

REGION I OVERVIEW

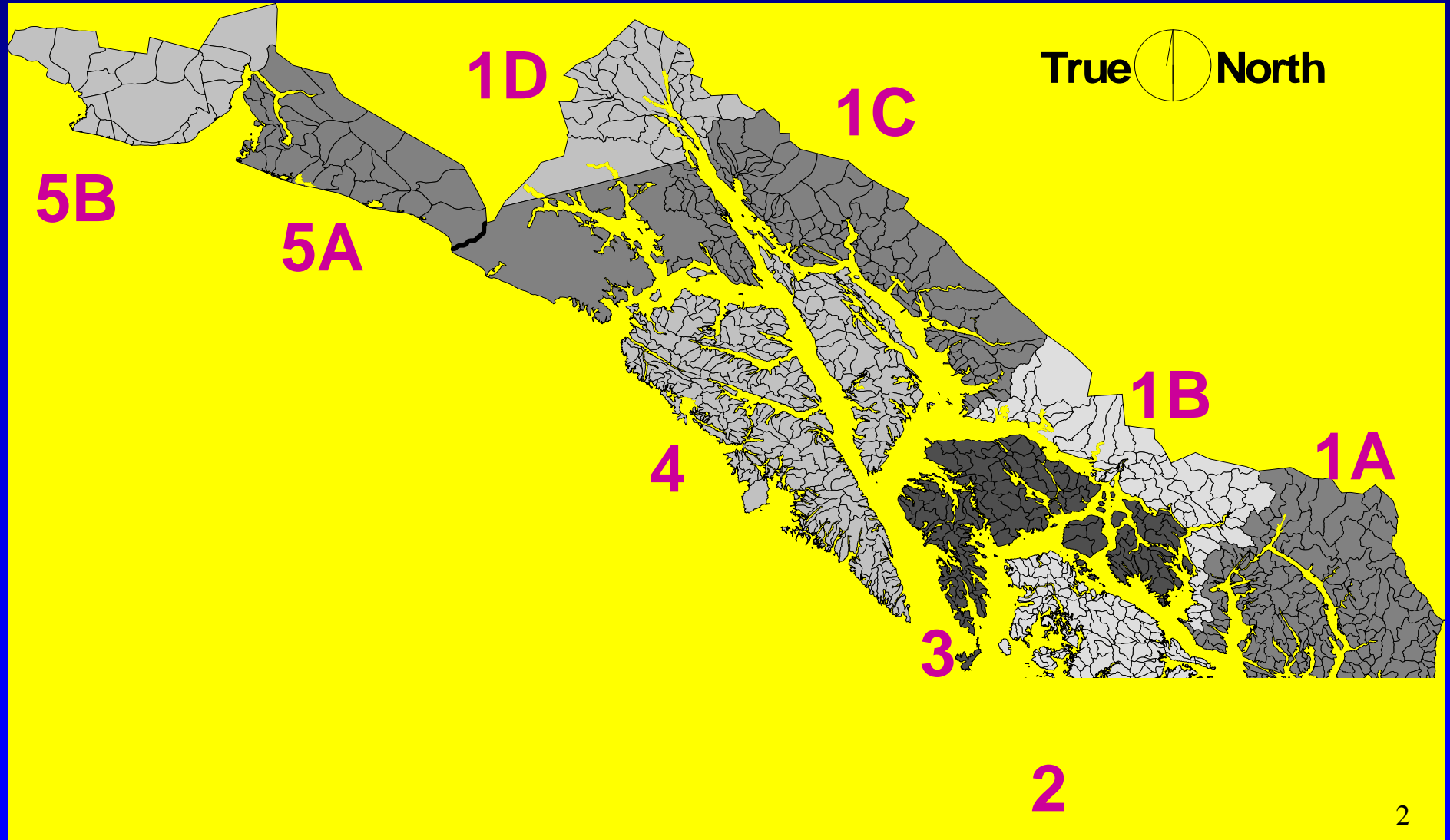
ALASKA BOARD OF GAME

SITKA, ALASKA

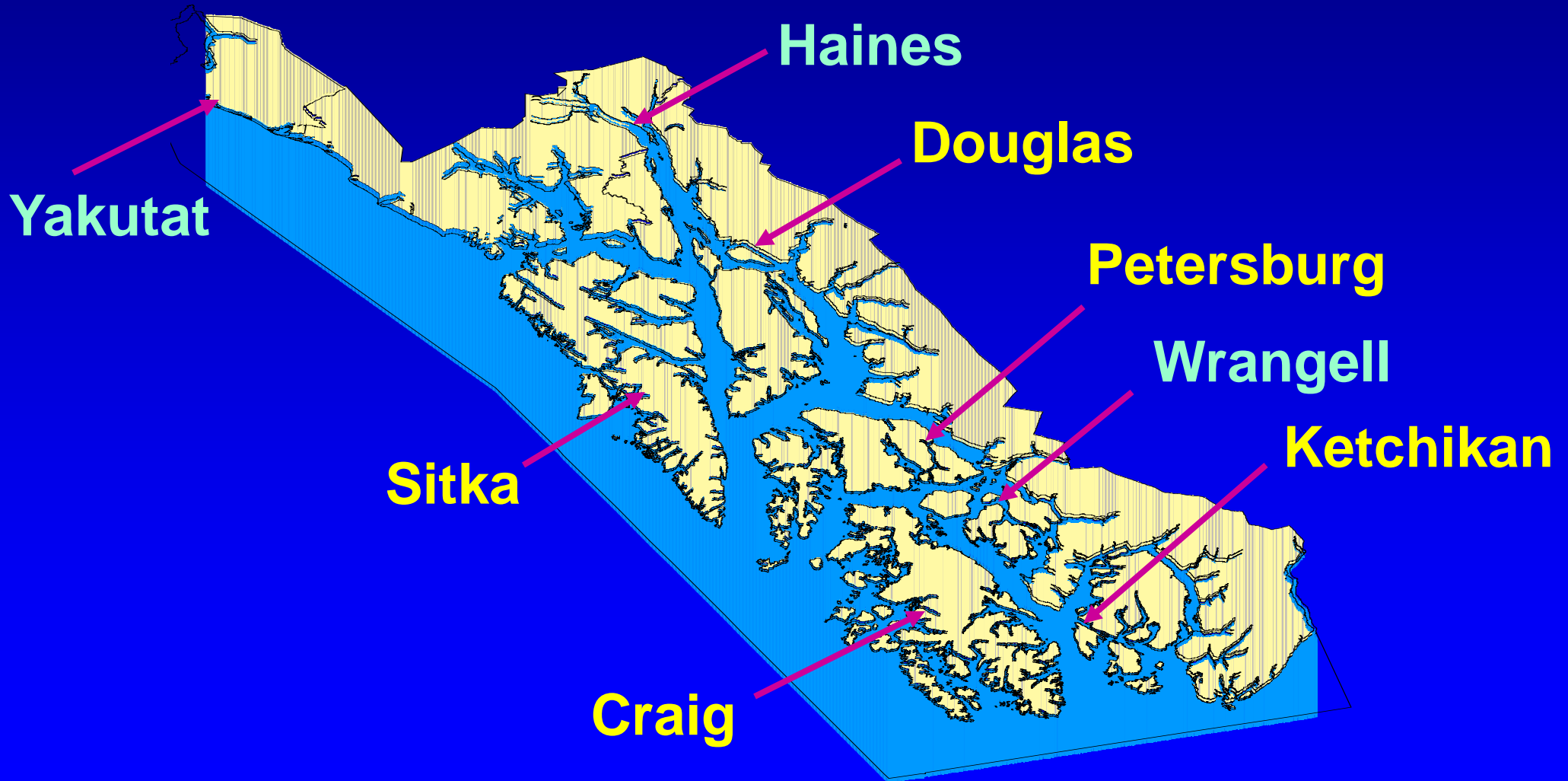
JANUARY 2013

Doug Larsen, Regional Supervisor

REGIONAL UNITS & SUBUNITS



Area & Regional Offices



REGIONAL STAFFING

Twenty-eight Full Time & Seasonal Staff; currently no vacant positions

Management Coordinator

- **Neil Barten (Douglas)**

Research Coordinator

- **Rod Flynn (Douglas)**

Four Area Biologists & Two Assistant ABs

- **Ryan Scott / Stephanie Sell (Douglas) – Units 1C, 1D, and 5**
- **Rich Lowell (Petersburg) – Units 1B and 3**
- **Phil Mooney (Sitka) – Unit 4**
- **Boyd Porter / Steve Bethune (Ketchikan / Craig) – Units 1A and 2**

REGIONAL STAFFING

Research Biologists

- **Dave Person, Kris Larson (Ketchikan)**
- **Kevin White, Karin McCoy, Anthony Crupi (Douglas)**

Wildlife Technicians

- **Lavern Beier, Chad Rice, Jane Pascoe, Carl Koch, Jeff Jemison, Frank Zmuda (Douglas)**

Administrative / Accounting / Program Technicians

- **Brenda Hildre, Jay Litke, Brenda Bowers (Douglas), Holley Dennison (Sitka), Mary Meucci (Petersburg), Emo Bylund (Ketchikan)**

Biometrics and GIS Support

- **Grey Pendleton, Dave Gregovich (Douglas)**

REGIONAL BUDGET

FY13 - \$3.9 million, including salaries

Federal Aid & Fish and Game Funds: (\$2.77 million)

General Fund: (\$0.82 million)

Special Project Funds

(FS, BLM, NPS, DNR, City of Sitka): (\$0.34 million)

