

**ELK
ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR.: W-33-9

PROJECT NR.: 13.0

PERIOD: 1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011

PROJECT LOCATION: Statewide

PROJECT TITLE: The Status of Elk and Factors Influencing Their Populations

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This performance report describes Region 2 elk survey and inventory activities.

Region 1

Regionwide Activities

ACTIVITY 1: Prepare biennial management report.

This was not accomplished as the report was not due during this report period.

ACTIVITY 2: Collect biological data on harvested elk including incisors for aging and photos of antlers.

The Petersburg Area Biologist collected six incisors and five antler photographs from six elk harvested in Unit 3 during the report period.

Activities by Unit

Units 1A, 1B, 2, and 3

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor for presence of elk in southern southeast Alaska through contact with deer, elk, moose and bear hunters.

Petersburg and Ketchikan area staff spoke with pilots, commercial fisherman, and deer, moose and black bear hunters opportunistically to gain an understanding of elk sightings and gather information on elk dispersal in southern Southeast Alaska.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor the general elk hunt in Units 1, 2, and “the remainder of Unit 3.”

Staff received no reports of elk harvested under the “general hunt”, outside of the Etolin-Zarembo permit hunt area.

Unit 3

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor the Unit 3 Etolin and Zarembo Islands elk hunt and analyze the permit report data.

The Petersburg Area Biologist and other staff members spoke with hunters before, during and/or after their hunts. Hunt-based parameters were evaluated by use of mandatory drawing and registration permit hunt reports, incisors, and photos of antlers submitted by hunters.

ACTIVITY 2: Conduct spring elk fecal pellet surveys on Etolin, Zarembo and Onslow Islands in conjunction with spring deer pellet-group surveys.

Elk and deer fecal pellet surveys were completed on Etolin and Onslow Islands.

ACTIVITY 3: Monitor four radio collared elk remaining on Zarembo.

Department staff conducted regular GPS collar download flights to determine winter and summer ranges of four remaining elk that were collared in spring 2009. The collars from these four elk released on schedule at the beginning of April 2011, and three of the four collars were successfully retrieved. Also in spring 2011, staff captured and radio collared a yearling bull elk which is currently the only radio collared elk in Unit 3.

Submitted by: Neil L. Barten, Region I Management Coordinator

Region II

Regionwide Activities

Activity: Prepare a biennial regional elk management report.

In Region II elk only occur within portions of GMU 8. Area staff continue to collect information in preparation for drafting report in 2012.

Activities by Unit and herd

Unit 8

Activity 1: Conduct aerial sex and age population composition surveys to determine status, trends, productivity, and mortality of elk.

We completed 8 aerial composition surveys for a portion of the population. Survey results suggested a stable trend in most of the herds observed. The unitwide population of elk was estimated at 610 animals.

Activity 2: Monitor elk seasonal distribution through relocation of radio-collared elk.

In June 2011, we captured 15 elk (14 female, 1 male) on Afognak and Raspberry Islands. All of the females were fitted with VHF transmitters, and were distributed as follows: Raspberry (1), Malina (2), Marka (3), Seal Bay (3), Duck Mountain (2), Waterfall (1) and the Portage Lake (2) herds. In addition to the newly collared elk, we continued to periodically relocate 12 other previously collared elk throughout this reporting period.

Activity 3: Monitor the elk harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports, and contact with hunters.

Harvest reports returned by hunters provided data on hunting effort and harvest. We issued 490 drawing permits and registration permits. Hunters reported harvesting 28 elk

(13 males, 15 females). The harvest by permit hunt was as follows: Raspberry Island drawing hunt, 3 males, 3 females; southwest Afognak drawing permit hunt, 2 males, 1 female; eastern Afognak drawing permit hunt, 13 males, 7 females; remainder of Unit 8, 4 males, 2 females; registration permit hunt, 7 females; federal subsistence hunt, 1 female. The reported 2010-11 harvest of 28 elk was about 5% of the estimated population, a slight decrease over the estimated 2009-10 harvest of 7%. We issued an Emergency Order on 23 October 2010, closing the bull elk season within the southwestern portion of registration hunt RE755 (south of a line from the head of Kazakof Bay to the head of Sapos Bay).

Submitted by: Gino Del Frate

Date: 2 September 2011