

ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NO. W-33-11

PROJECT NO.: 9.0 Bison

PERIOD: 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013

PROJECT LOCATION: Statewide: Activities in Regions III and IV

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

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This performance report describes bison survey and inventory activities. Activities are listed by region and herd or game management unit.

Region III—Interior Alaska

Regionwide Activities

ACTIVITY 1: Provide bison management information to State and Federal regulatory processes.

Provided information to McGrath and Delta Fish and Game advisory committees.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor harvest from permit hunts and analyze harvest data.

Monitored and analyzed preliminary harvest of 60 bison by 76 hunters from the Delta herd and 7 bison by 10 hunters from the Farwell herd.

ACTIVITY 3: Maintain a sample of radiocollared bison to monitor the herd distribution and movements by capturing and collaring approximately 15 bison.

Captured and radiocollared 10 bison with no mortalities in the Farwell herd; monitored distribution and movements of 9 radiocollared Delta Bison and 38 radiocollared Farwell bison.

Activities by Herd:

Units 19C and 19D the Farewell Herd:

ACTIVITY 1: Conduct ground or aerial surveys to assess population distribution, size and sex and age composition.

Conducted aerial minimum population estimation surveys in May 2013 and found 258 adult bison; and in June 2013 and found 260 bison including 25 calves.

Unit 20D the Delta Herd:

ACTIVITY 1: Conduct ground or aerial surveys to assess population distribution, size and sex and age composition.

Conducted aerial surveys to estimate the fall pre-hunt herd size of 448 bison and composition of 65 bulls:100 cows and 48 calves:100 cows.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor timing of bison movements from the summer range to the Delta Junction Bison Range (DJBR) and Delta agricultural lands.

Monitored herd movements, showing that bison moved from summer range to the DJBR on 13 July 2012 and individual bison began moving from the DJBR to private agricultural lands on 10 August 2012.

ACTIVITY 3: Plant and fertilize preferred bison forage species and control invasive, non-desirable species within the DJBR.

Planted oats on approximately 360 acres and turnips on 50 acres; fertilized 700 acres of perennial grasses; and mowed 400 acres of brush.

ACTIVITY 4: Provide trace mineral and water supplements within the DJBR.

Provided 20 trace element mineral blocks and kept 4 stock tanks full of water during July–September 2011 (bison drank approximately 14,000 gallons of water).

ACTIVITY 5: Monitor forage quality within the DJBR

Collected 7 forage samples and submitted them to the University of Alaska Fairbanks for nutritional analysis.

ACTIVITY 6: Collect blood serum from hunter-killed bison to test for livestock diseases.

Collected no blood from hunter-killed bison.

ACTIVITY 7: Conduct bison presence and crop field assessment surveys on private farm land.

Conducted 2 aerial bison presence and crop field assessment surveys on privately-owned agricultural land located within the Delta bison herd range, with photography used to document bison presence in privately-owned grain and hay fields.

Submitted by: Roy A. Nowlin, Region III Management Coordinator

Region IV—Southcentral and Southwest Alaska; Activity in Game Management Unit 11

PROJECT LOCATION: Game Management Unit 11

Regionwide:

ACTIVITY 1: Prepare biennial bison management report.

The next biennial bison management report is due to DWC HQ on 1 June 2012.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor the harvest of bison from the permit hunts and analyze harvest data.

2012-2013 Harvest	Permittees	Hunters	Males	Total harvest
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Unit 11 Chitina River	1	1	0	0 bison
Unit 11 and 13D Copper River	15	13	3 (60%)	5 bison

Activities by Unit:

Unit 11 Chitina River and Copper River Herds

ACTIVITY 1: Monitor the harvest of bison from the permit hunts and analyze harvest data.

See table above.

ACTIVITY 2: Conduct aerial sex and age population composition surveys to determine status trend productivity and mortality of bison.

Chitina River Herd - June 2013: 51 total bison, 46 adults and 5 calves

Copper River Herd - June 2013: 156 total bison, 122 adults and 34 calves

Submitted by: Lem Butler, Region IV Management Coordinator