Budget increased in the past two years

Federal Aid appropriation (sale of firearms and ammunition)

LAND OWNERSHIP

- **Tongass National Forest (FS)**
 - 69,000 km² (76%) of lands in Southeast
- **Glacier Bay National Park (NPS)**
 - 13,300 km² (15%) of lands in Southeast
 - No hunting or trapping in park
- **Remaining lands**
 - State or private ownership (9%)

REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Management

- Survey & Inventory
- Public service
- Hunt monitoring
- Nuisance wildlife



REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Research

- Black bears (Unit 2)
- Brown bears (Units 1C, 1D, 5)
- Deer fawn survivorship (Unit 2)
- Deer population assessment techniques (Units 3, 4)
- Marten population assessment (Unit 3 – Kuiu Island)
- Moose (Unit 1C – Gustavus, Berners Bay)
- Mountain goats (Units 1A, 1C, 1D, 4)
- Predator dynamics (Unit 1C – Gustavus)
- Elk (Unit 3)



REGIONAL PROGRAMS

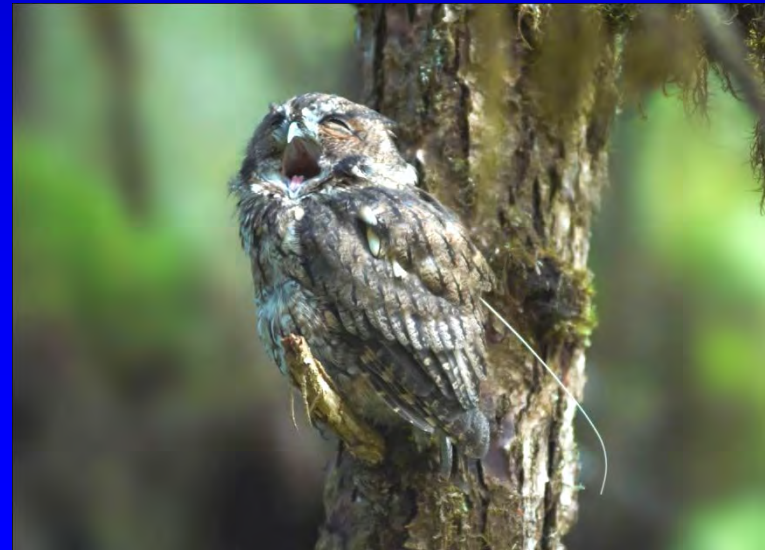
Pack Creek Bear Viewing

HE & Juneau Shooting Facility

Wildlife Diversity

Marine Mammals

Education & Outreach



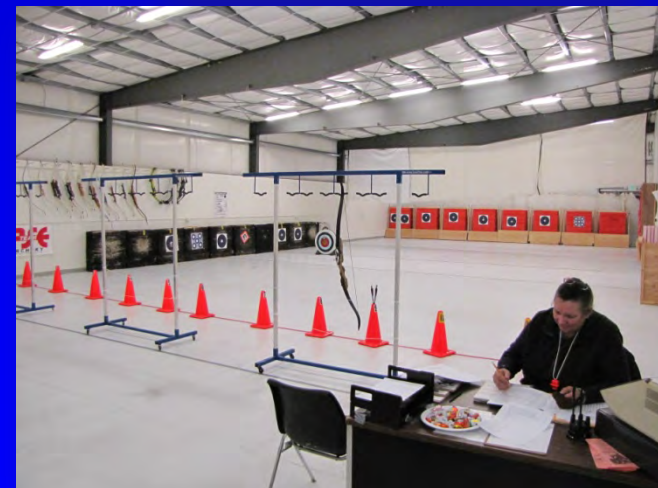
PACK CREEK

- Partnership with USFS; started in late 1980s
- Viewing area; closed to bear hunting
- Radio-collaring effort completed in 2012
- Viewership up in 2012 (over 1,000 visitors)
- Annual revenue up from \$14,000 to ~\$19,000
- New FS on-line permitting
- Seven new guide companies in 2012; 10 now active



HUNTER EDUCATION

- Staff involved in teaching courses across the region; Frank Zmuda regional lead
- User numbers low in Juneau indoor shooting facility
- Archery side completed, thanks to numerous volunteers
- Juneau Archery Club and Juneau Shooting Sports Foundation active and helping greatly



WILDLIFE DIVERSITY



- Karen Blejwas
- Alpine surveys
- Bat captures, telemetry, and surveys
- Bioblitz (Juneau)
- Bycatch of Kittlitz's murrelets
- Contaminants in rock sandpipers



MARINE MAMMALS

Harbor Seal Research

Gail Blundell, Christine Schmale

- Endicott and Tracy Arms; cruise ships, day boats, private vessels
- Important habitat for pupping, breeding, & molting seals
- Research focused on frequency and effects of disturbance



Sea lion Research

Lauri Jemison, Kelly Hastings

- Survival, reproduction, recruitment
- Distribution and movements, entanglements
- Concurrent studies in western Alaska



EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- **Tennie Bentz**
- **Brochures & Booklets**
- **ABC is partner program**
- **Volunteers give school presentations**



DEER TRAILS

News about deer biology, management and current research projects in Southeast

Issue 1 Spring 2009 News from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Inside this Issue...

