

Game Management Unit 2 Area Overview

Board of Game
January 9-13, 2015

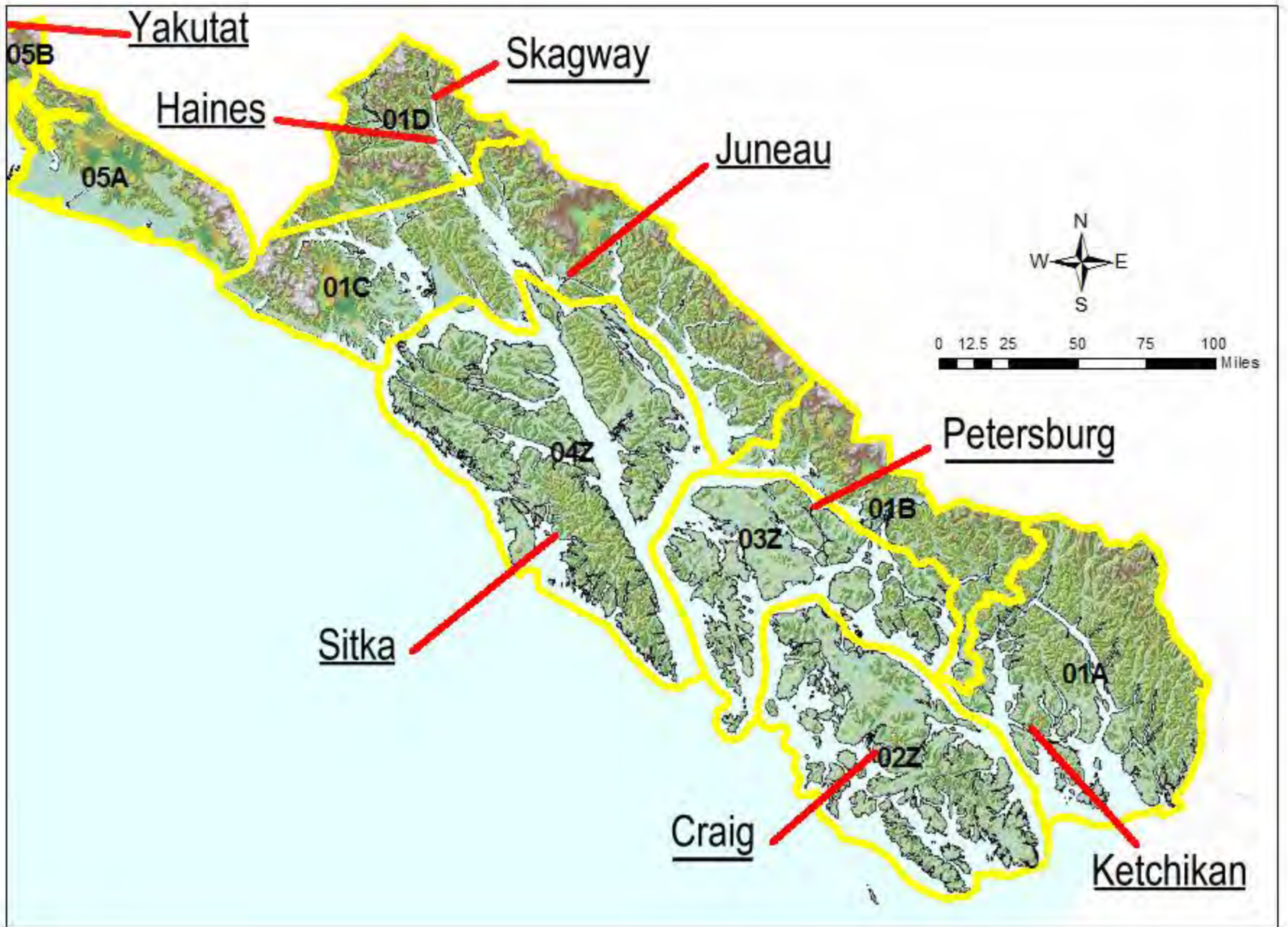


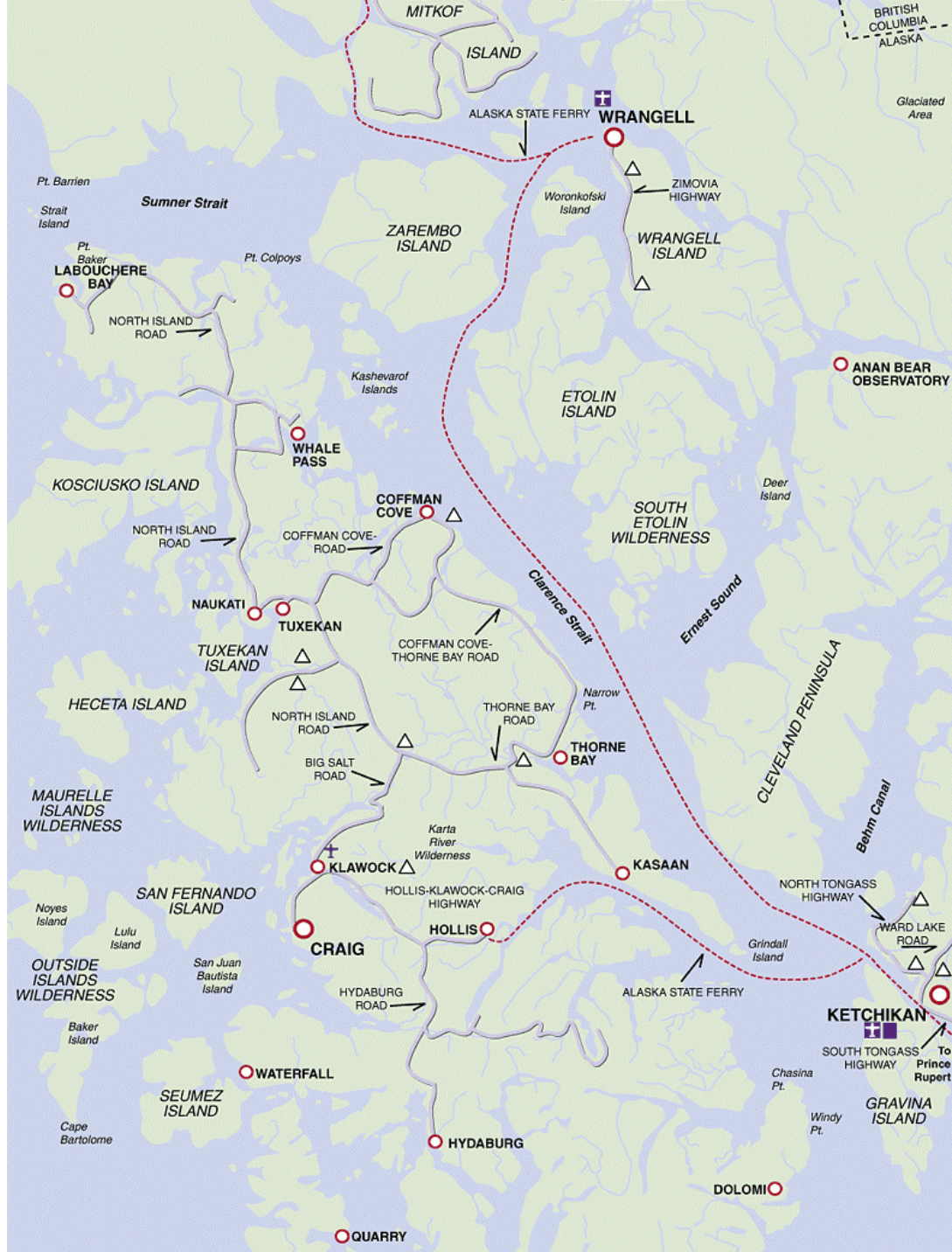
Stephen Bethune

Unit 2

Important Species

- Deer
- Black Bear
 - Wolves
- Furbearers
- Upland Birds
 - Waterfowl





Major Communities

–Craig	pop. ~ 1,100
–Klawock	pop. ~ 850
–Thorne Bay	pop. ~ 500
–Total POW	pop. ~ 3,600

- ADFG office located in Craig

DAVIES-BARRY
INSURANCE
826-2922

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
SUPPORT FISH
MANAGEMENT, FISHERIES
AND
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

SEASIDE COMMUNITY CENTER
Southeast Conference RC&D
Residence Construction and Development

S

Major Industry

- **Timber**
 - US Forest Service
 - State Forest
- **Commercial fishing**
- **Mining**
- **Tourism**
 - Charter fishing
 - Hunting & fishing
 - Bear viewing



Big Thorne Timber Sale

- Record of Decision June 2013
- ~149 MBF timber/~6200 acres of old growth
- ~46 miles of new road
- Sept. 2013 RF delayed sale pending review of wolf habitat concerns
- August 2014 ROD upheld
- August 2014 lawsuits filed
- Oct. 2014 Contract Awarded



