FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
State Wildlife Grant

Grant Number: W-33-8   **Segment Number:** 9

Project Number: 19.10

Project Title: Region I research planning, design, and support

Project Duration: July 1, 2003–June 30, 2011

Report Due Date: September 1, 2011

Principal Investigators: Rod Flynn, Research Coordinator

Work Location: Southeast Alaska

I.   SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON JOBS IDENTIFIED IN ANNUAL PLAN THIS PERIOD

JOB/ACTIVITY 1: Establish research program priorities

Accomplishments: Short and longer-term research priorities were established through discussions and meetings with regional staff. Additional discussions were held with others outside of the regional staff, including other regions, federal management agencies, and universities. Research questions were designed to answer management questions. Regional priorities were reevaluated related to this new information and in conjunction with potential funding. Because of partnering opportunities and targeted funding for specific groups of wildlife, regional staff identified additional priorities in the areas of furbearer management, elk population assessment and habit utilization, mountain goat population assessment, deer habitat evaluations related to timber harvest, wolverines movement, urban bears, Gustavus predators, and black bear population assessment. These projects were in addition to ongoing research priorities for brown bear, moose, and Sitka black-tailed deer

JOB/ACTIVITY 2: Develop research design alternatives

Accomplishments: In the evaluation of regional research priorities, alternative studies were considered for several of the projects. Final decisions on topic selection, research design, and field techniques were based on an analysis of the likelihood of accomplishing the research objectives, logistical considerations, and available manpower and expertise to work on the study.

JOB/ACTIVITY 3: Evaluate research designs

Accomplishments: Research designs were reevaluated and modified as necessary with the input of our statistical staff, based on information learned in previous years.

JOB/ACTIVITY 4: Statistical and population estimation/biometric services

Accomplishments: In support of various management questions, our staff biometrician conducted various ad hoc analyses to evaluate the quality of information already in hand. In some cases these analyses were done as a follow-up from earlier research data collection, and in

other cases it was done in support of new research ideas. These analyses included a number of game and nongame species, included population estimation, and habitat selection functions.

Design and support are an important part of maintaining a high quality research program. Planning is needed at many levels from strategic planning to planning experimental protocols of individual projects. A research plan is necessary to develop and maintain program direction, structure, and function that complement the Division of Wildlife Conservation's strategic plans. Before funding commitments are made to a specific research study, planning is a critical component to evaluate technical and logistical feasibility, cost effectiveness and relative priority of research proposals. Planning efforts for new studies may not always result in implementation of a study, but the process is necessary to ensure that only high quality, well designed studies are undertaken. Technical support in the form of biometric services is necessary to ensure sound study design and appropriate analyses both in the planning and post-data collection phase.

I.   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT

Extend the project for another year. Expand the project to included a Research Analyst II to perform some of the duties with data management and GIS.

Prepared by: Rod Flynn

Date: 9/01/2011