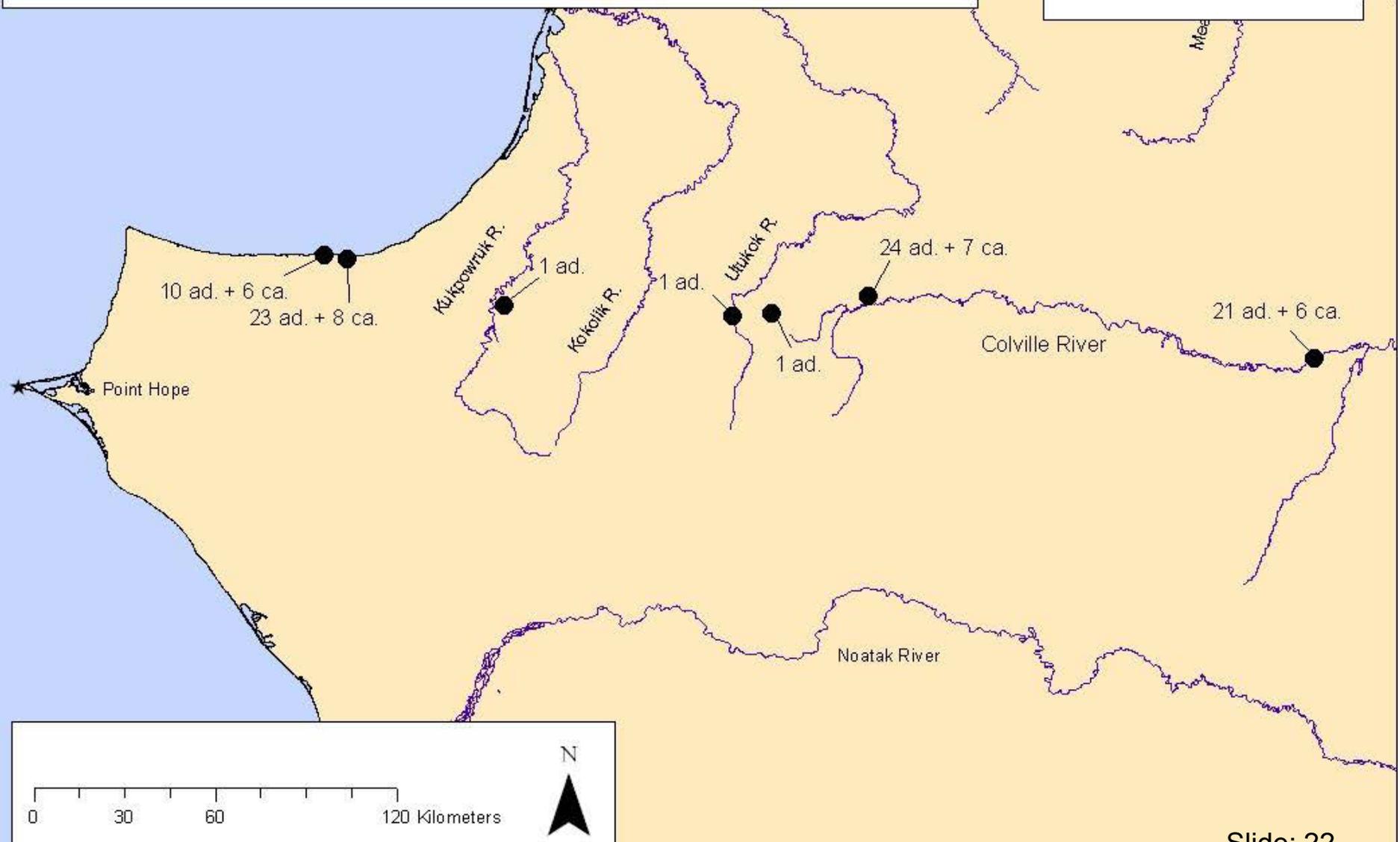
Wolverines per Hour During Moose Surveys

