

## **Proposal 203: Unit 23/26A Sheep**

- ∞ This proposal closes the Dall sheep seasons in Unit 23 and Unit 26A west of the Etivluk River drainage due to population decline**
- ∞ Department proposal**

# Proposal 203: AC Recommendations

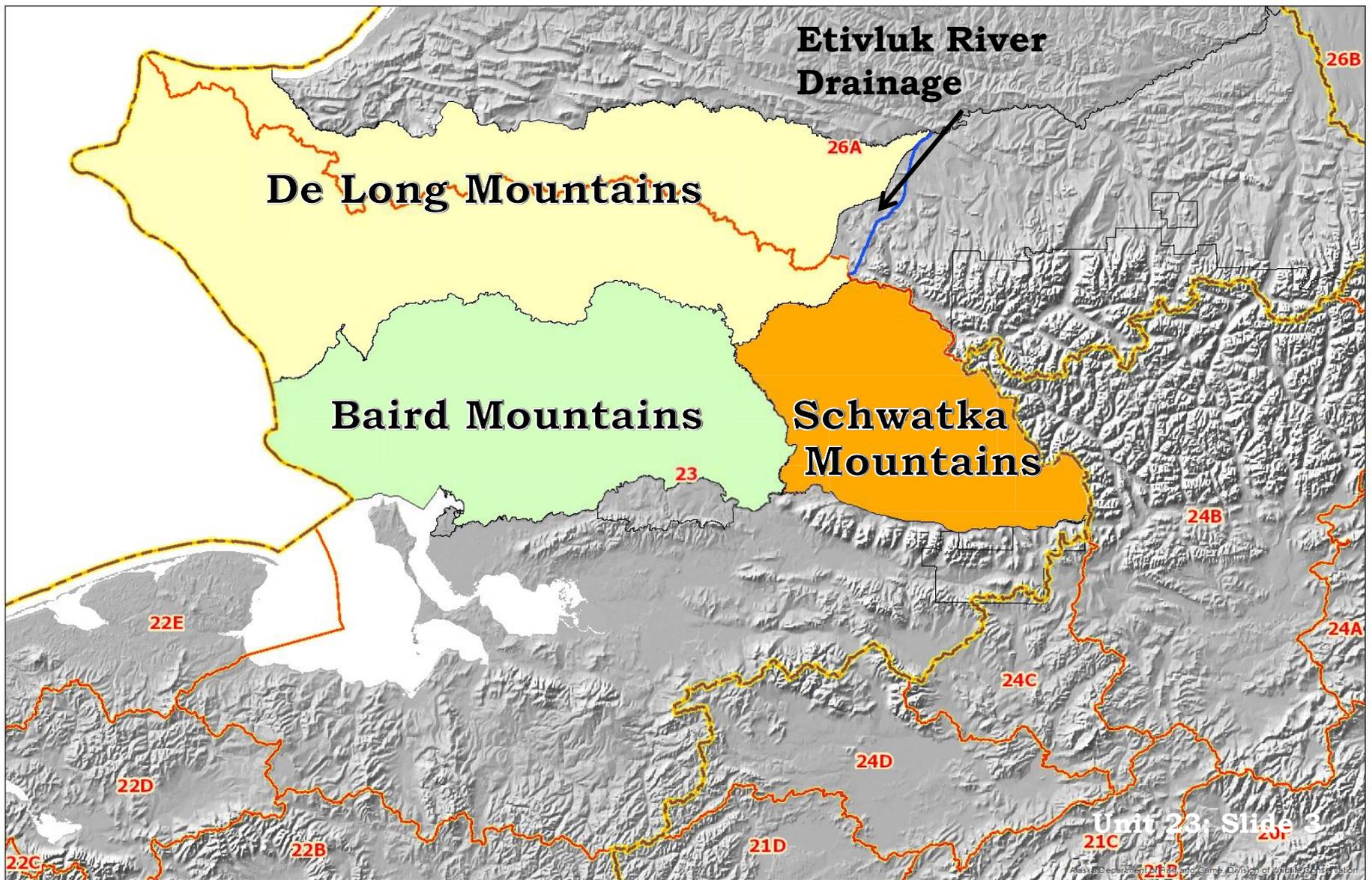
## ↪ Unit 23

⊗ Kotzebue Sound AC	SUPPORT
⊗ Noatak-Kivalina AC	SUPPORT
⊗ N. Seward Peninsula AC	No Vote
⊗ Lower Kobuk AC	No Vote
⊗ Upper Kobuk AC	No Vote