- Natural History
- Winter Effects on Deer
- Upcoming Deer Research on Chichagof Island
- How Harvest Reporting Helps Hunters & Wildlife
- Harvest Survey Results 2008
- Deer Pellet Surveys
- Landscape Changes May Challenge for Hunting Deer
- Estimating Deer Populations Using DNA

Southeast wildlife newsletter revived!

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation had for many years produced a regional newsletter which had gone by the name, The Deer Trails. This first edition of the Deer Trails is our attempt to revive the publication under a new name with a fresh face. This newsletter has been created to provide current wildlife news for interested readers throughout the Southeast region. While there are a variety of wildlife related issues and projects that need to be shared with you, it seemed appropriate to begin the series with a newsletter focused on Sable black-tailed deer, since a large number of households in Southeast Alaska utilize deer for food, recreation or cultural reasons.

We are mailing out copies to those of you who responded to our Deer Hunter surveys, and to also share the results of the past year's harvest surveys. We want to particularly thank those of you who responded to the deer harvest surveys, as your contribution of information is important to good deer management. This newsletter will be made available at all of the ADF&G area offices as well as across the counter at several locations where hunting licenses are sold.

In addition to the harvest surveys, there are a number of management related issues and current research projects underway that are highlighted in the publication. We hope you will find all of the articles to be of interest to you, and we look forward to hearing your input about topics you'd like to see addressed in future issues of this newsletter. Please send your ideas and feedback to ADF&G Wildlife Education Specialist, Kristin Rommoff at krommoff@adfg.alaska.gov or by phone (907) 465-4202.

You may also want to check out the Department's online magazine, "Alaska Wildlife News" at www.adfg.alaska.gov. This monthly publication addresses wildlife related topics and highlights ADF&G staff and projects across the state.

Snapshots From the 6th Annual Deer Celebration

This educational event is held each year in Craig, Alaska in Prince of Wales Island, blending culture and science with a wide variety of activities are offered to school groups from across the island. An evening feast with a keynote speaker and performance by local dancers finish out the day celebration. The Craig Community Association coordinates this event in partnership with ADF&G, U.S.F.S, Craig and Thome Bay Ranger Districts, Alaska State Troopers, St. Regional Health Commission and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Steve Bertone, ADF&G wildlife biologist, teaches students about beaver habitat

Mason (left) and Hudson (right) during Hunting Song

Matthew Mousset in the Hunting Song

Larry Dickerson, USFWS wildlife biologist and Len Dickerson teaching kindergarten students

Photos Courtesy of Jesse O'Brien, Craig Community Association

EDWARDS PRINT-GTD U.S. PAPER P&H Anchorage, Printing, Etc.

Mountain Goat Identification Quiz

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

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Moose Hunting in Antler Restricted Areas

