

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 25526
Juneau, AK 99802-5526

**ELK
ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR: W-33-3

PROJECT NR: 13.0

WORK LOCATION: Statewide

PROJECT LOCATIONS: Game Management Regions 1 and 2

PERIOD: 1 July 2004–30 June 2005

PROJECT TITLE: The Status of Alaska Elk and Factors Influencing Their Population

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This statewide performance report includes the two regions involved in elk survey and inventory activities. Statewide and regional activities are listed before specific activities by herd and game management unit.

**The Status of Elk
and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region I**

Regionwide Activities

Activity: Provide information to the Board of Game on elk management.

The Board of Game met in Juneau during November 2004. Staff prepared background material on elk management within each unit where this species occurs and provided recommendations to the board for 2 proposals from the public to change harvest regulations.

Activity: Monitor harvest through analysis of drawing permit data.

This was successfully done.

Activity: Collect biological data including incisors for aging and photos of antlers.

Of the 13 elk harvested during the report period, the Petersburg area biologist collected incisors from 11, and antler photographs from 10.

Activities by Unit

Units 1A, 1B, 2, and 3

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

Petersburg and Ketchikan area staff spoke with pilots 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: Monitor the general elk hunt in Units 1, 2, and “the remainder of Unit 3.”

Staff received one verifiable report of an elk harvested other than from Etolin and Zarembo Islands. This report involved a cow elk reportedly harvested on Bushy Island in Unit 3.

Unit 3

Activity: 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 drawing permits, incisors, and photos of antlers submitted by hunters.

Activity: Conduct spring elk fecal pellet surveys on Etolin Island in conjunction with spring deer pellet-group surveys.

No pellet-group surveys were conducted on Etolin Island during this report period, however, a total of 9 elk and deer fecal pellet transects were completed on Zarembo Island.

Activity: Use established population modeling techniques to estimate population growth.

This was not done during this report period.

Other activities funded by federal aid on this project:

The Petersburg area biologist conducted an aerial survey for elk on Etolin and Zarembo Islands during one day in mid August. A total of 37 elk were counted on Etolin Island, including 32 adults and 5 calves. A total of 36 elk were counted on Zarembo Island, including 23 adults and 13 calves. Densely forested habitat and resulting sightability problems continue to hamper our ability to obtain a reliable estimate of the elk population in GMU 3.

Stewardship Investment items purchased: None

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$4.7

Submitted by: Dale L. Rabe, Region I Management Coordinator

The Status of Alaska Elk and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region II

Regionwide activities

Activity: Prepare biennial regional elk management report.

A regional elk management report was prepared.

Activity: Provide information to the Board of Game on elk management.

An overview of elk management in Unit 8 was provided the Board of Game in preparation for its spring 2005 meeting.

Activities by Unit

Unit 8

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

We completed 2 summer aerial composition surveys and 2 winter surveys for a portion of the population. Survey results suggested an increase in the most of the herds observed and the movement of several eastern herds to the west side of Afognak Island. The unit population of elk was estimated at 890 animals.

Activity 2: Monitor elk seasonal distribution through relocation of radiocollared elk.

No work was done on this activity.

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

Hunters reported harvesting 92 elk (63 males, 29 females). The harvest by permit hunt was as follows: Raspberry Island drawing permit hunt, 8 males, 2 females; southwest Afognak drawing permit hunt, 1 male, 5 females; eastern Afognak drawing permit hunt, 8 males, 6 females; remainder of Unit 8, 17 males, 4 females; registration permit hunt, 29 males, 12 females; federal subsistence hunt, 0. The reported 2004–05 harvest was about 10% of the estimated population, a slight increase over the estimated 2003–04 harvest of 9%.

Stewardship Investment items purchased: None.

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$8.7

Submitted by: Gino Del Frate, Region II Management Coordinator

Statewide Project Costs (in thousands):

State Share = \$3.35

Federal share = \$10.05

Total costs = \$13.4