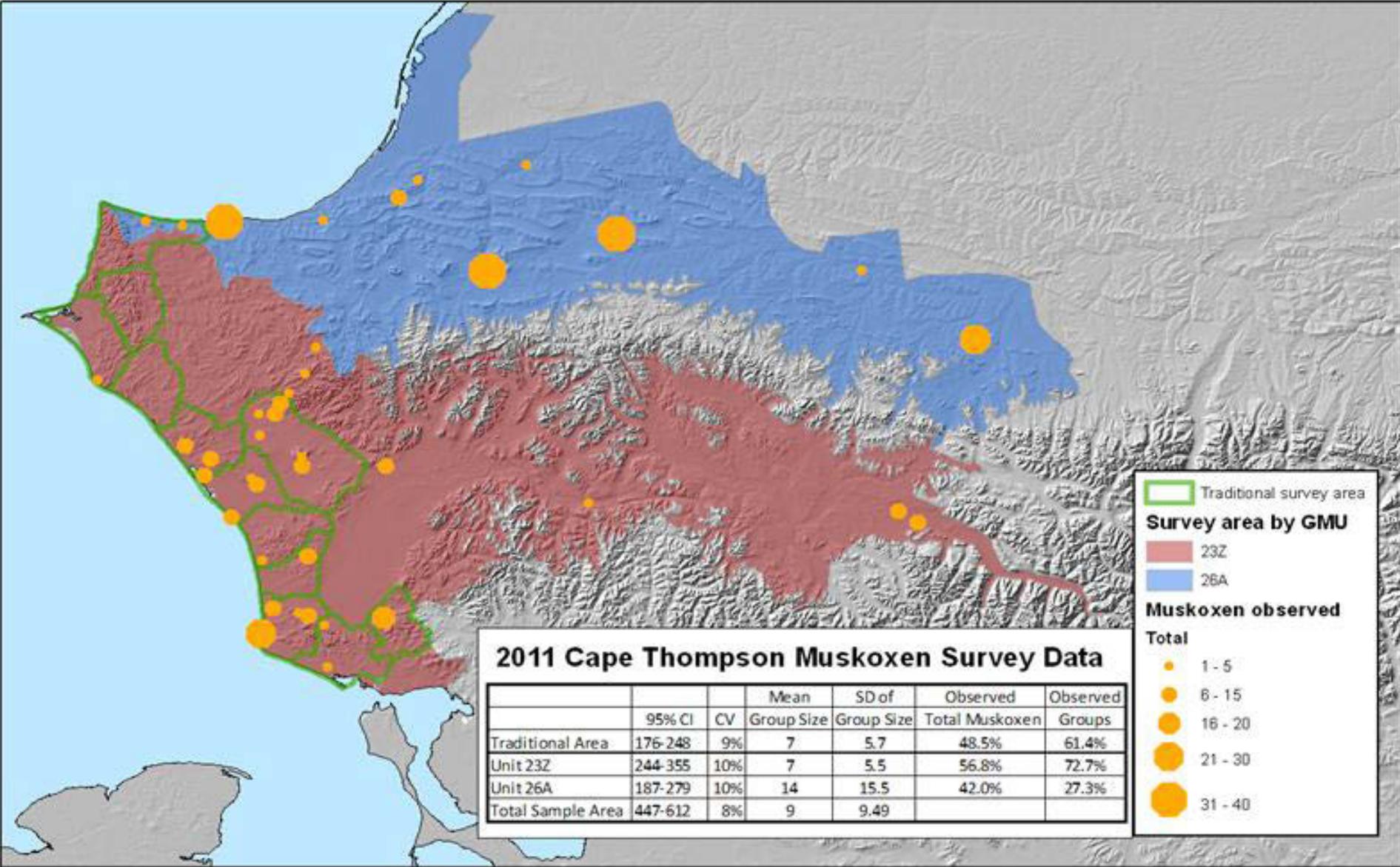




Western 26A Muskox Sightings, June-July 2009

Legend
● (adults + calves)