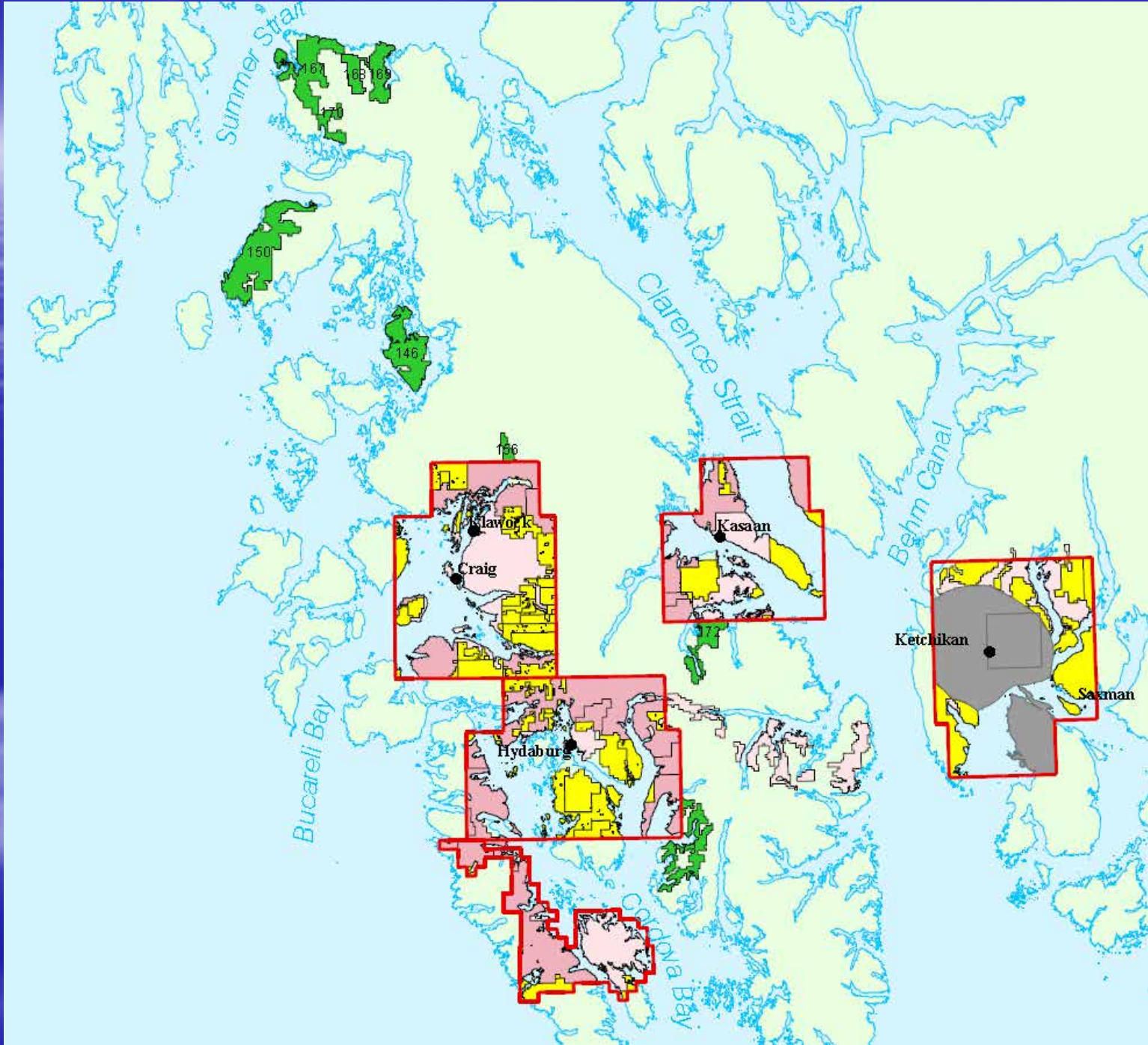
Record of Decision
BIG THORNE FES



Sealaska Bill

Outside Box Selection

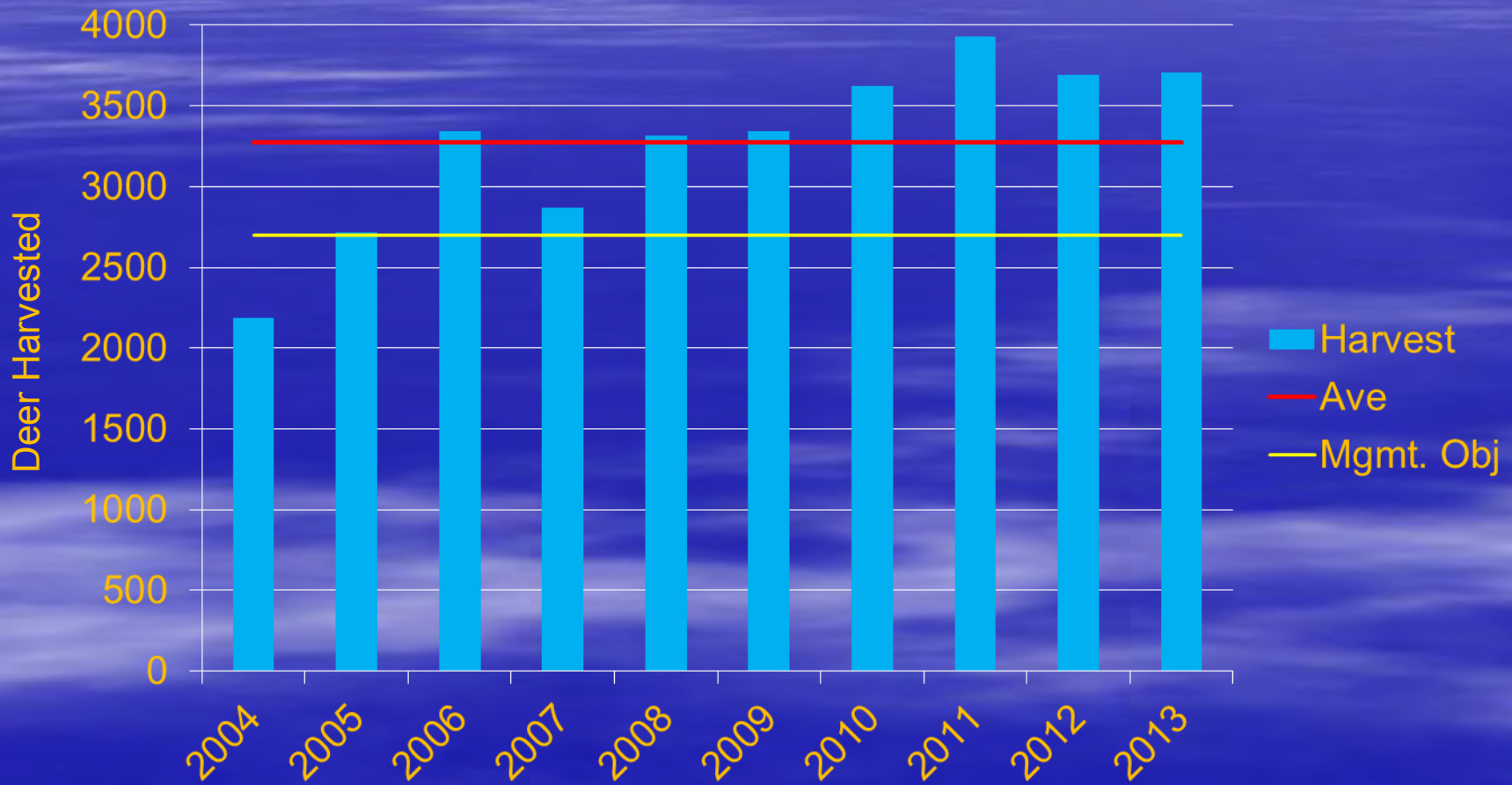
- Passed Congress in December 2014
- Transfers 70K acres of TNF to Sealaska Corp.
- ~ 68.5K acres available for logging
 - 62.5K in GMU 2
- Remainder in energy, tourism and cultural sites
- Includes 152K acres in “new” conservation areas
- Satisfies land claims owed under 1971 ANCSA



Unit 2 Black-tailed Deer

- Fed. subsistence season July 24 – Dec 31, Bag limit 5 including one doe (Oct 15-Dec 31)
- State season Aug 1 – Dec 31, bag limit 4 bucks
- Non-federally qualified hunter season is August 16-December 31 (on Federal lands in Unit 2)
- Severe winter carrying capacity reached?
- Three consecutive mild winters
- Large tracts of second growth reaching stem exclusion stage
- No deer related proposals

Unit 2 Deer Harvest (2004-2013)



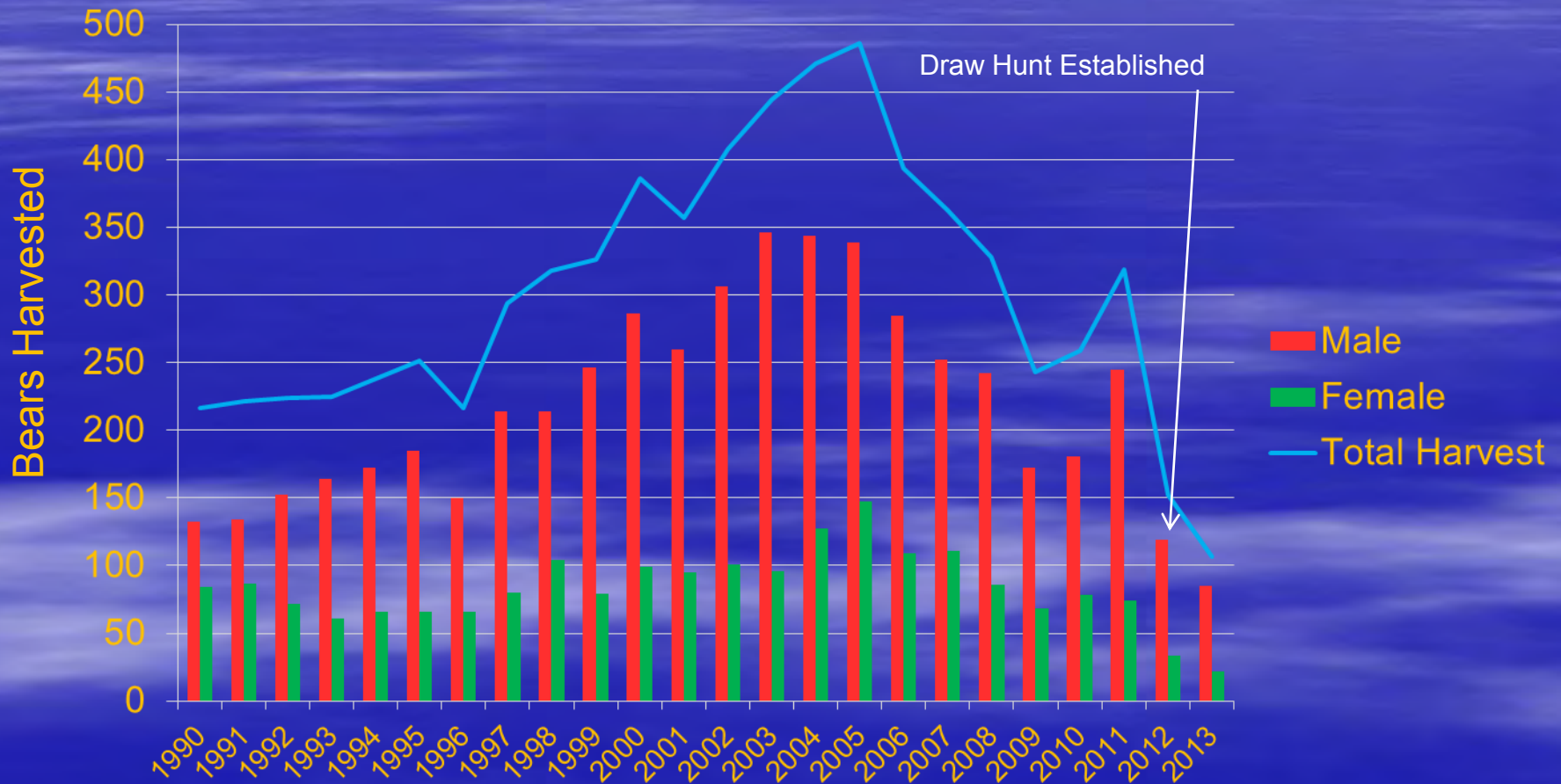


Unit 2 Black Bears

- First draw hunt for non-guided NR's fall 2012
- Unit 2 black bear field research completed. Data analysis on-going
- No black bear related proposals



Unit 2 Black Bear Harvest (1990-2013)



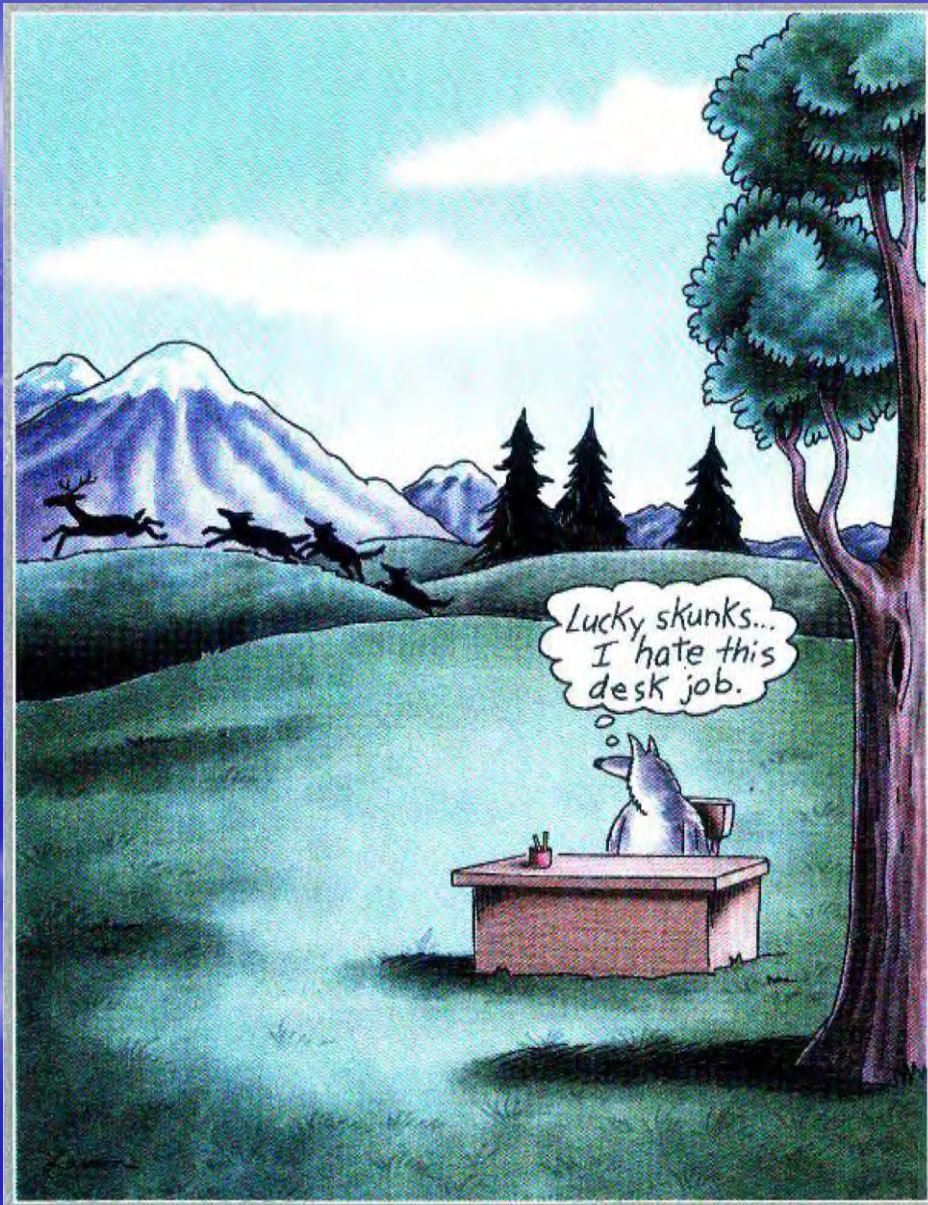
Unit 2 Wolf Management



- Harvest quota 30% of estimated fall pop.
- Closed by EO in 1999 (quota 90 wolves)
- Closed by EO in 2013 (quota 60 wolves)

Unit 2 Wolf Management

- ADFG recommends reduced harvest on POW while acquiring current pop. Estimate
- ADFG reduced harvest quota to 25 for 2014
- Conservation concerns can be addressed via regulations and mgmt. mechanisms
- Current research to estimate populations ongoing
- Three wolf related proposals



Unit 2 Furbearers

- Marten average 940 (range 575-1226)
- River otter average 255 (range 71-563)
- Beaver average 185 (range 53-309)
- Beaver & marten trappers use roads
~85% & 55%, respectively
- Otter trappers use boats ~85%
- One Unit 2 specific furbearer proposal

Unit 2 Upland Birds



Elk On Prince of Wales?





Questions?