Southeast Alaska

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

SPECIES STATUS

Black & Brown bears

Mountain goats

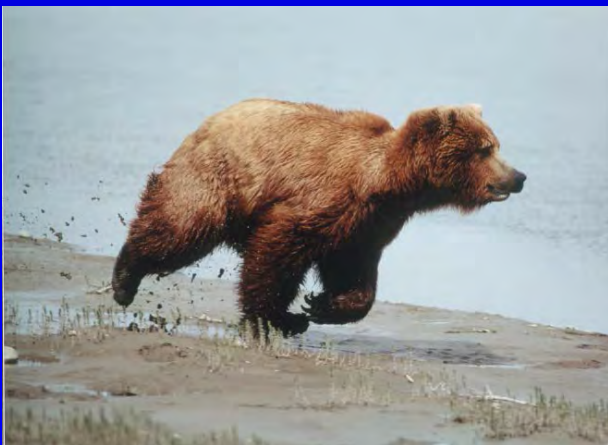
Moose

Deer

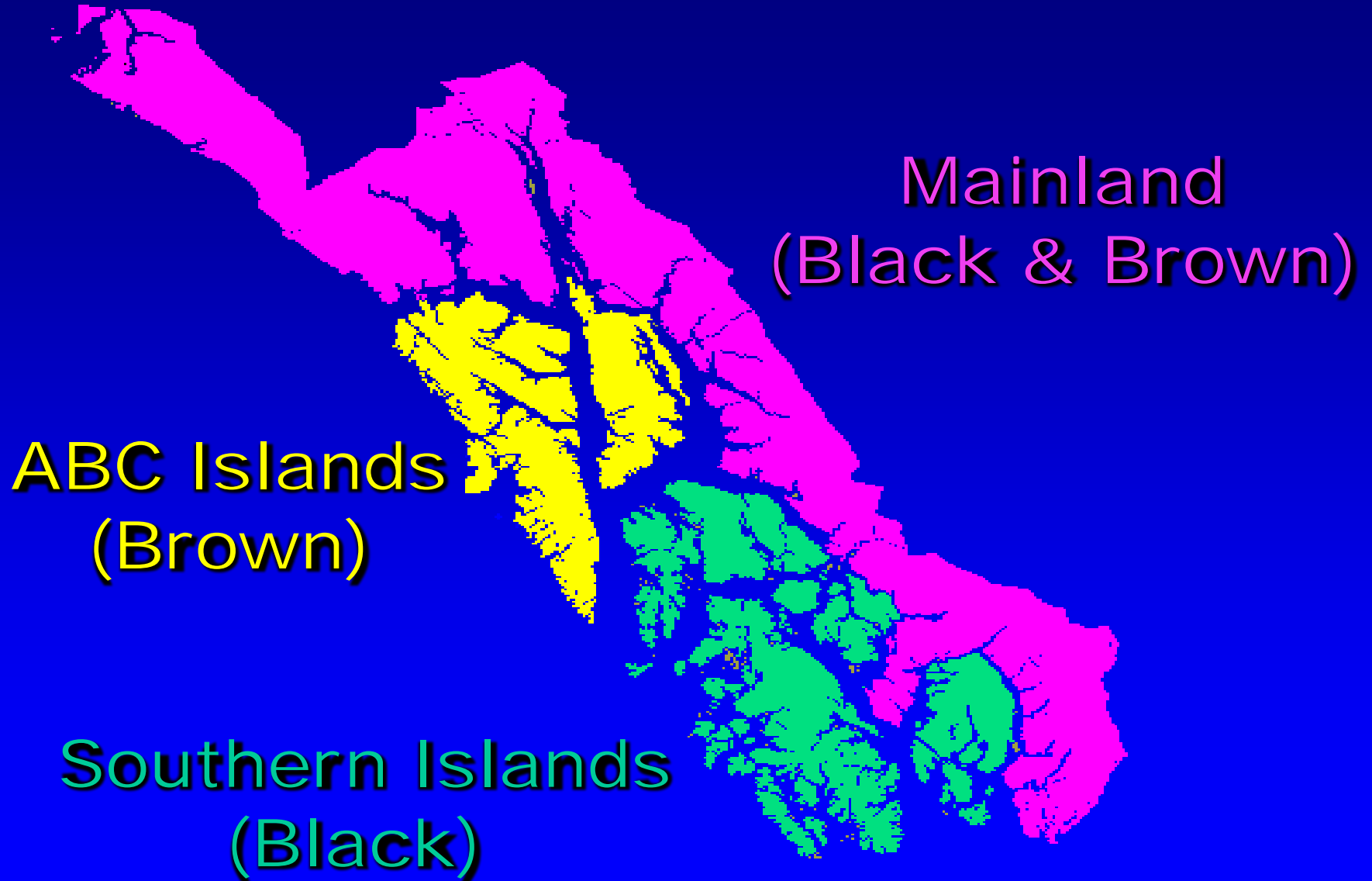
Elk

Furbearers

Wolves



Black & Brown Bear Distributions



BEAR DENSITIES & HARVESTS

Densities

- **Black bears on islands:**
Up to 3.4 bears/mi²
- **Brown bears on islands:**
1.0 bear/mi²
- **Brown bears on mainland
(Bradfield, Unuk, Berners):**
0.1 bears/mi²

Harvests (during past 5 years)

- **210 brown bears / year**
- **740 black bears / year**



BLACK BEAR MANAGEMENT

- **Highly prized trophy – 75% nonresident harvest**
- **Concerns about black bear conservation brought to the Board in 2010 – 19 black bear proposals at that meeting; 1 at this meeting**
- **Board implemented several regulatory changes, including drawing permits for unguided nonresident hunters; went into effect 1 July 2012**



BEAR TRAILS NEWSLETTER

Summer 2010

BEAR TRAILS

News from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game



Black Bear Hunting on Prince of Wales Island

Bear hunting is a popular and enjoyable pastime in Alaska, and the Southeast panhandle of the state offers some of the most phenomenal bear hunting opportunities anywhere in the state. Each year hundreds of Alaskans as well as visitors from other states take to the woods in search of black bears. Nowhere is black bear hunting more popular than on a few of the islands in the southern part of the panhandle, most notably Prince of Wales (POW) and Kuiu islands.

