

**Wildlife Restoration MULTI-YEAR GRANT
INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

**Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Wildlife Restoration Grant**

GRANT NUMBER: AKW-R-12-2019

PROJECT NUMBER: P2.0

PROJECT TITLE: Wolf demography in the Fortymile Caribou Herd range following 20 years of predator reductions in Upper Yukon-Tanana Predation Control Area (UYTPCA).

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: 22 Feb. 2019 – 30 June 2022

PERFORMANCE YEAR: 31 March 2020 – 30 Sept. 2021

REPORT DUE DATE: 29 Dec. 2021

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Danny Caudill and Torsten Bentzen, ADF&G

COOPERATORS: None.

Authorities: 2 CFR 200.328
2 CFR 200.301
50 CFR 80.90

I. PROGRESS ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES DURING PERFORMANCE YEAR

OBJECTIVE 1A: Estimate wolf survival in the study area.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: We captured and radio-marked 10, 3, and 43 wolves in the late spring of 2020, fall of 2020, and spring of 2021, respectively. Similar to last reporting period, we monitored ~90 wolves from 35+ packs. We monitored these animals throughout the year to verify survival status.

OBJECTIVE 1B: Estimate wolf productivity.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: During survival monitoring flights (which in many instances occurred multiple times a month) we attempted to count all wolves associated with radio-marked wolves and attempted to classify the uncollared wolves by age. In many instances the wolves were difficult to classify by age by the fall (e.g., Oct.) of each year. Department staff flew ~70 days in state aircraft during the reporting period to monitor survival, productivity, and pack size. Contract pilots were regularly used to augment department counts and to assess observer variability. We are compiling and digitizing the data collected on these flights for future analyses.

OBJECTIVE 1C: Estimate wolf pack size.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Wolf pack sizes were recorded on each flight (survival or survey) when possible (i.e. wolves were in vegetation that allowed observation from an aircraft) as outlined in 1B accomplishments.

OBJECTIVE 2A: Wolf population estimate for territorial wolves in radio-marked packs.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: We will use the counts conducted in 1B, once the data are compiled and digitized, to estimate fall population size in marked packs. We will use the counts conducted in 2B to estimate the spring population size in marked packs once the data are compiled and digitized.

OBJECTIVE 2B: Wolf population estimate for territorial wolves in unmarked packs.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Because we conducted a survey of the entire study area in the spring of 2021 and we have a large number of radiomarked packs and individuals, we did not attempt to survey the study area in the spring of 2021 (i.e., survey for unmarked wolf packs in the study area).

OBJECTIVE 3: Literature review, data analysis, reporting writing, and publication of results.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: The principal investigators reviewed the literature and completed reports. Data was compiled, backed-up electronically, and entry into databases is ongoing.

II. SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON PROJECT TO DATE.

This is the second year of the project; accordingly, all accomplishments completed to date are outlined in the specific objective above or in the specific objectives in the report from the first year as nearly all accomplishments to date are associated with field data collection (i.e., little analytical work has been started).

III. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT REPORTS AND/OR AMENDMENTS.

None

IV. PUBLICATIONS

None during the reporting period.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT

The project should continue as planned. At the cessation of this project, some funds should be allocated to another project to monitor the marked wolves until the radiocollars reach the end of their service lives. Doing so will maximize the information gain from marked individuals.

Prepared by: Danny Caudill

Date: 12/28/2021

Literature Cited

None.