## ↪ Unit 26

⊗ North Slope AC	SUPPORT
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# Proposed Closures: Units 23 and 26A



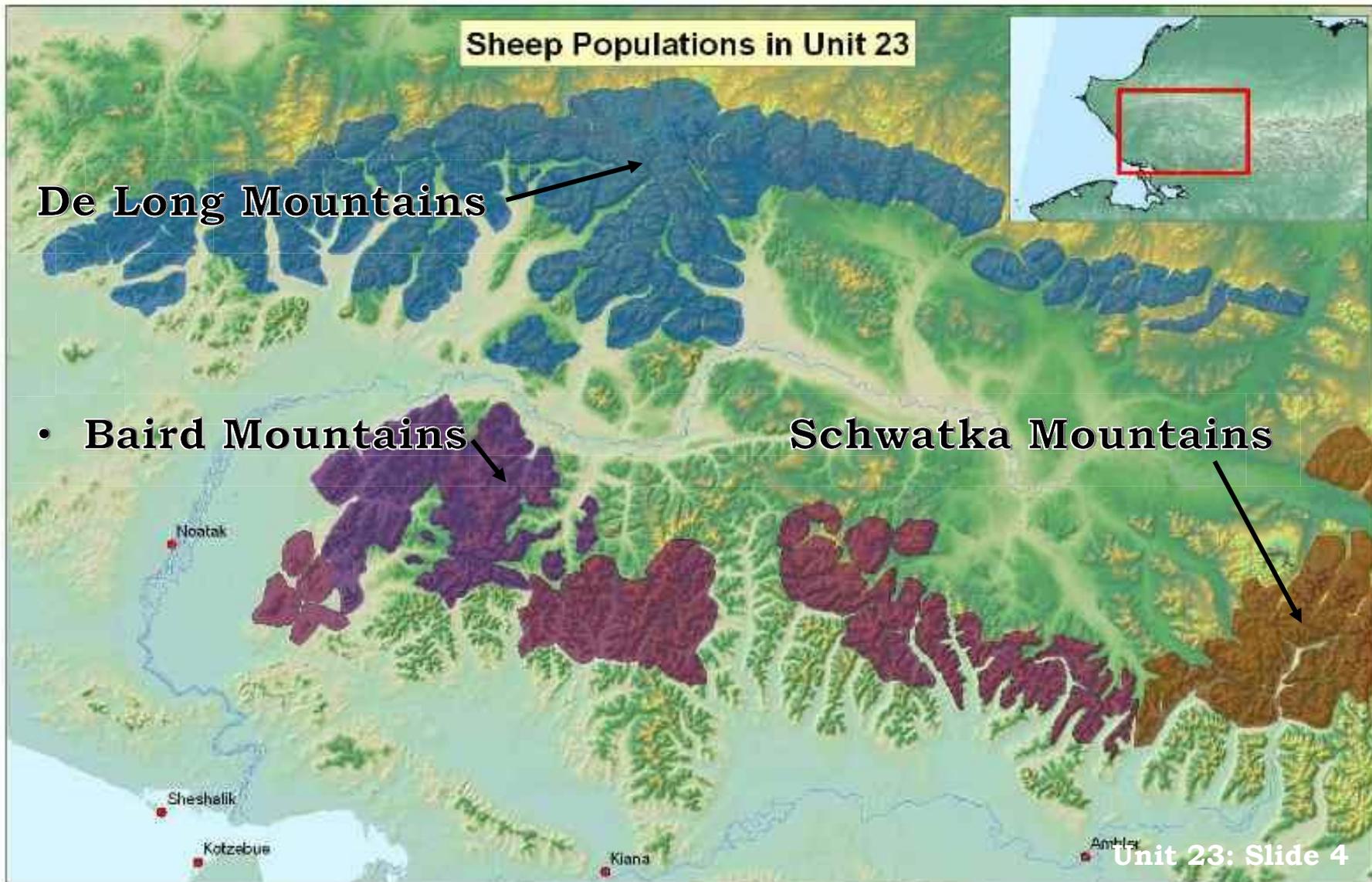
# Sheep Populations/Ranges

Sheep Populations in Unit 23

De Long Mountains

• Baird Mountains

Schwatka Mountains



## Unit 23/26A Sheep ANS Finding

### ∞ **De Long Mountains**

ANS = 0 – 9 sheep

### ∞ **Baird Mountains**

ANS = 18 – 47 sheep

### ∞ **Schwatka Mountains**

ANS = 2 – 4 sheep

# Proposal 203: Sheep Regulations

## De Long Mountains (Portions of Units 23 and 26A)

### RESIDENT REGISTRATION:

1 sheep by registration permit

Aug. 10 – Apr. 30

(Subsistence hunt only)

### GENERAL SEASON DRAW:

1 ram with full curl or larger  
by drawing permit when  
harvestable surplus is  
greater than 9 sheep

Aug. 10 – Sept. 20

**Proposed regulation:** De Long Mountains (Unit 23 northern and western portion, and Unit 26A that portion west of Etivluk River **drainage**)

RESIDENT REGISTRATION RS388: **No open season.**

GENERAL SEASON DRAW: **No open season.**

# Proposal 203: Sheep Regulations

## Baird Mountains (Portions of Unit 23)

RESIDENT REGISTRATION (Not Issued\*\*):

1 sheep by registration permit                      Aug. 10 – Apr. 30  
(Subsistence hunt only)

GENERAL SEASON DRAW (Not Issued\*\*):

1 ram with full curl or larger                      Aug. 10 – Sept. 20  
by drawing permit when  
harvestable surplus is  
greater than 47 sheep

\*\*Federal management and harvest has prevented State  