From the mid 1990s to 2005, black bear harvest from POW increased dramatically. Since then, the harvest has been declining just as dramatically. With these changes has come some uncertainty and concern about the conservation and sustainability of this bear population. In response, the Alaska Board of Game (BOG) took action at its 2008 meeting to address the concern for the bear population on POW. Increased black bear harvests in other parts of southern Southeast Alaska have also drawn attention from our department and BOG members.

This issue of *Bear Trails* offers information and insight into the recent history of bear hunting on POW, on the Board of Game's actions, the department's related activities and ensuing observations, and anticipated future direction towards managing this resource. I hope you will take a few moments to read the newsletter and to provide your feedback on hunt-related questions you may have or those posed by our department (a questionnaire is enclosed). Your input is extremely valuable to us as we seek to manage black bears on POW and other parts of Southeast Alaska in a manner that ensures public opportunity while simultaneously ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainability of the species. Thanks for any feedback you are able to offer.

Doug Larsen, Regional Supervisor
Region I- Southeast Alaska
Division of Wildlife Conservation
Department of Fish and Game

Inside:

- Black Bear Harvests on POW
- Alaska Board of Game 2008
- Current Research on POW
- Controlled Use Area: Finding for Units 1, 2 and 3
- Upcoming Board of Game Meeting



Below is a list of possible management options currently under consideration for addressing low black bear numbers in portions of Southeast Alaska. Please review the list of black bear management options you support and **rank your top five personal preferences, using 1 as your first and most preferred option.** We will review the feedback we receive and share it with BOG members as we work to address this important management issue.

We are seeking feedback about Game Management Units 1A (southern SE mainland), 1B (central SE mainland), 1C (northern SE mainland), 2 (POW and surrounding islands), and 3 (Kuiu, Kupreanof, Mitkof and Wrangell Islands). Please indicate which units your feedback on black bear management applies to: 1A __, 1B __, 1C __, 2 __, 3 __, all of these units __.

Indicate Your Rankings Below:

- _____ Shorten the spring hunting season (i.e., eliminate June)
- _____ Shorten or close the fall hunting season
- _____ Extend the Fall period of Controlled Use Areas (CUAs are in effect during Sept. in parts of Units 2 and 3)
- _____ Reduce the resident bag limit from 2 bears to 1
- _____ Implement a drawing permit for nonresident black bear hunters in SE Alaska
- _____ Implement harvest caps for specific geographic areas
- _____ Eliminate bear baiting
- _____ Modify the number of Forest Service hunt allocations to registered guides
- _____ Black bear populations are fine; make no regulatory changes at this time
- _____ Other (please specify)

Comments: _____


Please provide the following information to assist us in reviewing responses. Please check all that apply:

- _____ I am an Alaska resident. Community of residence _____
- _____ I am not a resident of Alaska.
- _____ I have hunted black bears in SE Alaska. If so, which Unit(s)? _____
- _____ I am a licensed transporter in SE Alaska (transport hunters and gear)
- _____ I am a licensed hunting guide in SE Alaska.
- _____ I am a business owner in SE Alaska. If so, type of business: _____

Thank you for completing the questionnaire and returning it to the ADF&G area office in Douglas or by mail.

BLACK BEAR HARVEST TICKETS

- Went into effect in 2010 – 2011
- Allows the department to obtain hunter effort data
- Effort data can help assess causes for harvest changes

 **2010-2011**
EXPIRES JUNE 30, 2011

2010-GL000-0301708-ML

BLACK BEAR HARVEST OVERLAY

ISSUE DATE: MM DD YYYY DL STATE DRIVERS LICENSE (DL) NUMBER

HUNTING LICENSE NUMBER DATE OF BIRTH MM DD YYYY CUST SRV NUM (CSN)

FIRST NAME MI LAST NAME


POST OFFICE BOX, ROUTE AND BOX NUMBER, OR STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

COMMUNITY OF PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE

AK RESIDENT NON RESIDENT

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY - USE ALL CAPS

 **BLACK BEAR HARVEST REPORT**
NON-TRANSFERABLE

2010-2011
EXPIRES JUNE 30, 2011

2010-GL000-0301708-ML

I HUNTED BLACK BEAR YES NO

DO NOT USE THIS CARD FOR REPORTING ACTIVITIES OF A PERMIT HUNT. TO REPORT ONLINE: <http://hunt.alaska.gov/>

DAYS HUNTED EXAMPLE: 05	KILLED A BEAR (Y OR N)	DATE OF KILL (MM DD)	SEX (M/F)	Unit/Sub-Unit EXAMPLE: 13B	Location of Hunt/Kill (Specific Area, Nearest Landmark)	Transport	SEALING CERTIFICATE (If Successful)

▶ CHECK COMMERCIAL SERVICES USED:

1. NONE
 2. TRANSPORT TO FIELD
 3. NON-GUIDED HUNTING SERVICES
 4. REGISTERED GUIDE
 5. LODGE/CAMP
 6. OTHER _____

I GOT TO WHERE I STARTED WALKING BY (SELECT ONE):
Primary Transport Codes

01. AIRPLANE 06. OFF ROAD VEHICLE
 02. HORSE/DOG TEAM 07. HIGHWAY VEHICLE
 03. BOAT 08. ON FOOT
 04. 4 WHEELER 09. OTHER
 05. SNOW MACHINE 10. AIRBOAT

THIS REPORT MUST BE PROPERLY FILLED OUT AND RETURNED TO FISH AND GAME WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER TAKING THE LEGAL BAG LIMIT OR WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE SEASON, EVEN IF YOU DID NOT HUNT. THIS HARVEST TICKET MAY BE VALID UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL GAME REGULATIONS - SEE YOUR STATE AND FEDERAL GAME REGULATIONS.

IF A BEAR IS TAKEN IN AN AREA THAT REQUIRES SEALING, ALL SUCCESSFUL HUNTERS MUST BRING THE SKULL AND HIDE TO A SFAI FOR SEALING.

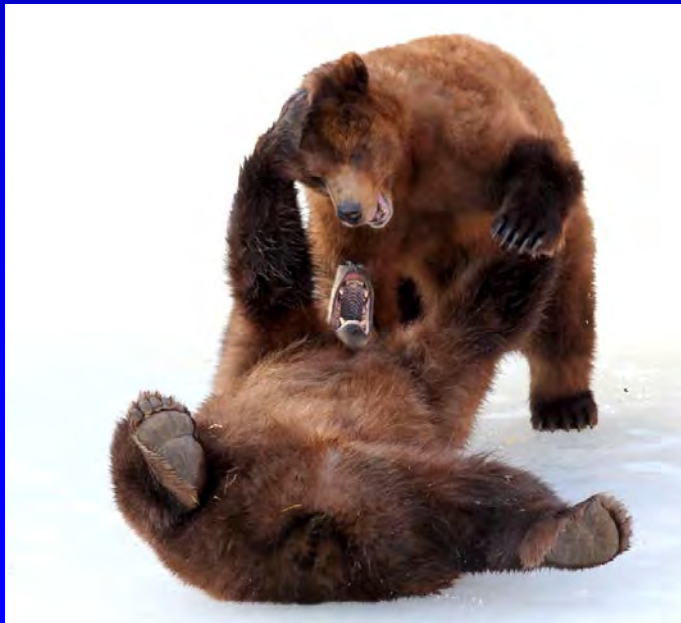
BROWN BEAR MANAGEMENT

- **Highly prized trophy**
 - **67% nonresident harvest (2002-2011)**
- **Historically the Board received numerous proposals**
- **Unit 4 Brown Bear Mgmt. Strategy developed (2000) to more broadly address issues**
 - **Large stakeholder process**
 - **Several mgmt. options identified; some implemented, some not**
 - **Report on the 2000 strategy during this meeting**
 - **Public work session scheduled**



FORTRESS OF THE BEAR

- In Sitka: Les and Evy Kinnear own and operate
- Board of Directors
- Five bears in facility
- 20,000 – 30,000 visitors/year



MOUNTAIN GOATS

Occur in Units 1, 4, and 5

- **Transplants to Baranof Island (Unit 4) and Revilla Island (Unit 1A)**
- **SE population: 10,000 – 15,000**
- **Stable**
- **Harvest ~ 115/year (2010 – 2011)**
- **Nannie harvests discouraged: point system (male = 1; female = 2)**
- **Proposals 16 and 31 would modify bag limits, regionally and within Unit 4**



MOOSE

Occur in Units 1, 3, and 5

- Harvest has stabilized at about 180/year

Management challenges

- Registration, Tier II, and Drawing
- Any bull, Spike/fork/50, Cow
- Antler configurations
 - Proposal 12 would modify definition of legal antlers



DEER

Assess populations using pellet surveys / new DNA technique / new hunter harvest tickets

- **Densities highest in Unit 4**
- **Population changes are dictated mostly by weather**
 - **Tough winters: 2006-2008**
 - **Closed doe hunting in parts of Unit 4 (state & federal): 2007-present**
 - **Cooperative hunter check stations with USFS on NE Chichagof Island**
- **Harvest ~ 11,000/year**



- **Management Challenges: weather, habitat change, predation**

➤ **Five proposals related to deer regulations at this meeting**

ELK

Occur mainly on Etolin and Zarembo islands in Unit 3

- **Introduced in 1987 to Etolin Island (Roosevelt & Rocky Mountain)**
 - **Fifty originally: est. ~ 250 today**
 - **Collaring effort initiated in 2008 (11 elk currently radio collared)**
 - **Drawing and registration permit hunts: bow/firearm**
 - **Low harvests: mean = 9 per year (range: 1 – 19)**
- **Proposal 13 would modify the Unit 3 hunt boundaries**