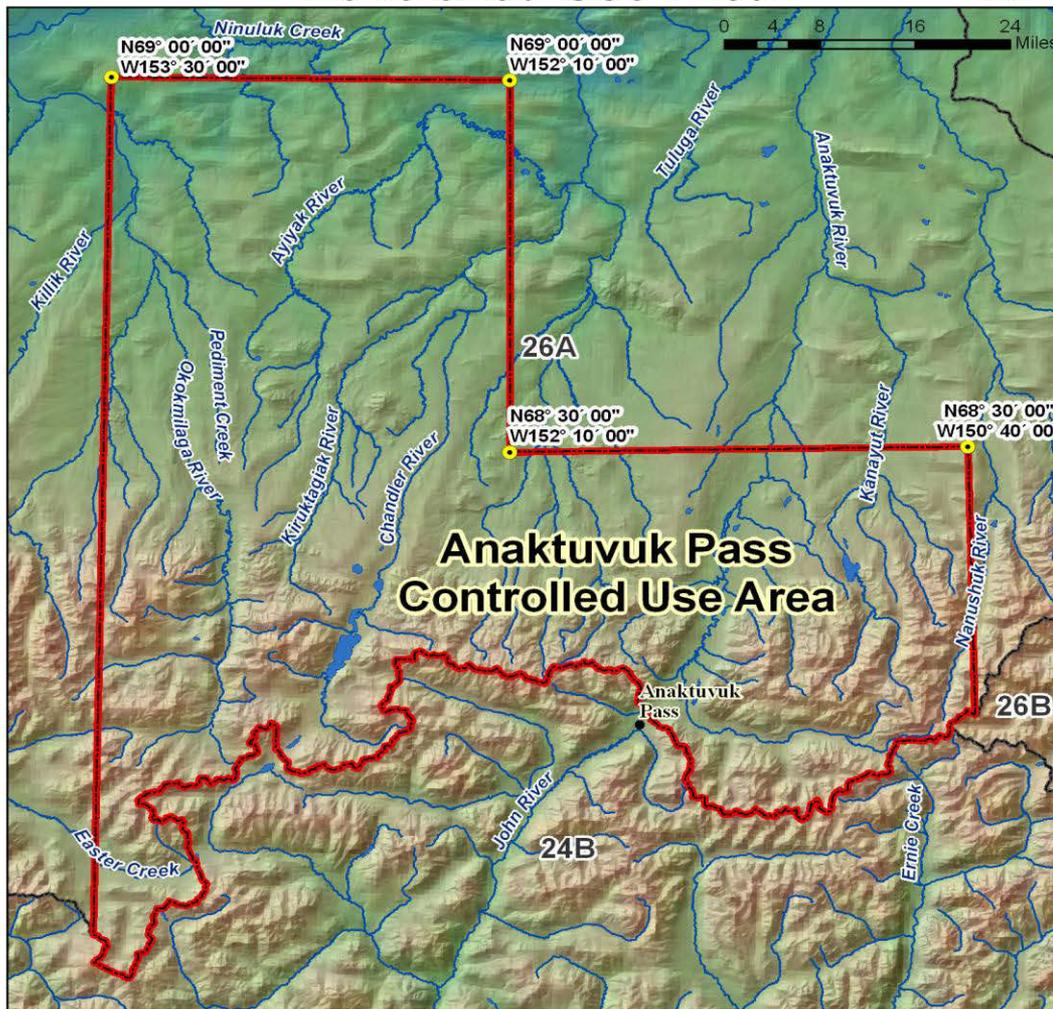








Anaktuvuk Pass Controlled Use Area



AREA DESCRIPTION FOR Anaktuvuk Pass Controlled Use Area

Beginning at 153° 30' W Longitude on the game management boundary between Units 24 and 26A, north along 153° 30' W Longitude to 69° 0' N Latitude, east along 69° 0' N Latitude to 152° 10' W Longitude, south along 152° 10' W Longitude to 68° 30' N Latitude, east along 68° 30' N Latitude to 150° 40' W Longitude, south along 150° 40' W Longitude to the game management boundary between Units 24 and 26A, and westerly along the game management unit boundary to the point of origin at 153° 30' W Longitude.



End



Questions ?

Proposal 31: Unit 26A Moose

Effect of Proposal: This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose season in Unit 26A.

This is a Department proposal.

Department Recommendation: Adopt.

Supported by:

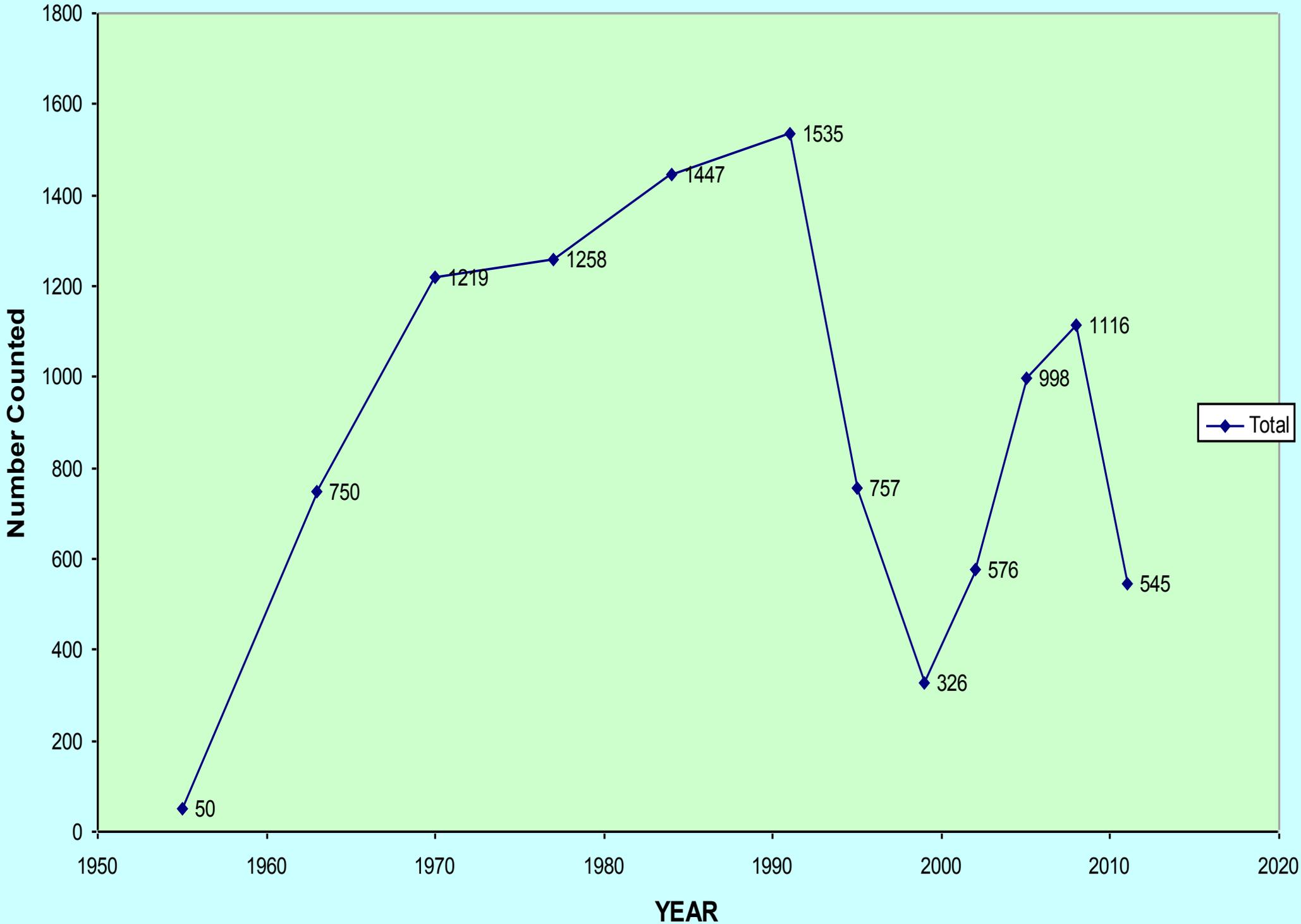
- North Slope Advisory Committee (Arctic)

Population Status and Harvest Record

- Population declined by 50% from 1116 moose in 2008 to 548 in 2011.
- The percentage of short yearlings declined from 23% in 2007 to 2% in 2009 and 2010.
- The reasons for the decline appear to be nutrition and predation rather than hunting.
- The harvest level, particularly cow harvest has been very low.
- The reported harvest ranged from 8 to 12 moose between 2006 and 2011.
- There have been no cows harvested for 3 years.