Game Management Unit 1A

- Important Game Species
 - Moose
 - Goats
 - Deer
 - Black Bear
 - Brown Bear
 - Furbearers
 - Waterfowl

MAJOR COMMUNITIES

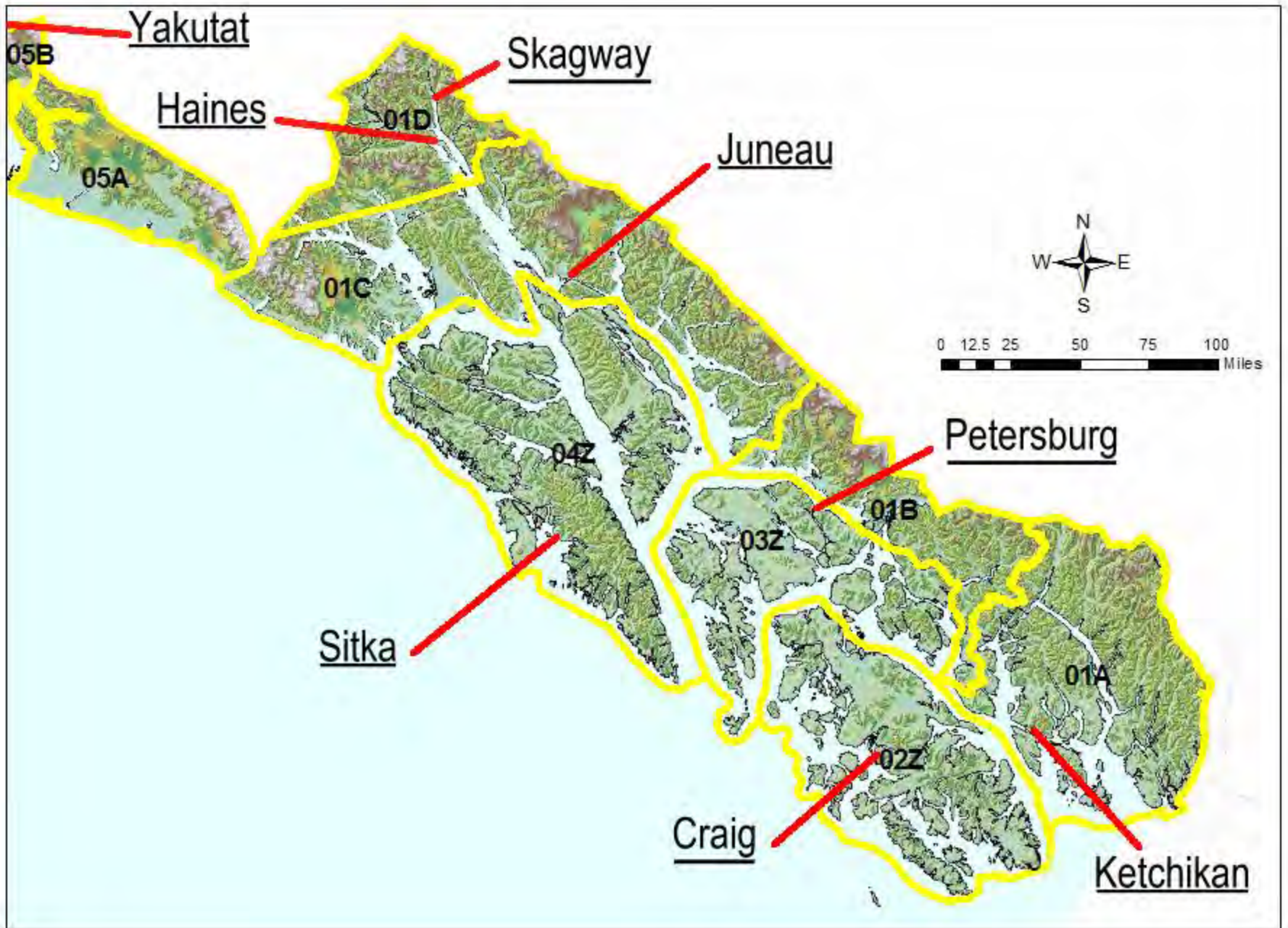
–KETCHIKAN	pop. ~ 8,500
–Metlakatla	pop. ~ 600
–Others	pop. ~ 450

- Area Office located in Ketchikan
Satellite office in Craig

Ketchikan Management Area

- **Unit 1A Mainland and Islands**
- **~ 5300 Square Miles**
- **Includes: 2400 Square Miles Misty Fiords National Monument**

- **Unit 2 Prince of Wales and other Islands**
- **~ 3,600 Square Miles**
- **Includes: 3rd Largest Island in North America**



Unit 1A Overview

Ketchikan Tourism



Currently over 900,000 visitors to Ketchikan annually
1997~532,000 2014~ 906,000
Average summer day ~12,000 visitors

Ketchikan Waterfront

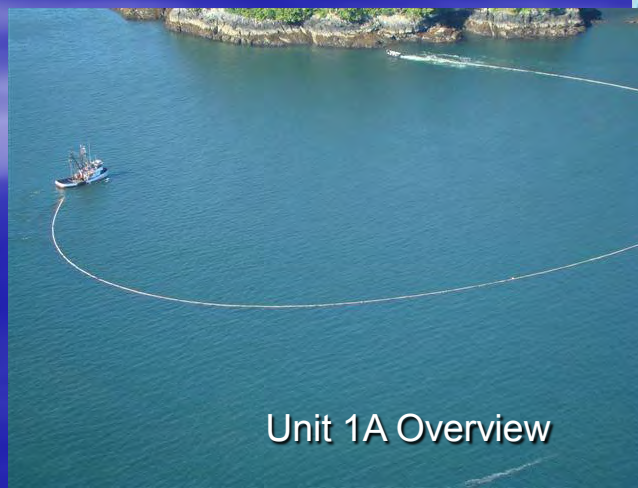


Logging

- Mental Health Timber Sales
- University Timber Sales
- Federal Timber Sales
- State Timber Sales
- Sealaska Outside Box Timber Selection
- Sealaska Cleveland Timber Harvest
- Saddle Lakes Timber Sale and Road Connection

Commercial Fishing

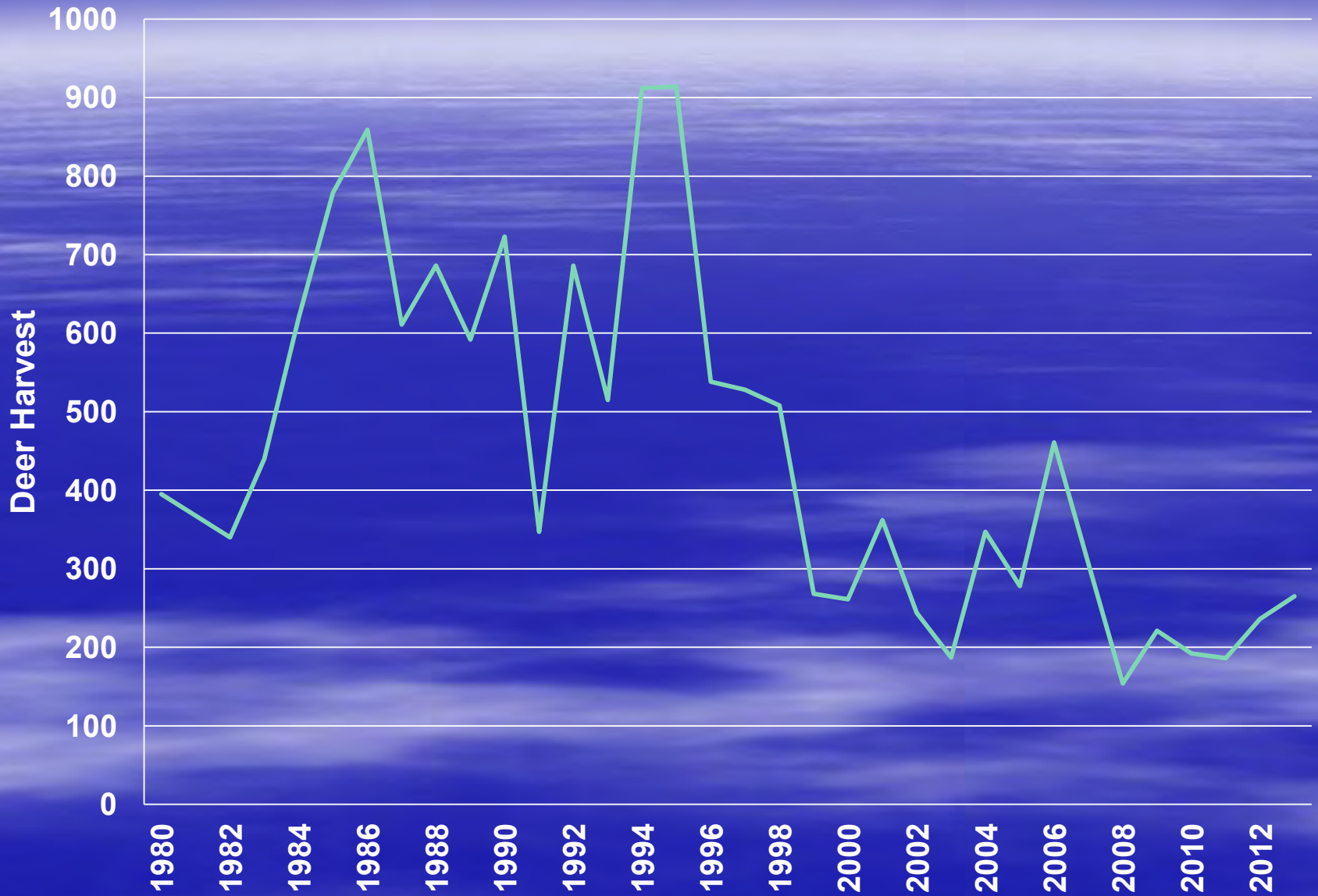
- Seine
- Gill Net
- Ground Fish
- Trolling
- Dive Fishery
- Shrimp/Crab



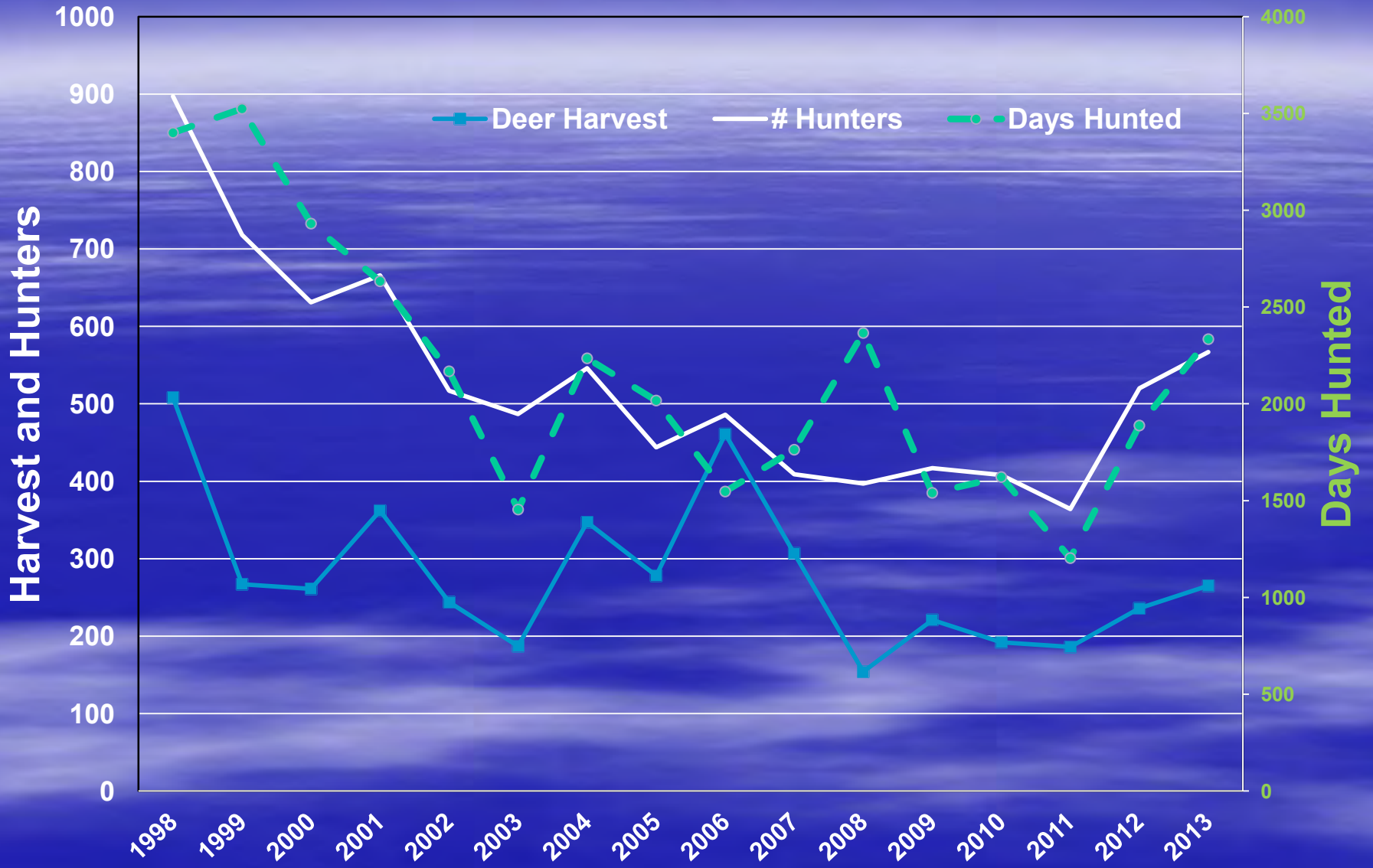
Unit 1A Deer

- Population at Low to Moderate Level
- Winters Are Limiting
- Second Growth Issues
- Predation by Black Bears, Brown Bears, Wolves, and Mountain Lions