hunt since 1995.

**Proposed regulation:** Baird Mountains (Unit 23 southern  
and western portion)

RESIDENT REGISTRATION:                      **No open season.**

GENERAL SEASON DRAW:                      **No open season.**

# Proposal 203: Sheep Regulations

## Schwatka Mountains (Unit 23 Remainder)

### RESIDENT REGISTRATION:

3 sheep by registration permit

Aug. 1 – Apr. 30

(Subsistence hunt only)

### GEN. SEASON HARVEST TICKET:

1 ram with full curl

Aug. 10 – Sept. 20

## Proposed regulation: Schwatka Mountains (Unit 23 Remainder)

### RESIDENT REGISTRATION:

No open season.

### GEN. SEASON HARVEST TICKET:

No open season.

# Proposal 203: Sheep Regulations

## Unit 26A east of Etivluk River, excluding Gates of the Arctic National Park

### RESIDENT REGISTRATION:

3 sheep by registration permit

Aug. 1 – Apr. 30

(Subsistence hunt only)

### GEN. SEASON HARVEST TICKET:

1 ram with full curl or larger

Aug. 10 – Sept. 20

**Proposed regulation:** Unit 26A, that portion east of **and including** the Etivluk River **drainage** excluding Gates of the Arctic National Park

### RESIDENT REGISTRATION:

3 sheep by registration permit

Aug. 1 – Apr. 30

(Subsistence hunt only)

### GEN. SEASON HARVEST TICKET:

1 ram with full curl or larger

Aug. 10 – Sept. 20

# Proposal 203: Sheep Regulations

## **Unit 26A, that portion within Gates of the Arctic National Park**

GEN. SEASON HARVEST TICKET:

3 sheep

Aug. 1 – Apr. 30

**Proposed regulation: No change**

GEN. SEASON HARVEST TICKET:

3 sheep

Aug. 1 – Apr. 30

# Sheep Population Summary

Marginal habitat, edge of range – supports low populations

Minimal exchange - discontinuous populations

Winter mortality early 1990s – all seasons closed

Slow recovery to 2009 – about 80% of previous numbers

Winter mortality 2014 – extensive icing in western ranges

Declines of 50-80% – varies by area, similar to mid-1990s

# De Long Mountains Population

**2014 preliminary estimate** is 359 sheep  
80% decline since 2011

**Ram: “ewe-likes” ratio** (2011, 2014)  
Declined from 35 to 33 rams:100 “ewe-likes”

**Large ram ratio** (2011, 2014)  
Declined from 3 to 2 rams:100 “ewe-likes”

**Lamb ratio** (2011, 2014)  
Declined from 8 to 4:100 “ewe-likes”.

# Baird Mountains Population

**2014 preliminary estimate** is 309 sheep

50% decline since 2011 (n= 587 sheep)

63% decline since 2009 (n= 823 sheep)

**Ram: “ewe-likes” ratio** (2009, 2011, 2014)

Changed from 36 to 21 to 23:100 “ewe-likes” sheep

**Large ram ratio** (2009, 2011, 2014)

Declined from 7 to 3 to 1 rams:100 “ewe-likes” sheep

**Lamb ratio** (2009, 2011, 2014)

Declined from 33 to 23 to 2:100 “ewe-likes” sheep

2014 lamb recruitment was the lowest on record

Much lower than 7:100 “ewe-likes” observed in 1991

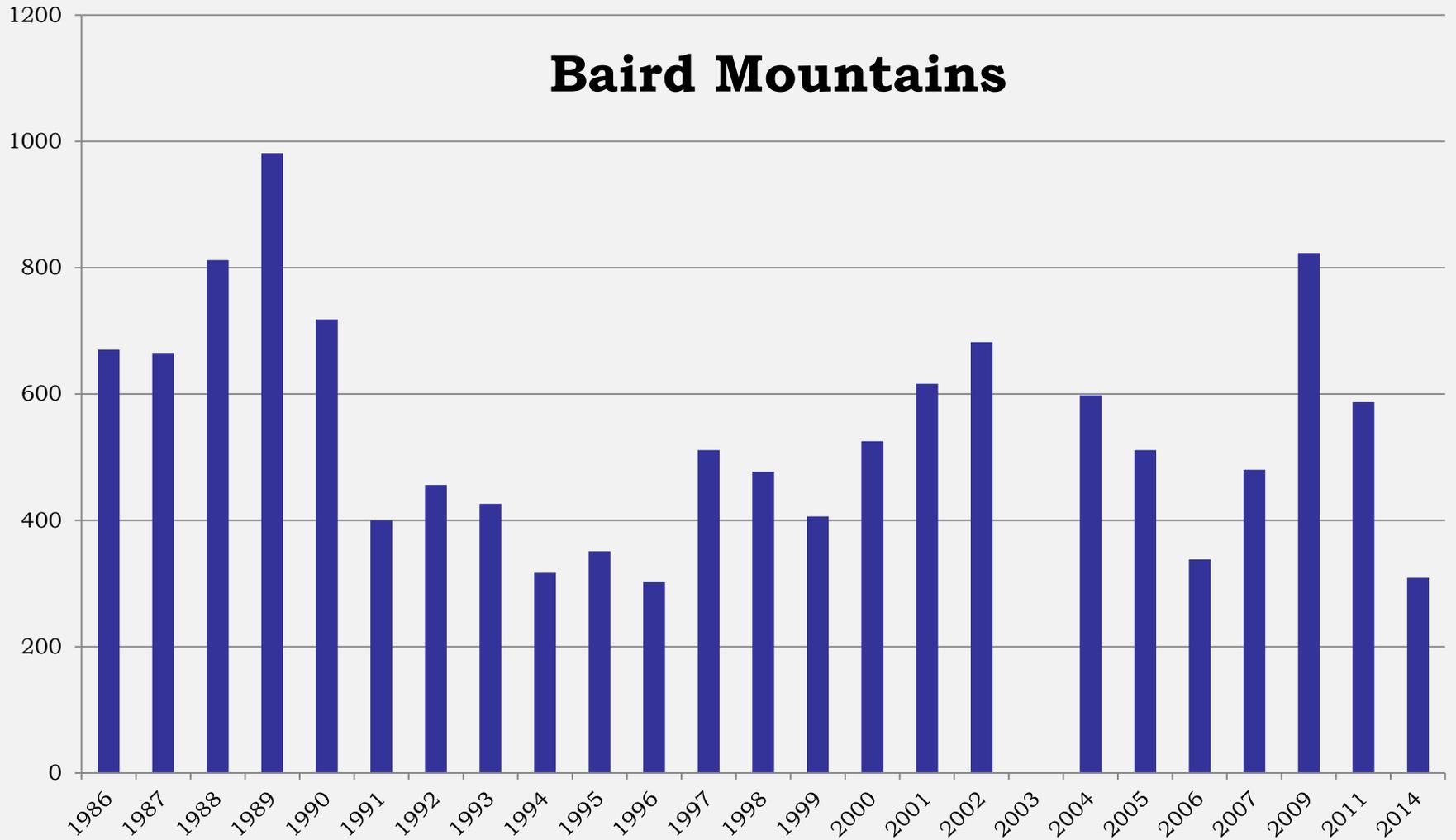
Prior to recent winter mort events, lamb ratios were

30:100 “ewe-likes” in 1989

33:100 “ewe-likes” in 2009

# Sheep Abundance

## Baird Mountains



# Schwatka Mountains Population

**2014 preliminary estimate** - not surveyed

Surveys in 2014 show declines within GAAR;

**2014 Itkillik Area preliminary estimate** is 646 sheep

60% decline since 2011 (n = 1,669 sheep)

Itkillik Area is a comparative area to east  
Schwatka Mountains likely similarly affected

**Ram: “ewe-likes” ratio** (2011, 2014)

38 to 70 rams:100 “ewe-likes” sheep

Ratio influenced by 60% reduction in “ewe-likes”  
Effects of low recruitment for several years

Ram count decreased 27% from 335 to 244 rams

**Large ram ratio** (no data)

**Lamb ratio** (2011, 2014)

Declined from 25 to 11:100 “ewe-likes” sheep

# Harvest Summary

	Number of sheep harvested				
Regulatory year	Baird Mtns	De Long Mtns	Schwatka Mtns	Unknown	Total Harvest
<b>RY2009</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>RY2010</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>26</b>
<b>RY2011</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>21</b>
<b>RY2012</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>19</b>
<b>RY2013</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>20</b>
	<b>Amount Necessary for Subsistence (ANS)</b>				
	<b>18-47</b>	<b>0-9</b>	<b>2-4</b>		