FURBEARERS

Average Annual Harvests (2010-2011)

- **Beaver:** ~ 270
- **River otters:** ~ 570
- **Wolverines:** ~ 20
- **Lynx:** ~ 5
- **Marten:** ~ 3,100



➤ **Seven proposals related to furbearer regulations at this meeting**

FURBEARER ISSUES

- Long-standing debate about dates of pelt primeness, and associated season dates
- Department concern about marten vulnerability in some roaded areas
- Trapper survey distributed in December, 2012

In which Game Management Units do you usually trap? 1A __, 1B __, 1C __, 2 __, 3 __, 4 __, 5 __

Based on your experience, please rate the quality of each species' fur during each of the listed months.
U = unknown, 1 = poor, 2 = acceptable, 3 = excellent

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April
Arctic Fox (example)	U	1	2	3	3	2	U
Beaver							
Coyote							
Ermine							
Lynx							
Marten							
Mink							
Muskrat							
Red Fox							
River Otter							
Wolf							
Wolverine							

How many years have you trapped? _____

When trapping *marten*, how often do you use the following to access your trap line?
0 = never, 1 = infrequently, 2 = frequently, 3 = always

	Beaches/ shoreline	Hiking trails	Municipal roads and highways	Remote unim- proved roads	Other (please specify)
Primary trap lines					
Secondary trap lines					

If the trapping season for marten, mink, muskrat and river otter were aligned with one another and shifted (not shortened), which of the following sets of dates would you most prefer?
Nov 10-Jan 31 __ Dec 1-Feb 15 __ Jan 1 - Mar 15 __ Current seasons are fine __

Additional Comments: _____

Name and phone number (optional): _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you have questions please call 907-465-4265.

GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS

- **Surveys were sent to 231 trappers**
- **Responses were received from 60 (26%)**
- **Majority of respondents indicated pelts were most prime for all species during Dec – Feb**
- **Majority of respondents (75%) preferred existing trapping season dates to earlier or later dates**
- **Sixty-eight percent (68%) of respondents indicated use of remote unimproved roads to access marten**

WOLVES

Occur in Units 1, 2, 3, and 5

- **Highest densities historically in Units 2 & 3**

Harvest

- **About 150-180/year region-wide**
- **Harvest guideline in Unit 2 – 30% of estimated population**

Challenges

- **Unit 2 population assessment & management**
 - **Proposal 20 would modify regional season dates**
 - **7 proposals in 2010, 1 in 2013**



Rich Lowell

SOOTY GROUSE

- Occur throughout most of Southeast Alaska
- Males vocalize in the spring
- Cryptic and difficult to see
 - One proposal to disallow harvesting females in spring



RESIDENCY ISSUES

- **Desire among some residents to provide hunting head start over nonresidents**
 - **Five proposals to provide earlier season dates for residents, or allocate percentages of permits to residents**
 - **Allocation issue for Board determination**

HUNTING ACCESS

- **Road systems associated with logging**
 - **Prince of Wales (Unit 2)**
 - **Mitkof, Wrangell, Kupreanof, Kuiu (Unit 3)**
 - **Northeast Chichagof (Unit 4)**



- **Boat and float plane access to coastal areas**
- **Limited float plane access to freshwater lakes**

ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- **Concerns about deer and wolves in parts of the region**
 - **Low numbers of deer in parts of Units 1 and 3**
 - **IM feasibility assessments**
 - **ESA petition to list SE wolves**
 - **USFWS 90-day finding**
 - **Wolves believed to be sustainable across the region**
 - **Wolf status paper available on dept. website**
 - **Wolf numbers appear to be down in Unit 2**
 - **Mortality assessment – possible need to regulate on smaller spatial scales**
 - **Ongoing research – provide population estimate and management implications**



ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- **Land management**
 - **Re-entries into previously harvested watersheds (e.g., Big Thorne)**
 - **Review of TLMP and its conservation strategy**
 - **IM law and timber production**
 - **Sealaska Lands Bill**



ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- **Chilkoot River Bears and People**
 - **Involved in facilitated interagency stakeholder process**
 - **Agency review initiated**
- **Mendenhall Refuge**
 - **Public relations markedly improved**
 - **Accretion remains an issue: Seal Trust effort to purchase lands**
- **Unit 4 Brown Bear Harvest Levels**
 - **Review & discussion of BBMS & options**
- **Federal Subsistence (dual regulatory system)**



ISSUES & CHALLENGES

Population Assessment

- **Forest cover makes seeing animals difficult (deer, elk, bears, furbearers, wolves)**
- **Aerial surveys (moose, goats)**
 - **Cost of flight time**
 - **Availability of aircraft**
 - **Weather-related limitations**
- **Ground-based surveys**
 - **Pellet transects / DNA (deer)**
 - **Hair-snaring / DNA (brown & black bears, and wolves)**



QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION