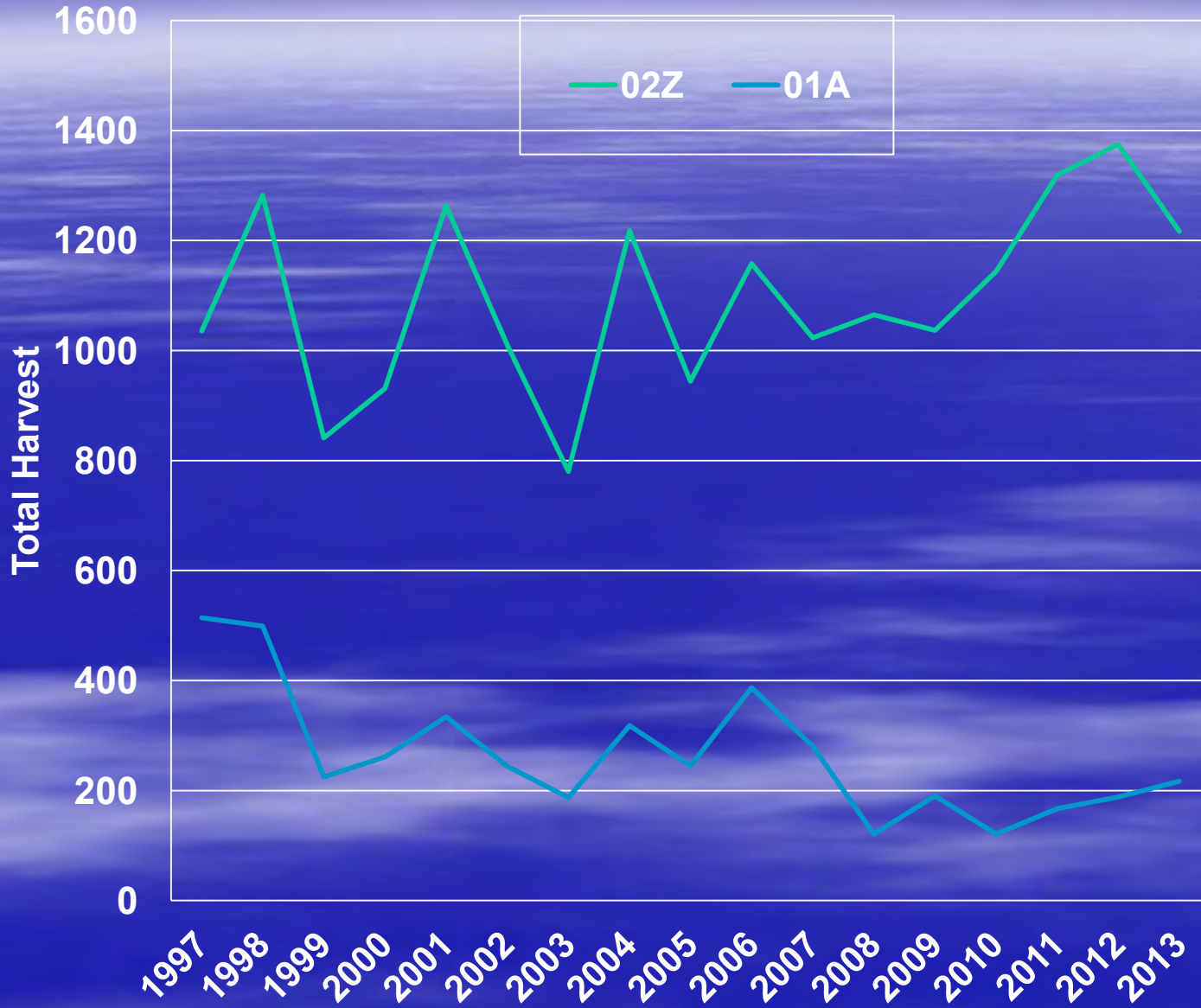
Total Unit 1A Deer Harvest



Unit 1A Deer Harvest and Effort



Unit 1A Ketchikan Resident Harvest by Hunting Area

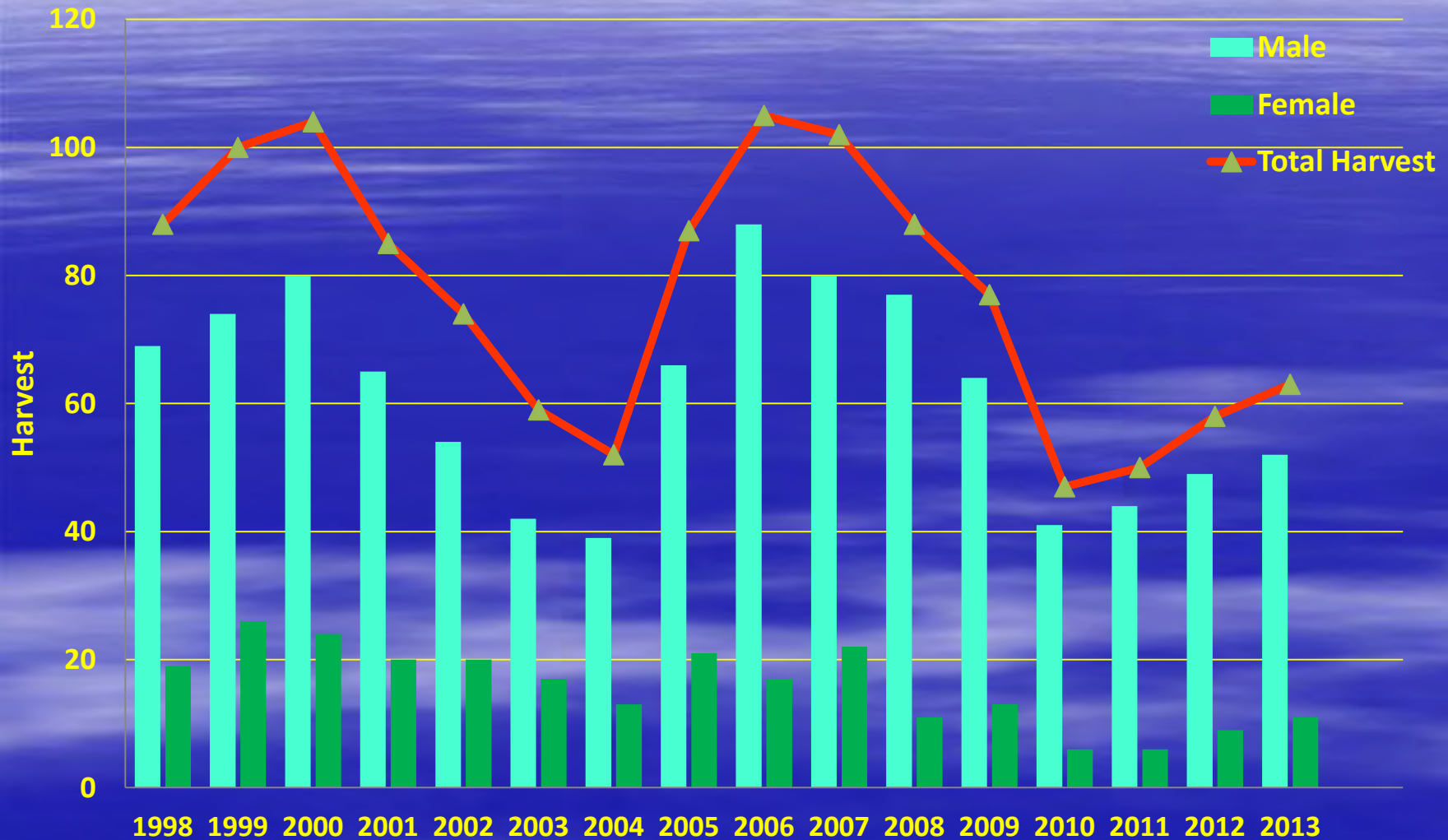


Unit 1A Black Bears

- **Wide Distribution**
- **Healthy Population**
- **Harvest Fluctuates**
- **Spring Hunting Along Extensive Shoreline**
- **Color Phase on Mainland Includes Blue, Cinnamon, and White**
- **Drawing for Non-Guided Nonresidents**



Unit 1A Black Bear Harvest



Nuisance Bears/People

- Some years in Ketchikan killed 6-15 bears
- Seldom move bears
- Public education effort
- Shifting responsibility to local residents
- Ketchikan Borough and City garbage ordinance
- Open Landfill at Hyder



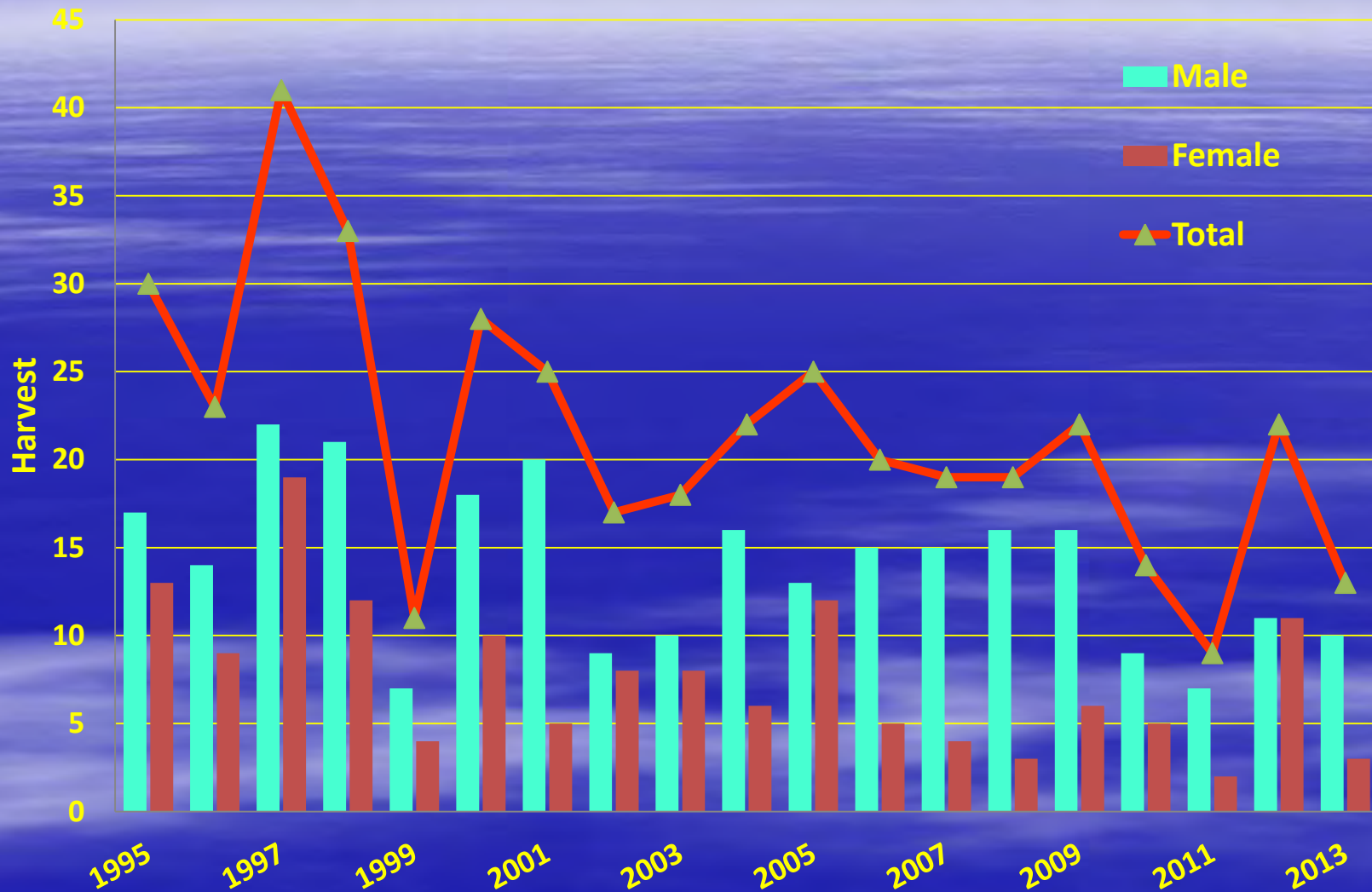
Unit 1A Goat Status

- **Healthy goat population**
- **Several Unit 1A goats each year make B&C**
- **Several trend count areas showing low counts**
- **Both transplants showing rapid horn growth patterns**
- **Both transplant populations have stabilized**
 - Reid Mountain registration permit
 - Deer Mountain three drawing permits

Goat Management Strategy

- **Registration permits**
- **Hunter Comments**
- **Aerial Composition Surveys**
 - **Manage for 2-6 points/hundred goats surveyed**
 - **2 points if poor survey conditions, bad winter, high harvest or other concerns**

Unit 1A Goat Harvest



Ketchikan Area Goat Hunts



Wrangell

ZAREMBO I

WRANGELL I.

ETOLIN ISLAND

REVILLAGIGEDO ISLAND

EDDO ISLAND

Ketchikan

GRAVINA ISLAND

ANNETTE ISLAND

Duke I.