# Harvest Summary

## **Baird Mountains (2004 – 2011)**

Average harvest was 2% of ewes

Average harvest was 14% of rams

## **De Long Mountains (2011)**

Based on ratios, very low numbers of full curl rams

Full curl hunter success is expected to be negligible

90% decline in lambs yields minimal recruitment

## **Registration permit hunts (RS388 and RS389)**

Take of 'any sheep' (current bag limit) is ill-advised

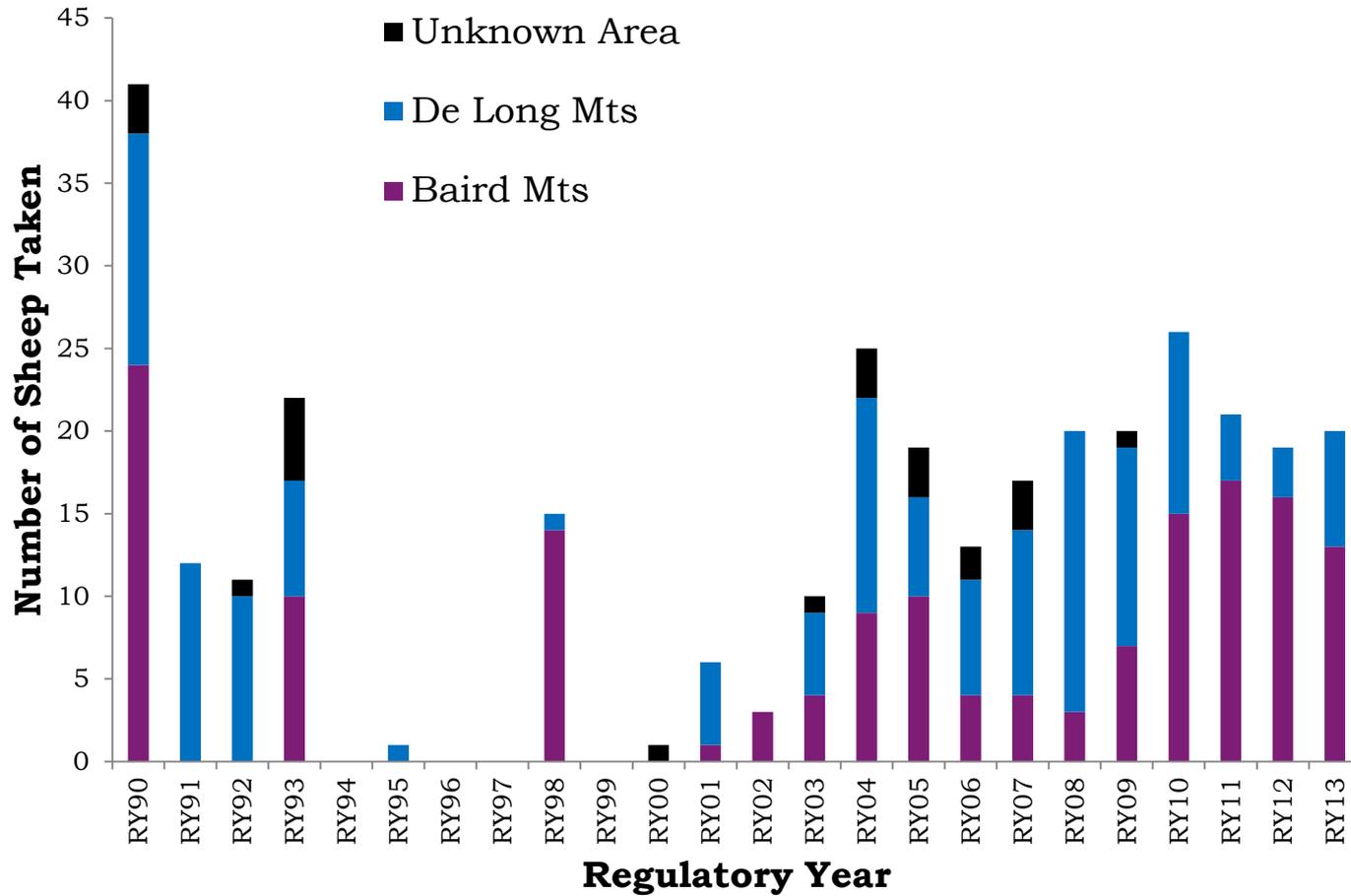
Negative impacts on population recovery

## **Department recommendation**

Close all hunting seasons (low numbers of sheep)

Promote population recovery

# Sheep Harvest Chart



# Summary of Closures

- Affects all state hunts (general season, subsistence) in Unit 23 and Unit 26A west of Etivluk River drainage
  - ⊗ De Long Mountains in Units 23 and 26A
  - ⊗ Baird Mountains in Unit 23
  - ⊗ Schwatka Mountains in Unit 23
- General season closures affect residents and nonresidents hunting by harvest ticket or drawing permit
- Subsistence hunt closures affect registration permits
  - RS388 (De Long Mountains, residents only)
  - RS389 (Schwatka Mountains, residents only)
- Populations will be monitored and when harvests can be sustained; a proposal to restore hunting opportunity will be prepared by the department

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