Unit 26A Moose Population

Unit 26A Moose Minimum Population Estimate 1955 - 2011



Unit 26A Antlerless Moose Seasons

No use of aircraft during general hunts

Fall Season Aug 1 – Sep 14

General hunt and permit hunt – One bull

Nearly all harvested moose are taken in fall.

Summer Season July 1 – Sep 14

General Hunt – Either sex

Western part of Unit 26A. Moose very rarely show up near villages in western Unit 26A.

Allows villagers opportunity to harvest moose.

Winter Season Feb 15 – Apr 15

General Hunt - Either sex

Reduces possibility of a violation during season when all moose are antlerless.

No cows have been harvested for 3 years.

Proposal 31: Moose



End

Proposal 34: Region V Brown Bear Tag

This proposal reauthorizes the brown bear tag fee exemption in Region V. The reauthorization applies to Units 18, 22, and 23.

This is a Department proposal.

Department Recommendation: **Adopt**

Proposal 34: Region V Brown Bear Tag

- Tag exemptions have allowed incremental increase in resident harvest.
- Increased opportunity for residents
- Harvest by a wide range of users

General Season Exemptions

- Unit 22 for the last 10 years
- Unit 23 for the last 6 years

General Season Harvest

- Unit 22 has average annual resident harvest of 48 bears over a 10 year period
- Unit 23 has considerable variation in harvest influenced by weather, human population and economy
- Harvests are within sustained yield

Proposal 34: Region V Brown Bear Tag

Subsistence Season Exemptions

- Units 18, 22, 23, and 26A
- Since the inception of Subsistence Brown Bear Management Areas and current Unit-based subsistence hunts.
- Registration permit requirements

Subsistence Season Harvest

- Harvest for food is low in all Units
- Unit 18 - 1-3 brown bears annually
- Unit 22 – about 6 bears over 10 years
- Unit 23 - up to 5 bears annually
- Unit 26A - very few bears taken

Proposal 34: Region V Brown Bear Tag

Summary Information

- Exemption of tag fee allows increased resident hunting effort
- General season harvests are within sustained yield
- Subsistence hunts have low annual harvest
- If not reauthorized, residents will be required to purchase \$25 resident brown bear tag

Proposal 34: Region V Brown Bear Tag

- End -

Proposal 33: Unit 26A Wolverine

Effect of Proposal: This proposal would lengthen the wolverine hunting season in Unit 26 by adding 31 days for a season Aug 1 – Mar 31.

This presentation is for the Unit 26A portion of the area requested in the proposal.

This is a public proposal.

Department Recommendation: Do Not Adopt.

Opposed by:

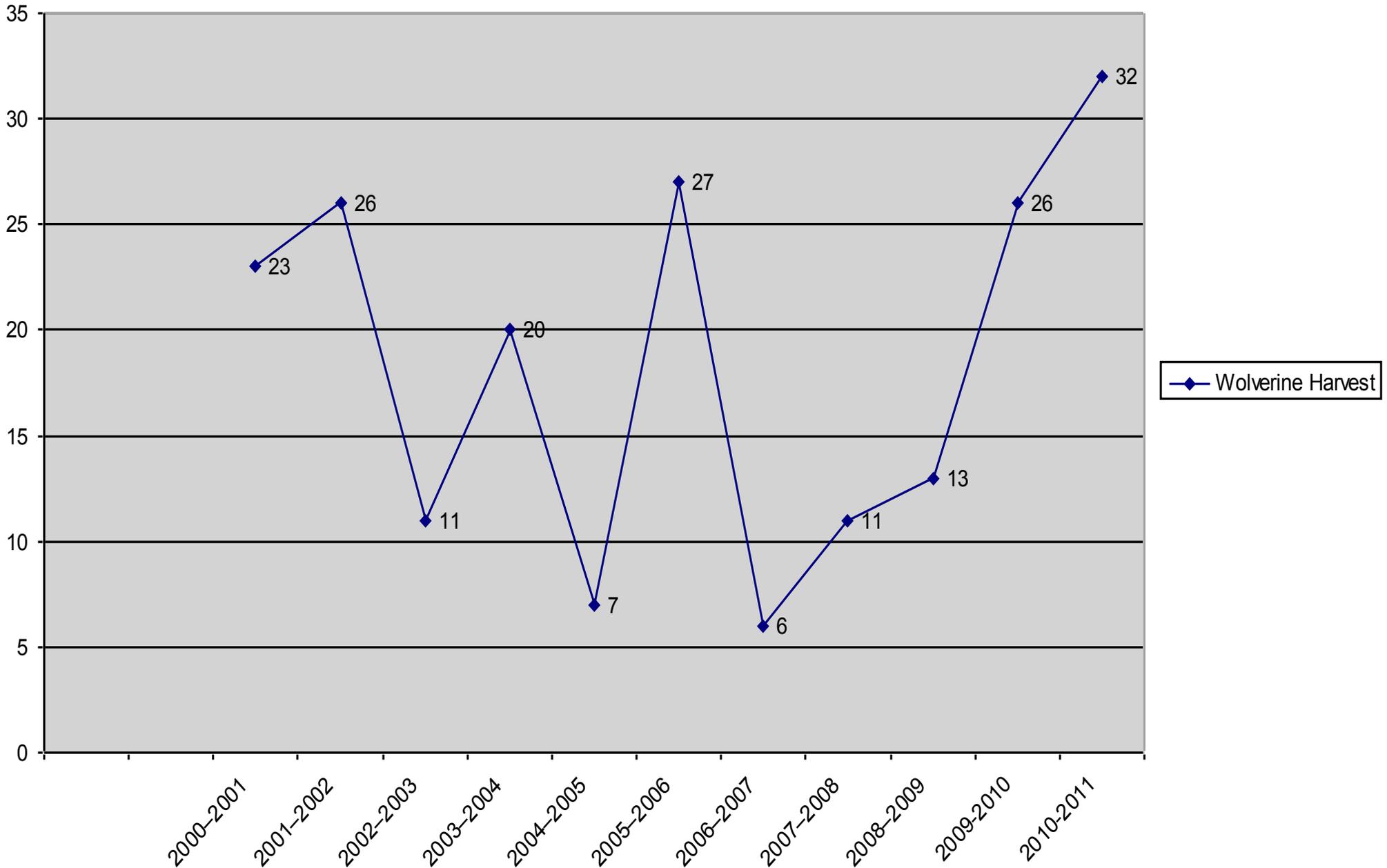
- North Slope Advisory Committee (Arctic)

Unit 26A - Wolverine Population and Harvest

- There have been no recent surveys to assess current wolverine population numbers.
- The number of wolverines seen during moose surveys and hunter's reports indicate that wolverine numbers are stable.
- Trapping records indicate a range in reported harvest from 6-32 wolverines per year.
- Currently, there seems to be an increasing trend in wolverine numbers.

Unit 26A Reported Wolverine Harvest

Wolverine Harvest



Unit 26A – Wolverine Information

- Few wolverines are harvested under hunting regulations
- Early season harvest could impact females with offspring, even when hunting harvests are low
- Female wolverines wean their kits from late July through early August. Harvesting females may result in decreased survival rates of kits.
- Fur quality is poor in August.
- Early season would create an inconsistency in the starting date from all other Units in Alaska.

Proposal 33: Unit 26A Wolverine



- End -

Proposal 13: Wolf

This proposal develops a Unit specific Amount Necessary for Subsistence (ANS) in Units 18, 22, 23, 26A.

This presentation covers Unit 26A.

This is a public proposal.

Dept. Recommendation: **No Recommendation.**

Allocation to be determined by the Board.

Wolf Season and Bag Limits

Unit 26A Wolf Trapping

Season: Nov 1 – Apr 30

Bag limit: No limit

Unit 26A Wolf Hunting

Season: Aug 10 – Apr 30

Bag limit: Ten wolves

Unit 26A Wolf Population

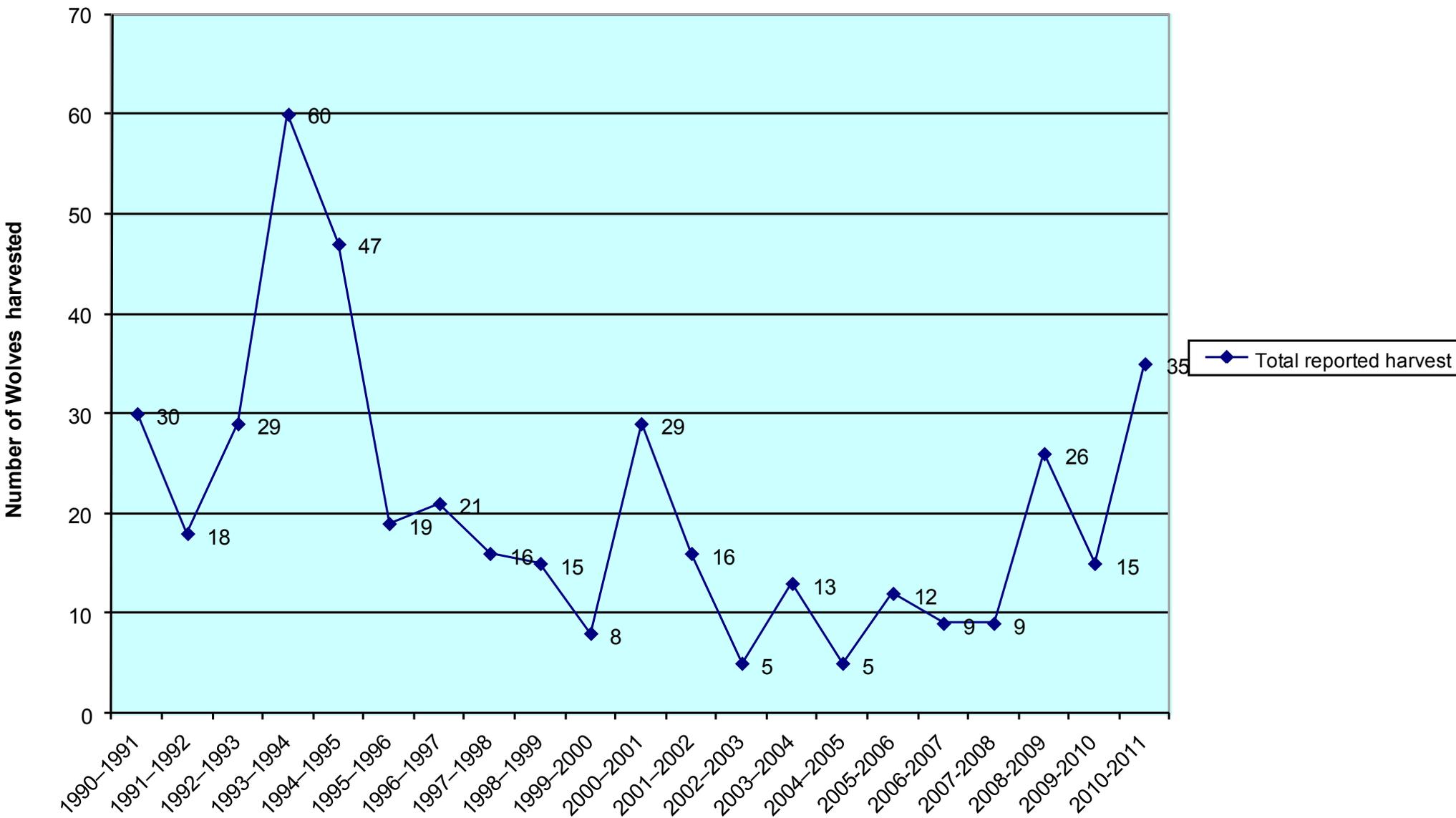
- A wolf survey in 2008 found 3.3-4.4 wolves/1000 km² in a 17,800 km² area between Umiat and Anaktuvuk Pass.
- In 1993 we estimated that there were 240-390 wolves in Unit 26A. Current prey bases and wolf densities in the foothills and the coastal plain are similar to what they were in 1993, implying that wolf populations may be similar.
- The number of wolves within any particular area is partly dependent on the presence of caribou and level of harvest and can vary widely.

Unit 26A Reported Wolf Harvest

- Sealing records 1990-2010: the total reported harvest has ranged from 8-60 wolves per year
- The average reported harvest has been 21 wolves per year
- In 2010 -2011 there were 35 wolves reported harvested
- Since 2000 a total of 12 nonlocal trappers had 20 wolves sealed. This was 11% of the total (174).

Unit 26A Reported Wolf Harvest

Total Reported Wolf Harvest Unit 26A



North Slope Borough Village Harvest Surveys

Unit 26A

- The total of the average number of wolves taken per year in each village is 60 wolves per year
- The total of the greatest number of wolves taken in each village in a year is 127 wolves
- Most, but not all (about 80%), wolves taken in Anaktuvuk Pass and Nuiqsut were from Unit 26A. Total numbers could be adjusted to 55 for average number and 115 for largest number.

North Slope Borough Village Harvest Surveys

Wolf Harvest

	AKP	ATQ	BRW	NUI	PtL	WW	
94-95	59	2		18	3		
95-96				6			
96-97	17	13	7				
97-98		1					
98-99	33						
99-00	3						
00-01			4	5			
01-02	28		9				
02-03	6				1	2	
03-04			14				
AC Meeting						20	Totals
Average	24	5	8	10	2	11	60
Largest	59	13	14	18	3	20	127

Proposal 13: Wolf

- End -

Proposal 32: Unit 26A Brown Bear Tag Fee

Effect of Proposal: Adds Unit 26A to the list of areas where a resident brown bear tag is not required for hunts.

This is a Department proposal.

Department Recommendation: Amend and Adopt.

Dept. Amendment adds Unit 18 to tag exemption .

Supported by:

➤ North Slope Advisory Committee (Arctic)

Proposal 32: Unit 26A Brown Bear Tag Fee

Key Issues

- Observations during moose and caribou surveys, hunter observations, and reports of problem bears all indicate brown bear numbers are increasing.
- Current harvest is well below sustainable levels.
- This proposal would put Unit 26A in alignment with Units 23, 26B, and 26C.

Unit 26A - Brown Bear Population

- Survey in western foothills in 1992 - density of 29.5 bears/1,000 km².
- Survey in 2000, 2001, and 2003 in Unit 26B & eastern Unit 26A - density of 18.3 bears/1,000 km².
- 1989 - population estimate for bears in Unit 26A of 900–1,120.
- Bears seen during surveys for other species, hunter reports, and problem bear reports all indicate a growing population.