DG007

DG006

DG005

RG001

Closed

CLEVELAND

BEHRM PENINSULA

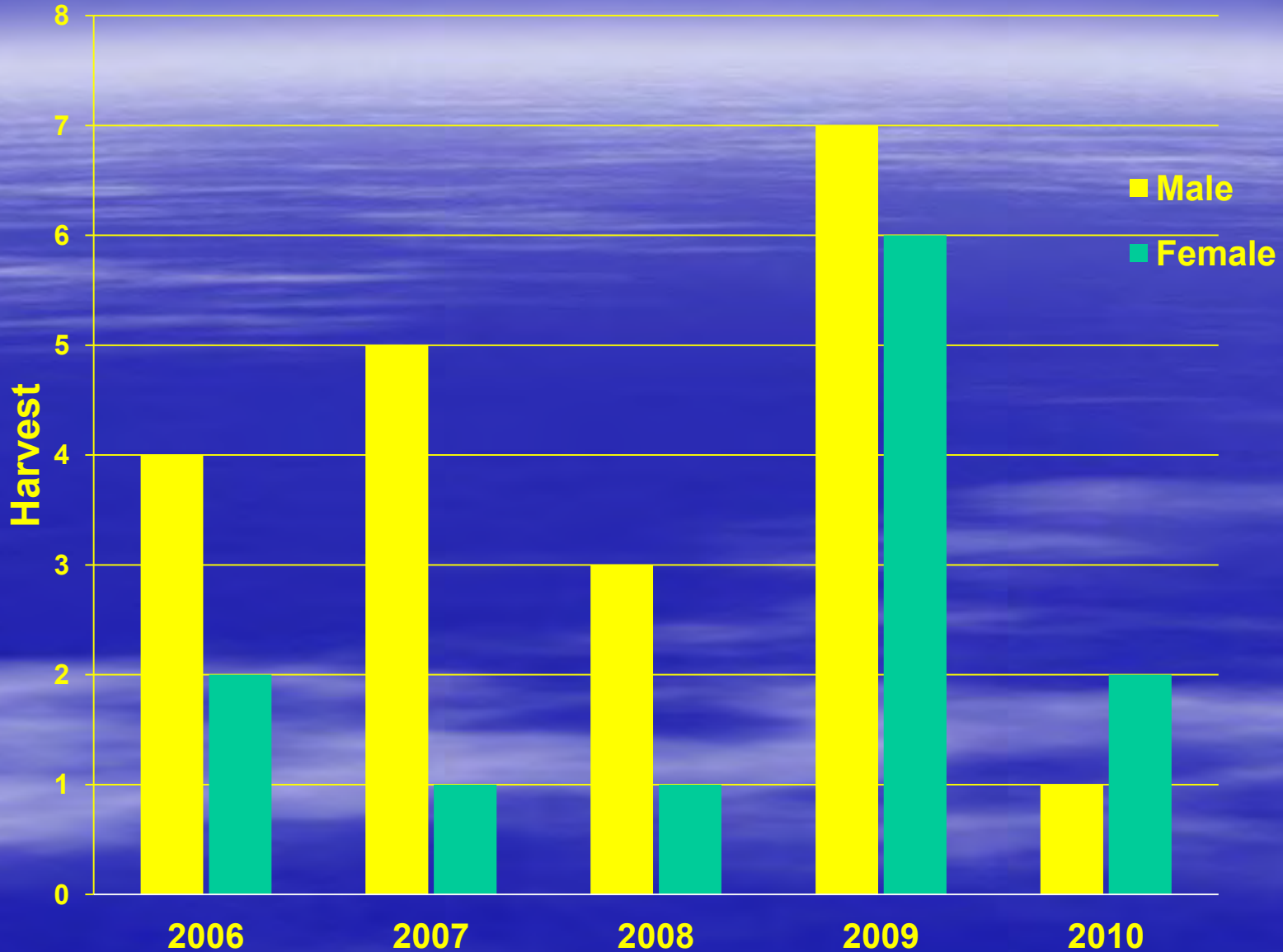
KETCHIKAN PENINSULA

Unit 1A Overview

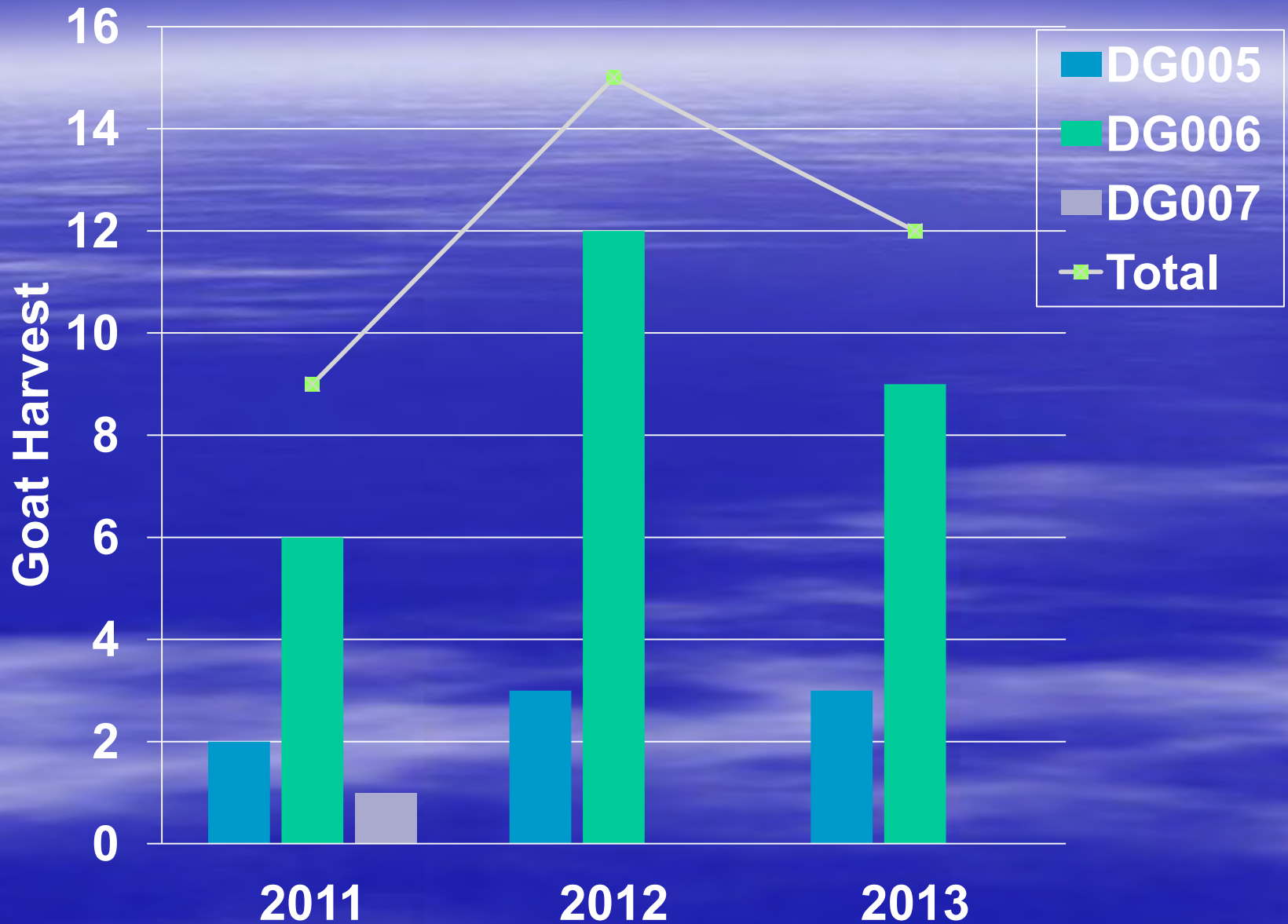


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DG003 Goat Drawing Harvest



Ketchikan Area Goat Drawing Hunts



Unit 1A Trophy Goats



Unit 1A Overview

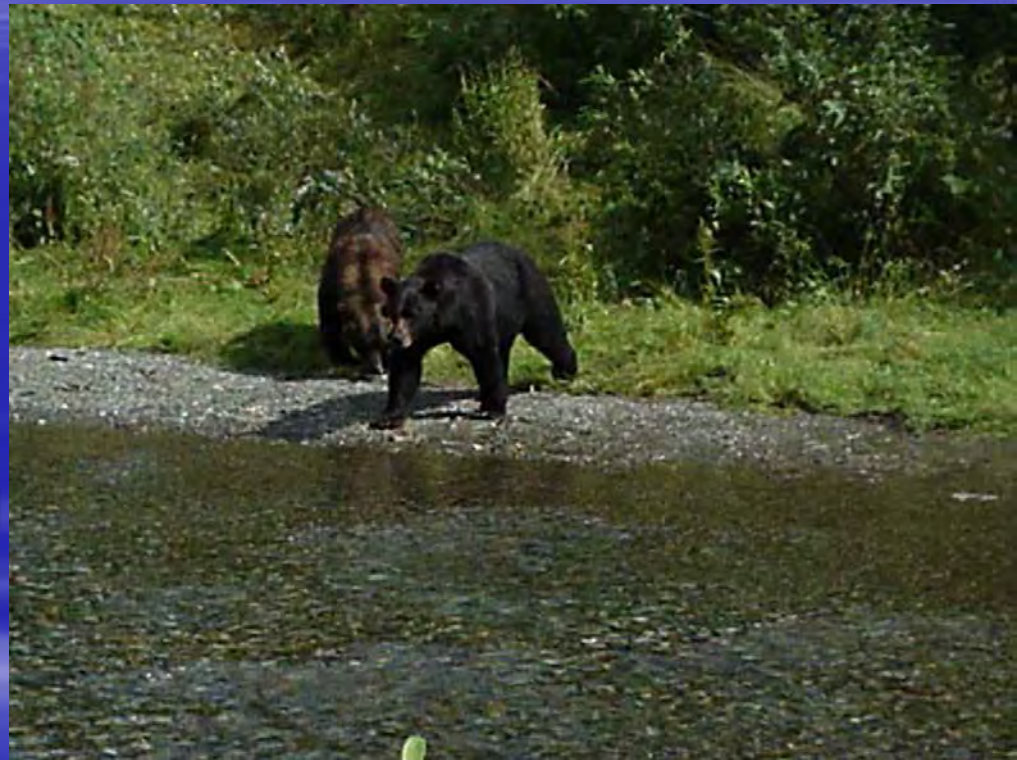
Cleveland Goat Research (USFS and ADFG)

- 2009 Captured 8 Goats
- 7 VHF Collars

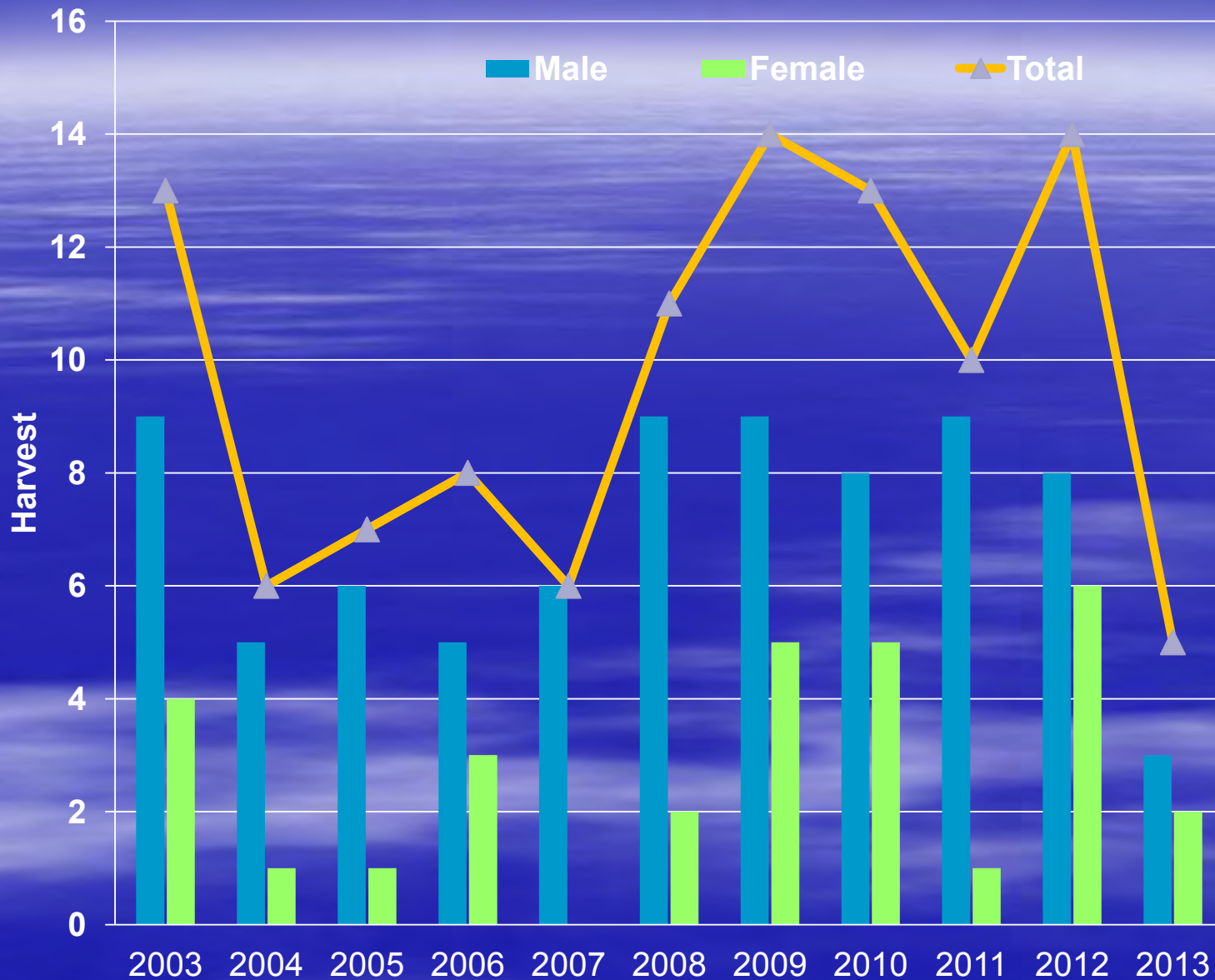
- 2010 Captured 5 Goats
- 5 GPS Collars
- 2014 Four of 5 GPS collars recovered
- Sightability Index, Mortality, Movements, Habitat Use, DNA For Viability

Unit 1A Brown Bear

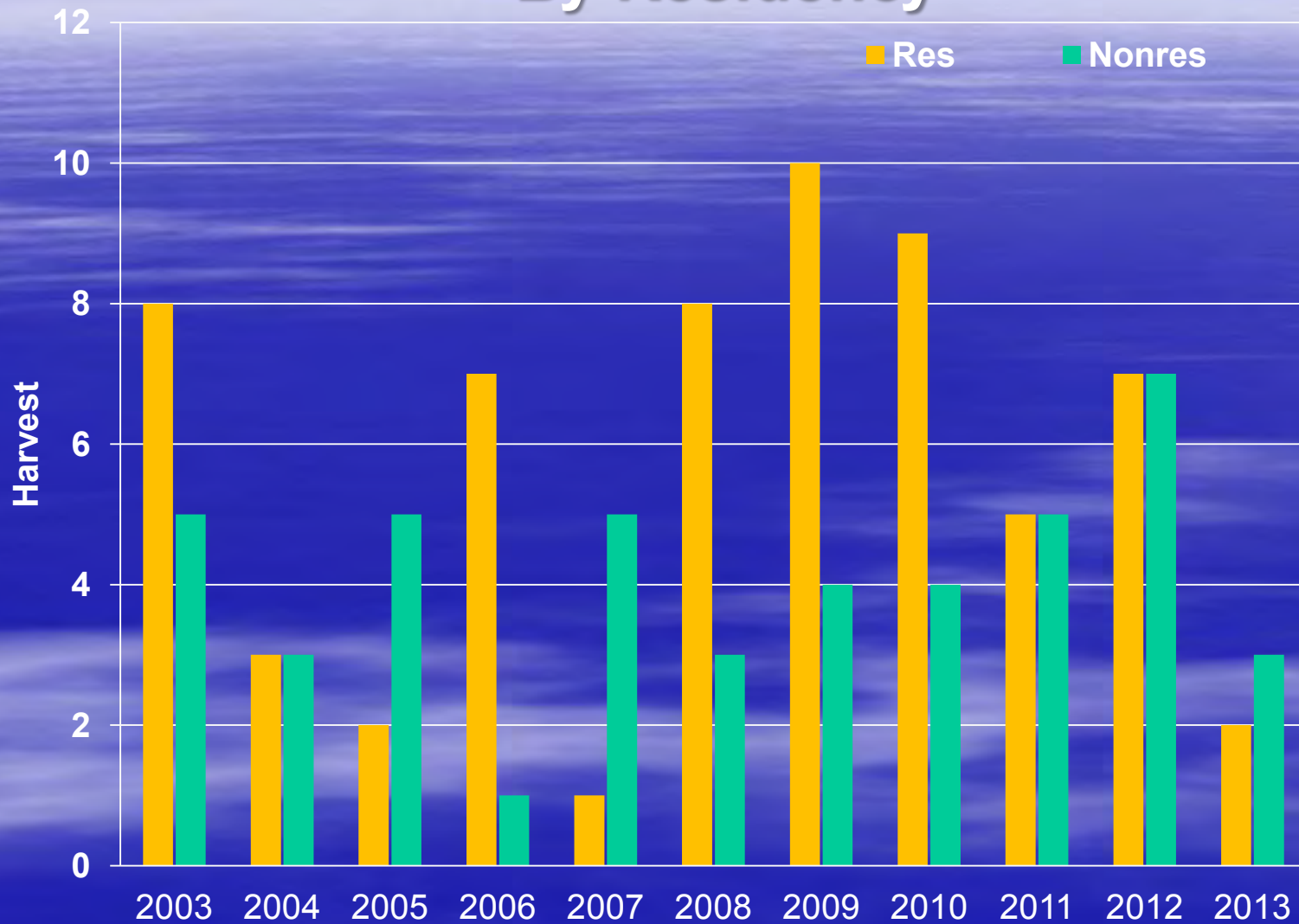
- Distribution on Mainland, Cleveland, and Revilla Island
- Estimated Population 150-300
- Distribution Expanding
- Harvest Stable
- Important for Viewing and Hunting



Unit 1A Brown Bear Harvest by Sex



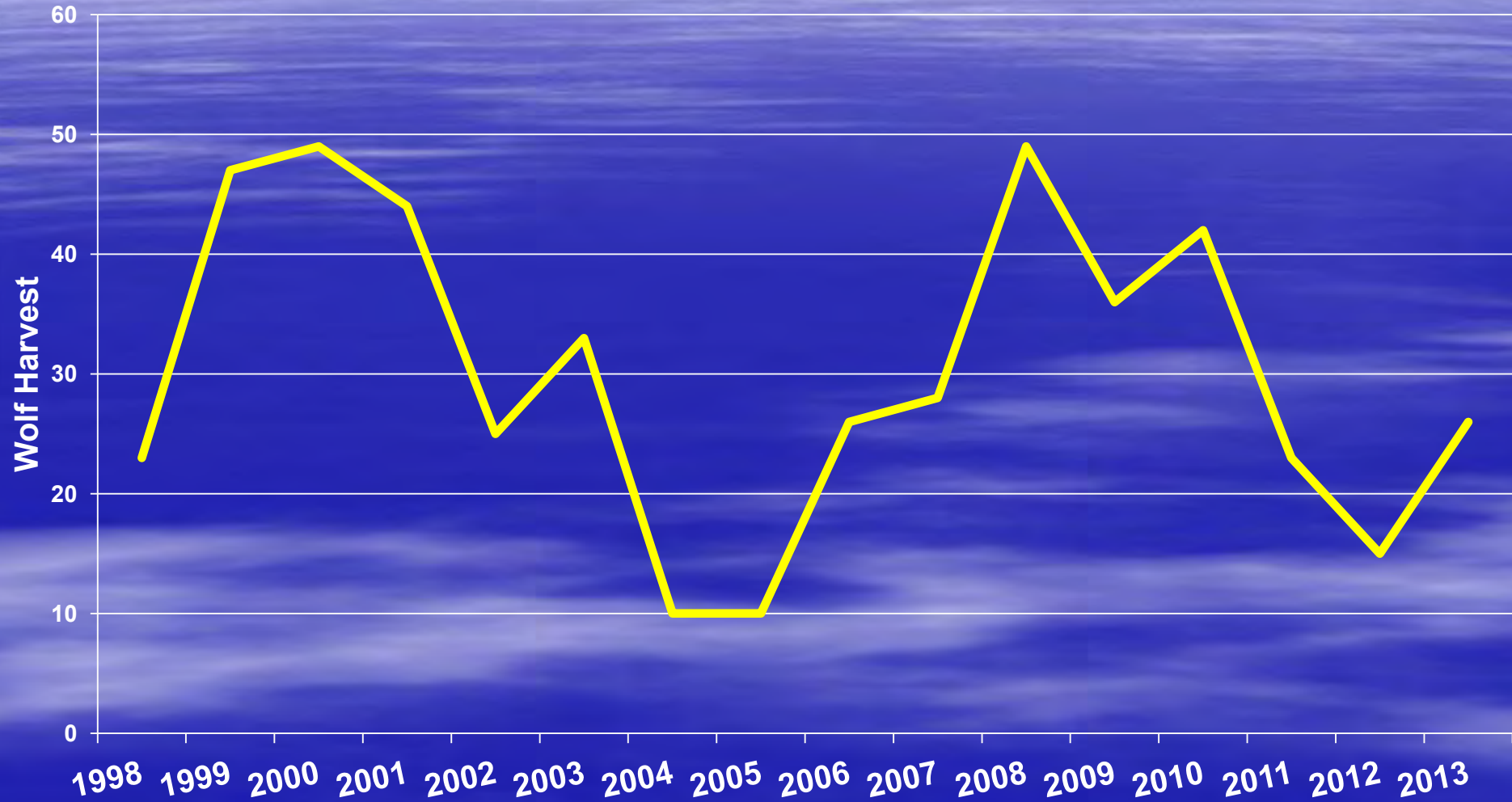
Unit 1A Brown Bear Harvest By Residency



Unit 1A Wolves

- Wolf Population Appears Stable
- Trapping Effort Fluctuates
- Most Trapping Along Beaches
- Trophy Species for Nonresidents
- Hunting Season Extended to include August and April
- Trapping Season extended November and April
- IM Feasibility Evaluation For Gravina Island

Unit 1A Wolf Harvest



IM For Portion of Unit 1A

- Feasibility Assessment
- Operational Plan
- Field Work Gravina Island
 - Deer Estimate (DNA technique development)
 - Vegetation Plots to evaluate winter habitat carrying capacity
 - Camera traps to estimate wolves
 - Wolf track distribution counts

Southern Southeast Alaska



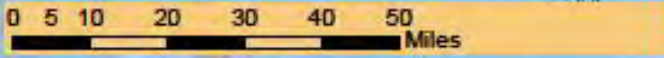
Unit 1A

Cleveland Peninsula
420 sq. mi.

Gravina Island
100 sq. mi.

Prince of Wales Island

Canada



Unit 1A Overview

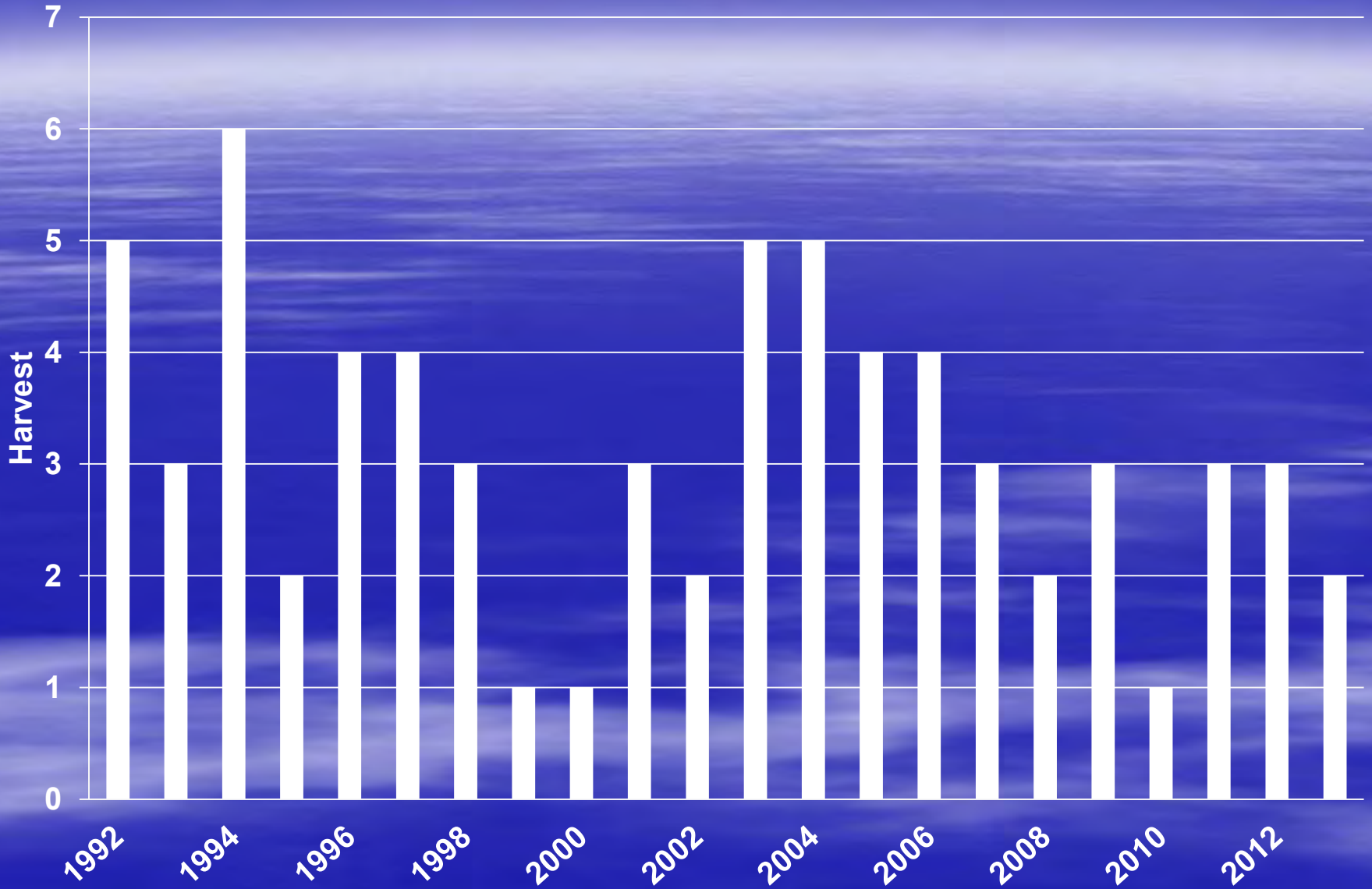


Gravina Island

Unit 1A Moose

- **Concentrated Mostly along Unuk River**
- **Population and Harvest Low**
- **Any Bull by Registration Permit**
- **Season: Sept. 15–Oct. 15**
- **Issue 40-70 Registration Permits Annually**
- **Harvest Variable (1–6 bulls)**
- **Federal Registration Hunt Starts 10 Days Early (Sept. 6)**

Unit 1A Moose Harvest



Unit 1A Furbearers

- **Marten average 167 (range 42-654)**
- **River Otter average 104 (range 45-185)**
- **Beaver average 35 (range 7-50)**
- **Wolverine average 3 (range 1-7)**

Ketchikan Hunter Education And Shooting Programs

Youth Shotgun League



Hunter Education



Proposal 12

Requests 4 changes to wolf hunting & trapping regulations in Unit 2

Public Proposal

Department Recommendation:

Neutral

AC Recommendation:

Craig AC: Oppose 0-8

Issue Statement

- Given the current restrictive harvest quota for Unit 2 wolves, a few prolific trappers can take a disproportionate share of the allowable harvest potentially resulting in early season closure.
- Proposed changes are intended to more equitably distribute the available harvest opportunity among individual trappers & hunters.

Proposed Changes to Unit 2 Wolf Hunting & Trapping Regulations:

- Reduce individual bag limit to 5 wolves per RY (hunt & trap combined)
- Require locking tags to be affixed at kill site
- Require trap site registration for wolves
- Only the trapper with registered trap site allowed to seal wolves taken at that site

Existing Regulations

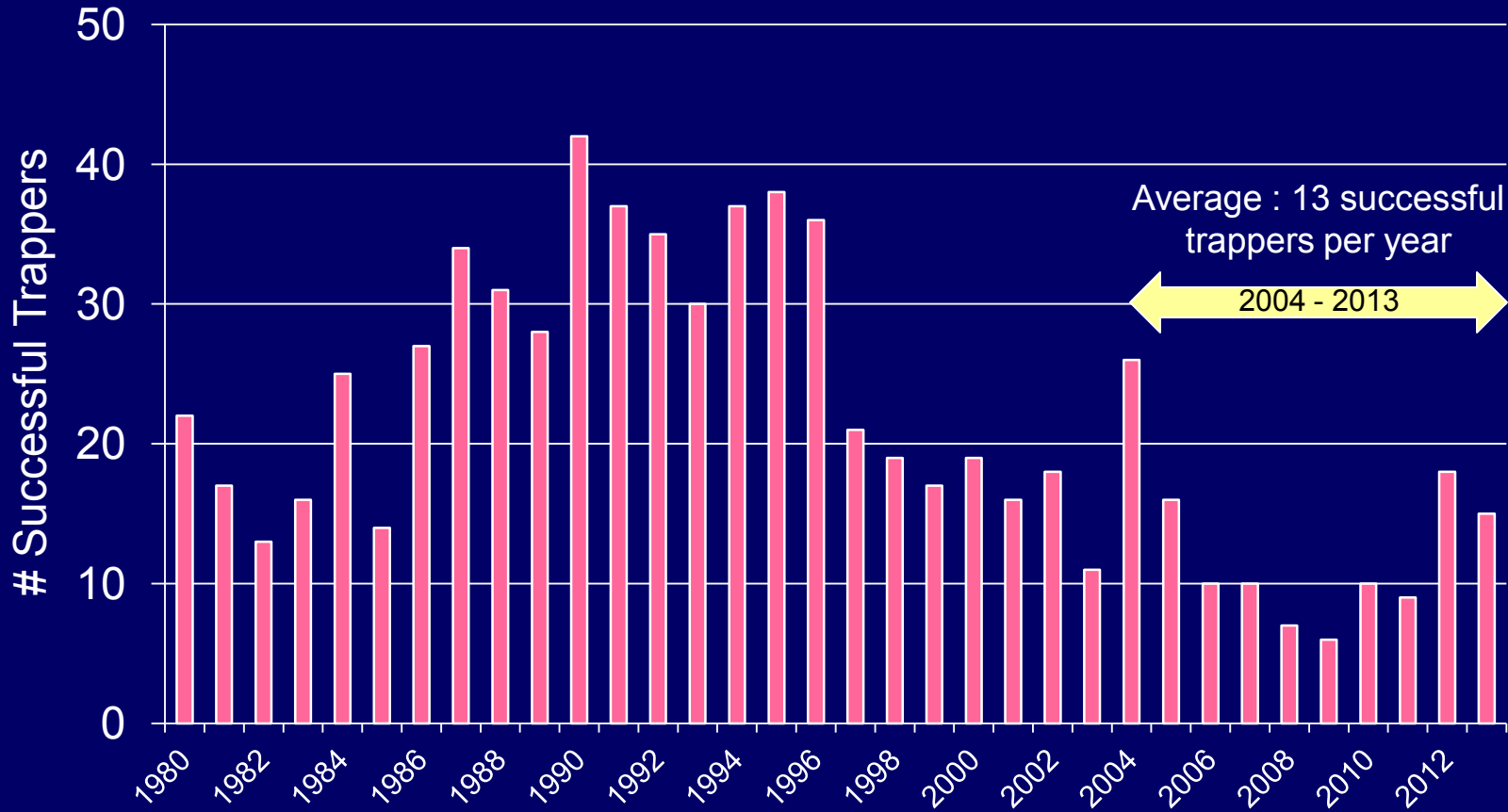
- **State Seasons:**

- Hunting: Dec 1 – March 31 (limit five)
- Trapping: Dec 1 – March 31 (**no limit**)

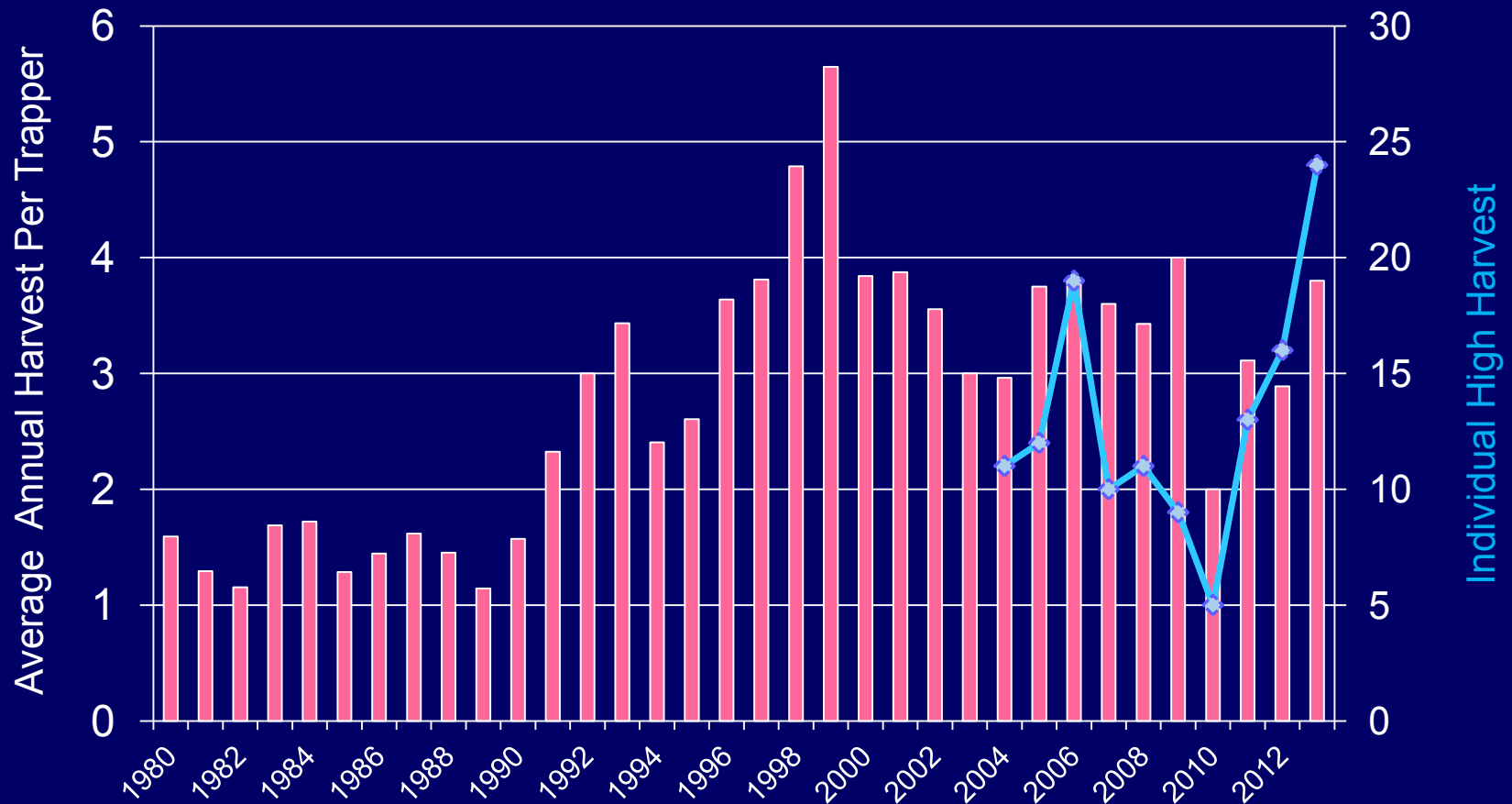
- **Federal Seasons:**

- Hunting: Sept 1 – March 31 (limit five)
- Trapping: Nov 15 – March 31 (**no limit**)

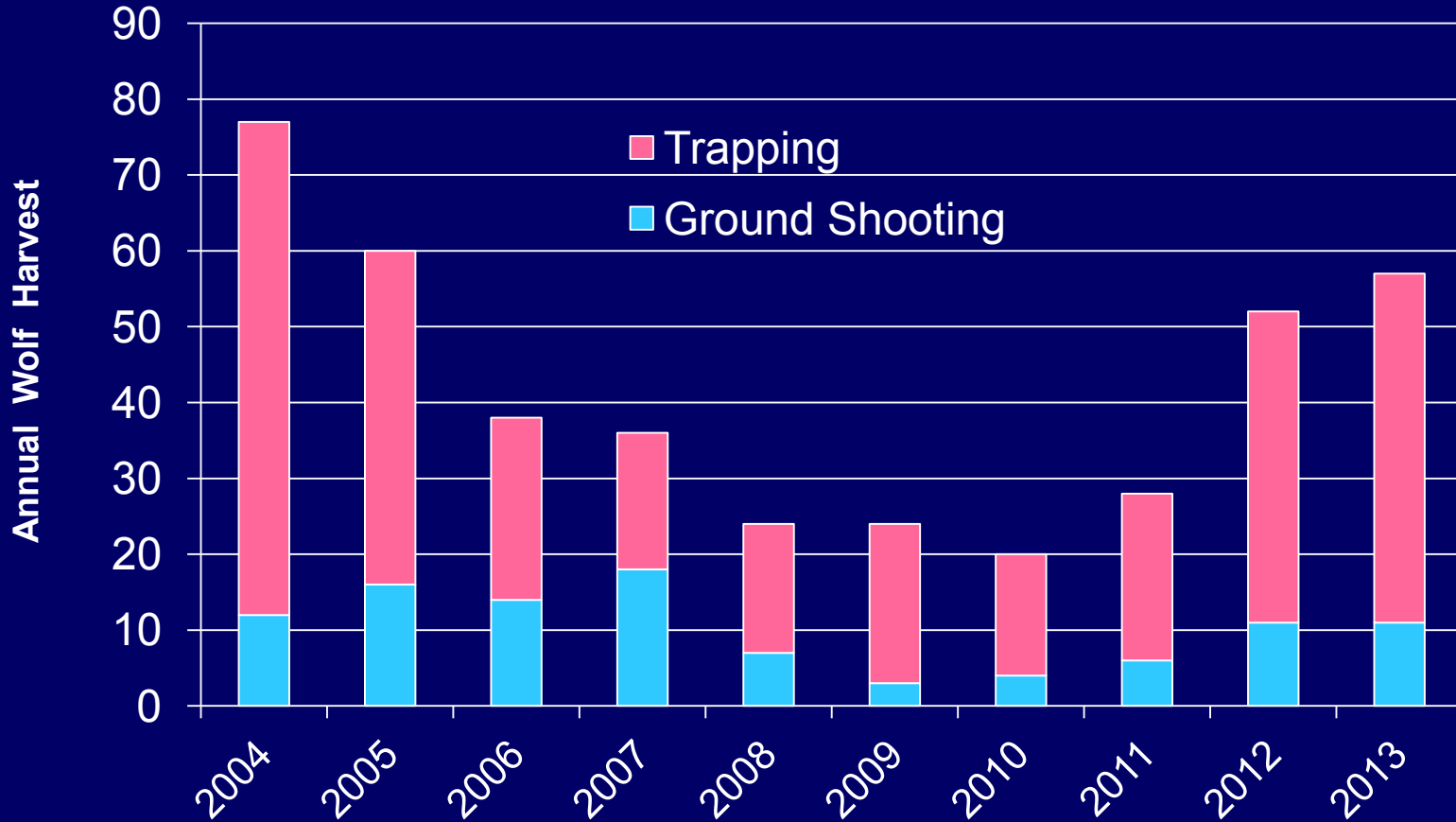
Successful Wolf Trappers (RY 1980-2013)



Wolves Per Successful Trapper (RY 1980-2013)



Method of Take



Discussion

- Allocation issue among individual trappers & hunters of Unit 2 wolves
- Proposal intended to ...
 - Spread harvest opportunity equitably among trappers & hunters
 - Reduce potential for early season closures

Proposal 12

Requests 4 changes to wolf hunting & trapping regulations in Unit 2

Public Proposal

Department Recommendation:

Neutral

AC Recommendation:

Craig AC: Oppose 0-8

Proposal 13

Count all Unit 2 wolf mortality toward the annual harvest quota and adjust the quota if natural mortality exceeds 8%

Public Proposal

Department Recommendation:

Oppose

AC Recommendations:

Craig AC: Oppose 0-8

Petersburg AC: Oppose 0-10

Sitka AC: Oppose 0-14

Wrangell AC: Oppose 0-11

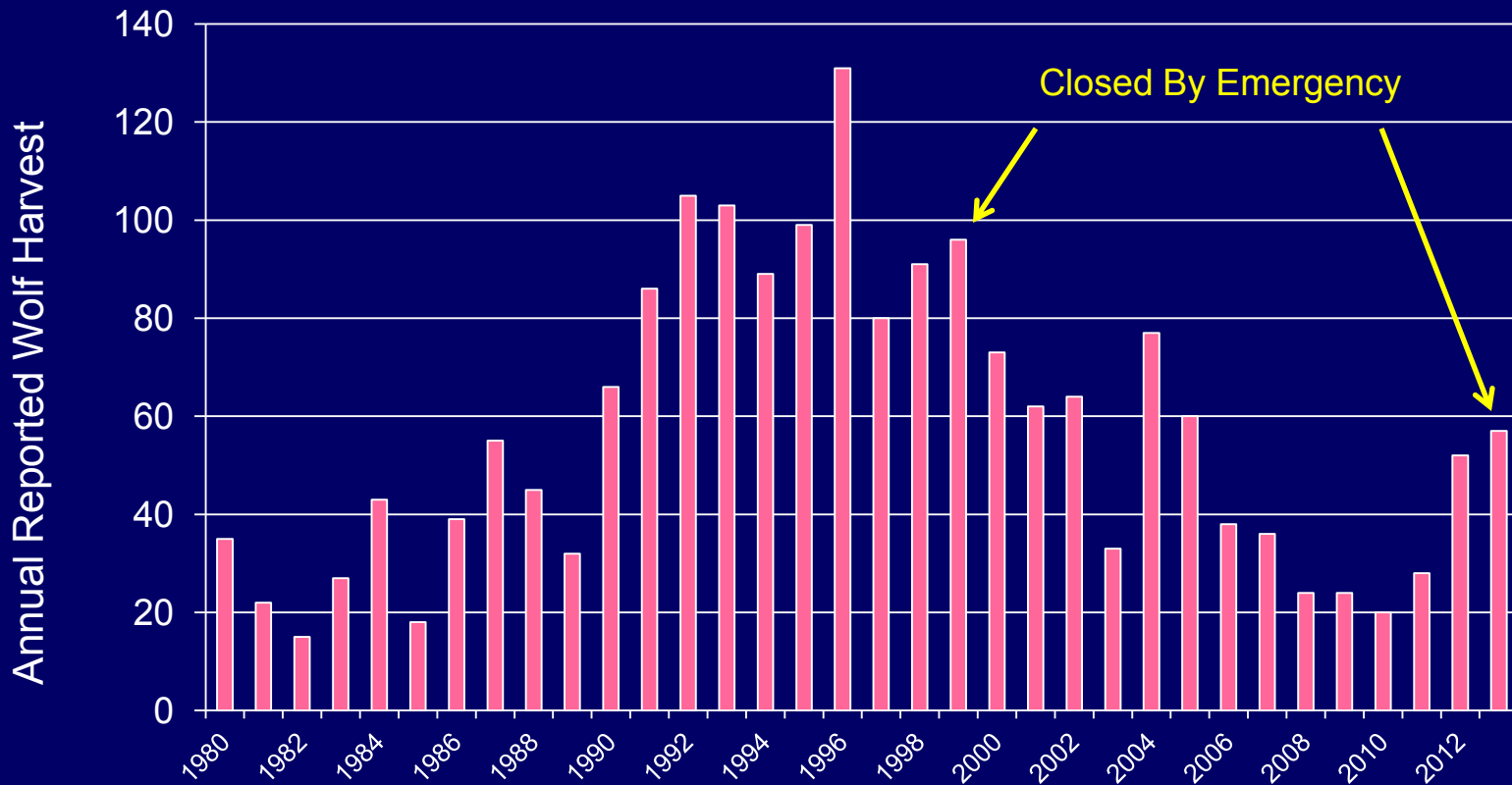
Two Primary Components:

- All causes of human related take of Unit 2 wolves (reported, illegal, wounding loss) would be accounted for in Department's annual harvest quota of 30% of the estimated fall population.
- The Department would adjust the 30% harvest quota if natural mortality exceeds 8%.

Background

- 38% total mortality was determined to be sustainable in a Unit 2 wolf study (Person & Russell 2008).
- Currently only sealed wolves are included in harvest totals.

Reported Wolf Harvest RY 1980-2013



Discussion

- Proposal 14 (Dept. Proposal) has feasible mechanism for achieving same result
 - Public outreach, broad local support
 - Conservative harvest quotas
 - Regulation for determining previously unreported wolves
- Not feasible for Dept. to conduct annual real-time estimates of natural mortality rates

Proposal 13

Count all Unit 2 wolf mortality toward the annual harvest quota and adjust the quota if natural mortality exceeds 8%.

Public Proposal

Department Recommendation:

Oppose

AC Recommendations:

Craig AC: Oppose 0-8

Petersburg AC: Oppose 0-10

Sitka AC: Oppose 0-14

Wrangell AC: Oppose 0-11

Proposal 14

Reduce the annual harvest quota for Unit 2 wolves and require reporting of wounded wolves

Department Proposal

Department Recommendation:

Support

AC Recommendations:

Craig AC: Support 8-0

Petersburg AC: Oppose 0-10

Sitka AC: Support 14-0

Two Primary Components:

1. Reduce annual harvest quota of Unit 2 wolves from 30% to 20% of the estimated fall population
2. Require mandatory reporting of unrecovered wolves. These wolves would count towards the annual harvest quota

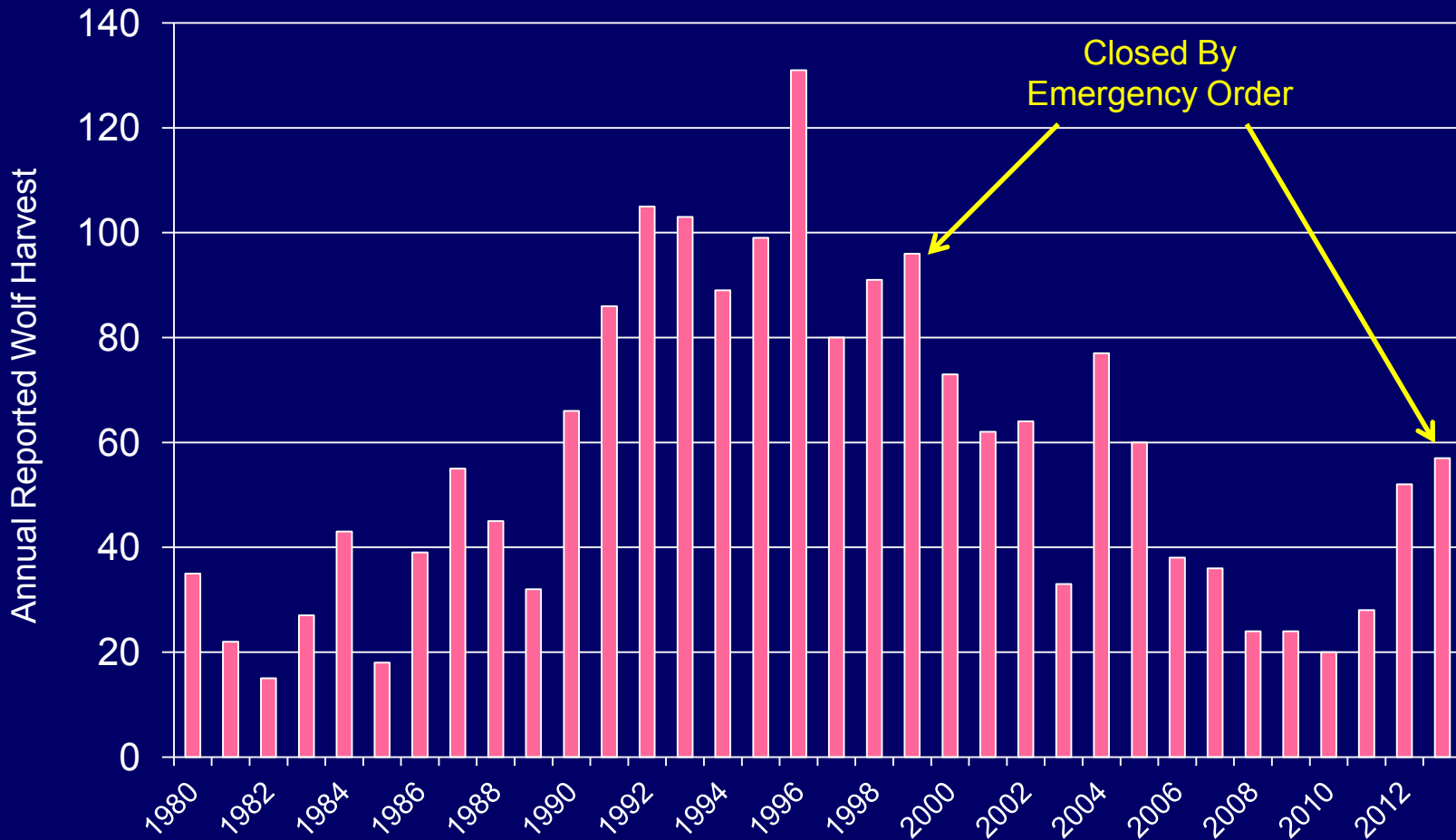
Background

- Person and Russell (2008) determined that 38% total mortality was sustainable in a Unit 2 wolf study
- Currently only sealed wolves are included in harvest totals

Discussion

- Reducing the harvest quota from 30% to 20% in regulation would reflect our current conservative management strategy.
- This proposal would provide a mechanism to help obtain numbers of unreported, wounded and/or illegal wolves.

Reported Unit 2 Wolf Harvest RY 1980-2013



Unit 2 Wolf Population

2013 estimated fall Unit 2 wolf population =
221 (95% CI 130 to 378)

** Estimate should be considered preliminary as the Dept. is currently in the process of refining the technique(s) used to estimate the Unit 2 wolf population*

Discussion

The Department sees this proposal and related management actions as a conservative approach to Unit 2 wolf management until updated population estimate is obtained

- Public outreach, broad local support
- Conservative harvest quotas
- Regulation for determining previously unreported wolves

Proposal 14

Reduce the annual harvest quota for Unit 2 wolves and require reporting of wounded wolves

Department Proposal

Department Recommendation:

Support

AC Recommendations:

Craig AC: Support 8-0

Petersburg AC: Oppose 0-10

Sitka AC: Support 14-0

Proposal 15

Allow the use of firearms to take
beaver in Unit 2

Public Proposal

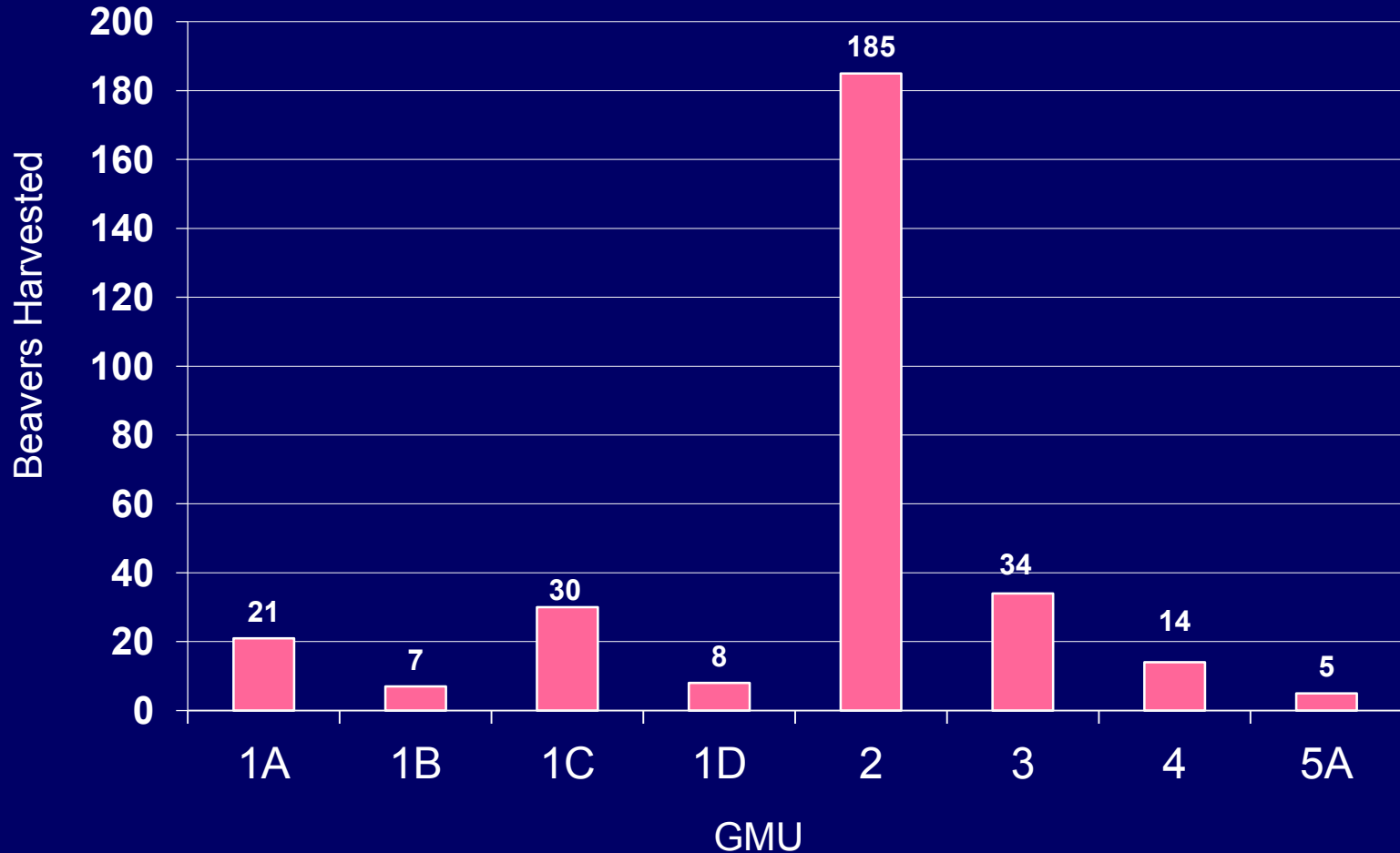
Department Recommendation:

Neutral

AC Recommendations:

Craig AC: Support 8-0
Juneau-Douglas AC: Support 9-0

Region I Average Annual Beaver Harvest (RY 2004-2013)



Discussion

- Not a conservation concern
- Numerous complaints and nuisance permits
- Legal to use firearms for river otter in SE
- Legal to use firearms for beavers in other areas of the state
- Consider extending proposal to all of SE

Proposal 15

Allow the use of firearms to take
beaver in Unit 2

Public Proposal

Department Recommendation:

Neutral

AC Recommendations:

Craig AC: Support 8-0
Juneau-Douglas AC: Support 9-0