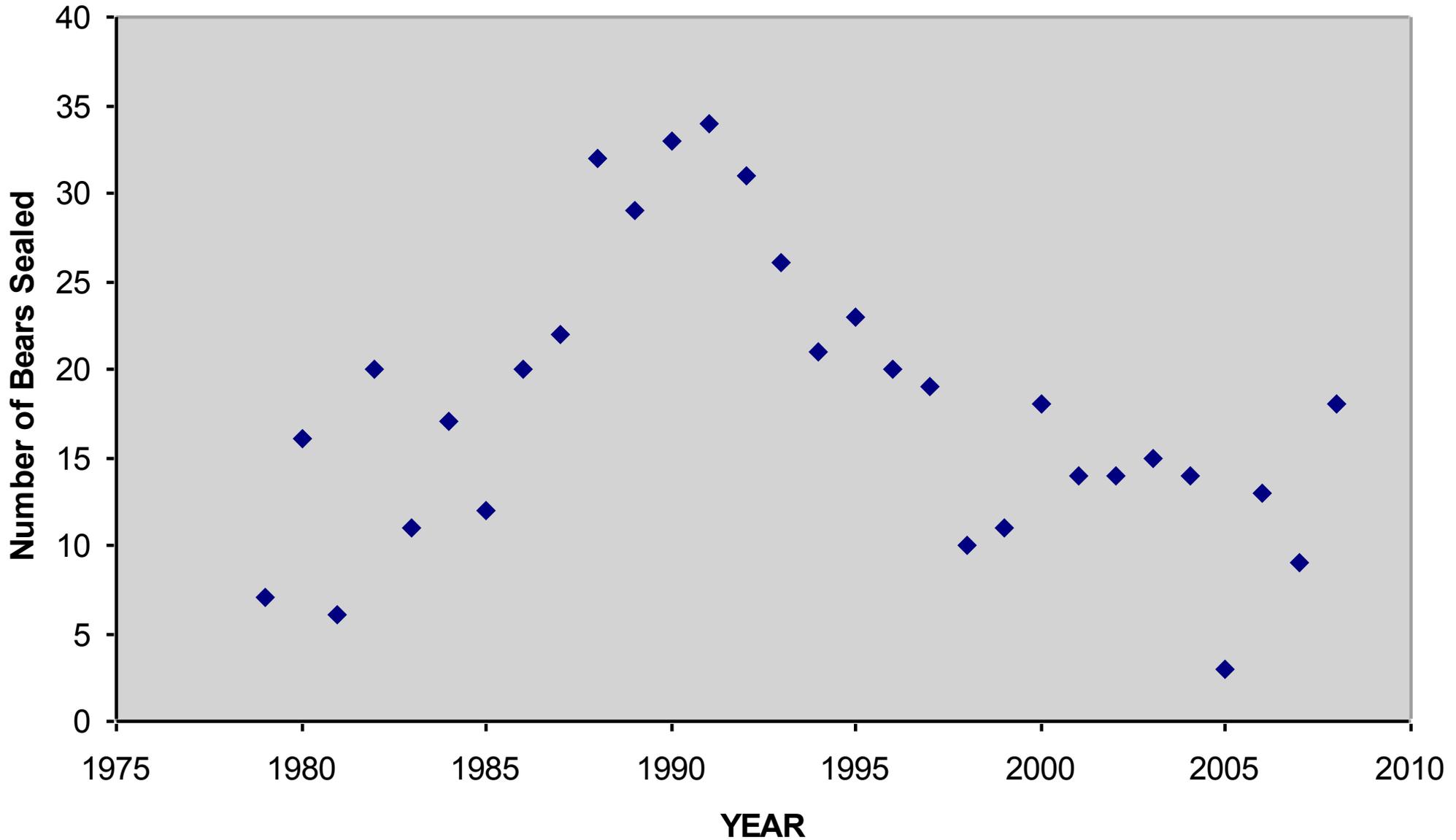
History of Unit 26A Brown Bear Regulations

- 1996: eliminated drawing permit requirements and lengthened the season to August 20 - May 31. Continued bag limit of 1 bear per 4 years.
- 1999: bag limit changed to 1 bear per regulatory year.
- 2005: brown bear general hunt season was extended to Aug 1 – May 31 and the subsistence registration hunt was extended to July 1 – May 31.
- 2009: Season length increased to 12 months per year for both general season and subsistence hunt.

Unit 26A Brown Bear - Harvest Patterns

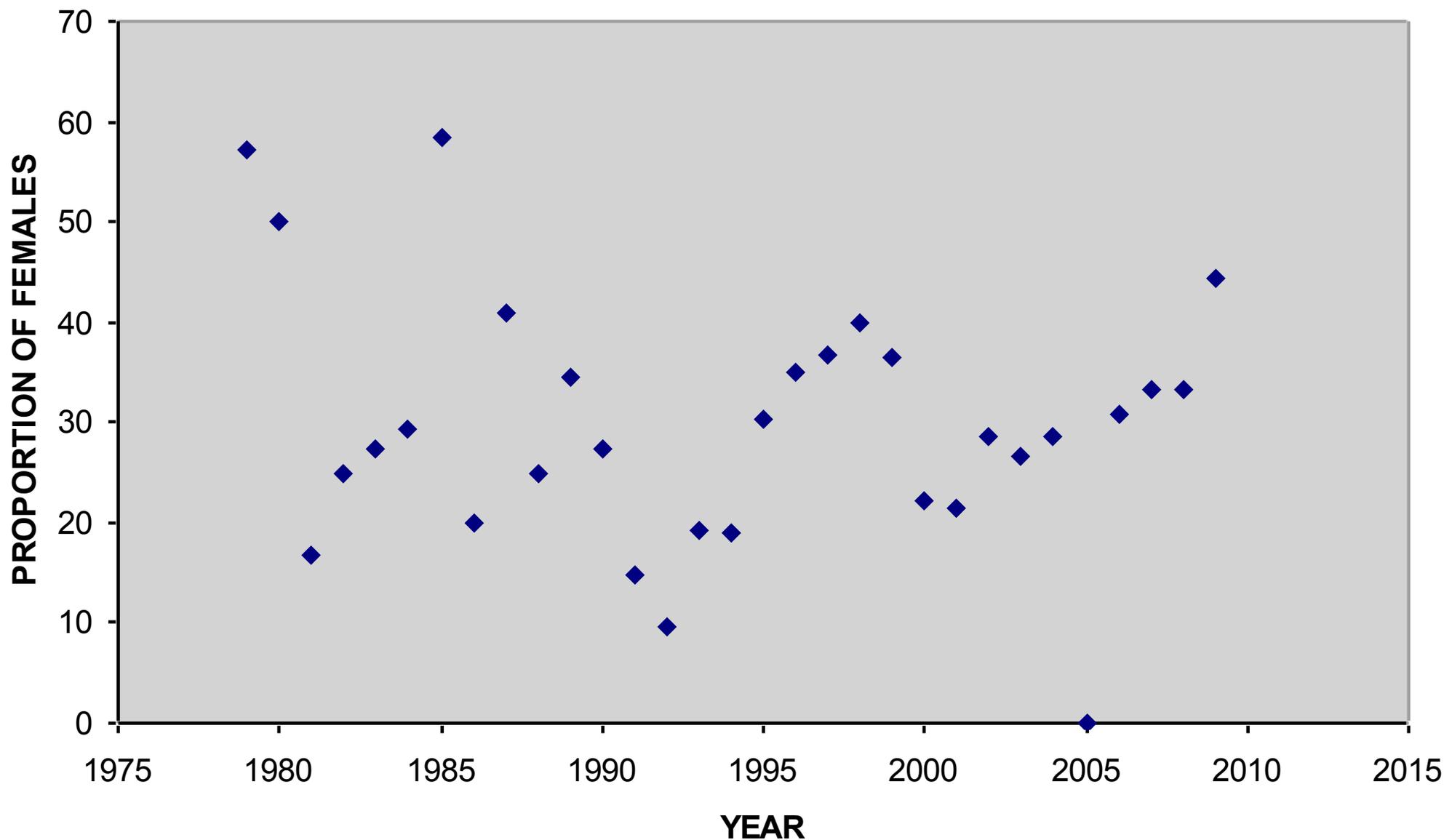
- During the last 3 seasons 20, 19, and 11 bears have been reported harvested.
- 5% harvest rate of current estimate would yield 45-56 bears.
- Bears harvested declined after 1996 because fewer people have been traveling to the area to hunt moose.
- Mean age of harvested bears has increased since 1979.
- Proportion of females in the harvest is consistent at an average of 30% since 1979.

Trend in Bear Harvest in Unit 26A since 1979



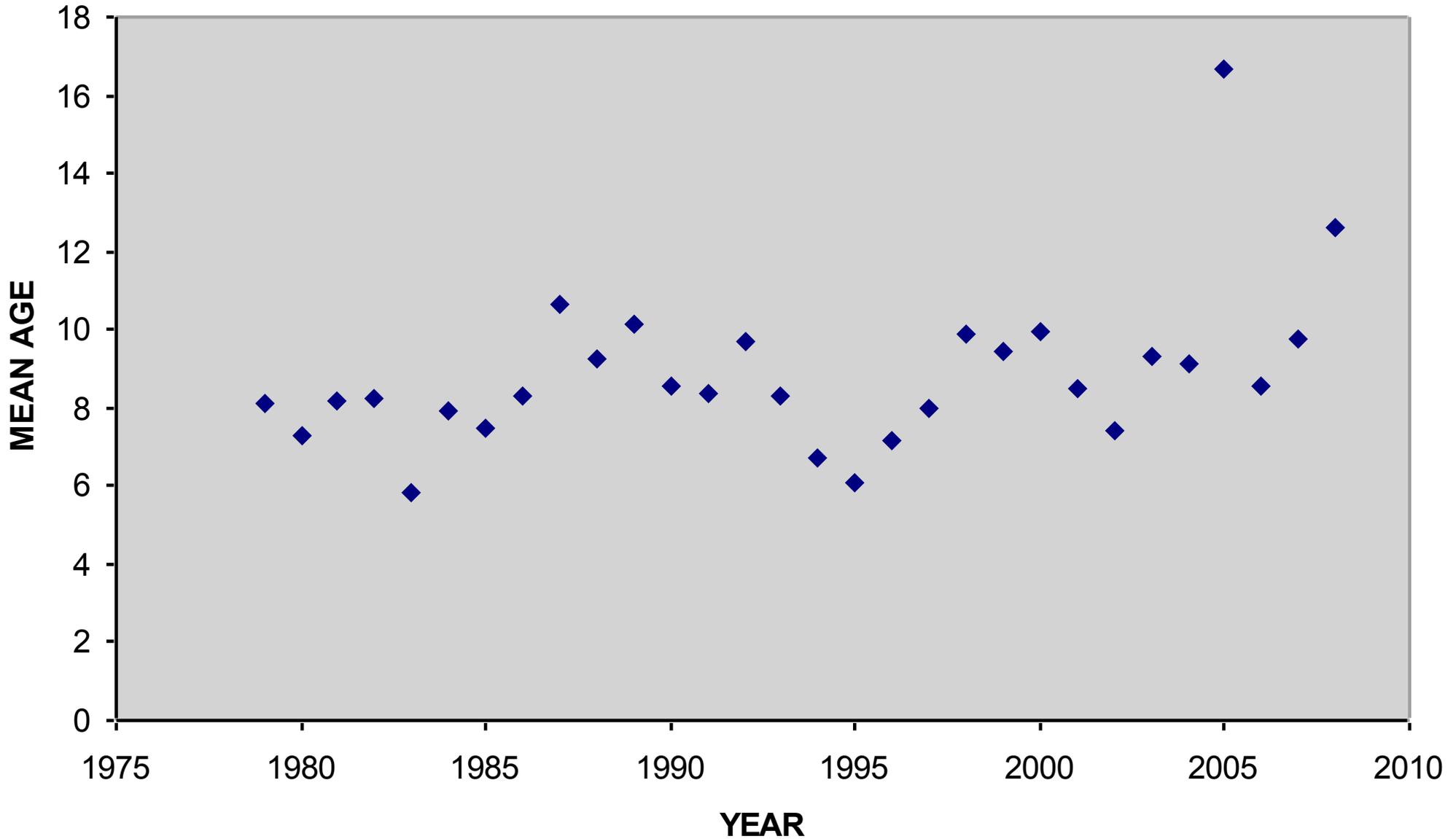
Significant decline in the number of bears harvested

Unit 26A Brown Bear Female Harvest since 1979



No significant trend in the proportion of females harvested

Age of Harvested Bears in Unit 26A since 1979



Significant *increase* in mean age

Proposal 32: Unit 26A Brown Bear Tag Fee



End