



National Park Service Update
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve
North Slope Regional Advisory Council Meeting
February 22-23, 2023

Subsistence Update

The Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) met in-person and via teleconference on November 9-10, 2022 in Fairbanks. The SRC received an update on the Ambler Access Road project as well as staff updates on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, moose survey results, Dall's sheep survey results, and law enforcement along the eastern boundary of the Park. The next SRC meeting is scheduled for either March 21-22 or April 18-19 in Fairbanks and via teleconference. At this upcoming meeting, there will be continued discussion on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd and other resource updates will be shared. SRCs were created to promote local participation in the process of managing subsistence uses on National Park Service lands. For more information, please contact Marcy Okada marcy_okada@nps.gov and (907) 455-0639

The Gates of the Arctic SRC is requesting a reappointment of Esther Hugo to the SRC from the North Slope RAC.

Additionally, the National Park Service is providing funding for each of the 7 Subsistence Resource Commissions to send a representative to the North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference that's being held in Anchorage in May 2023. The theme for the meeting is Crossing Boundaries. Arctic ungulates regularly cross landscape boundaries, connecting ecological processes between different systems. This necessitates collaboration across geographical boundaries, and also calls for crossing boundaries between Western science and Local and Indigenous Knowledge. A critical component of this conference is making sure that local knowledge holders are able to attend and participate.

Dall's Sheep Survey

The National Park Service conducted distance sampling surveys for Dall's sheep from July 6-16, 2022 in Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and, in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), on BLM and State managed lands surrounding the Dalton Highway. We also received help from 3 Fish and Wildlife Service biologists who work for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We flew surveys in the Itkillik Preserve area of northeast Gates and in the southeastern portion of Gates of the Arctic Park, between the Dalton Highway and the John River. Unfortunately, we did not finish surveys in the Anaktuvuk Pass survey area because of snow and the start of the Anaktuvuk Pass community hunt. Overall, the survey revealed approximately stable abundance in the Itkillik Preserve survey areas, and a similar number of sheep in the SE Gates survey area compared to last year, which means ~60% decline in adult sheep since 2015 in SE Gates.



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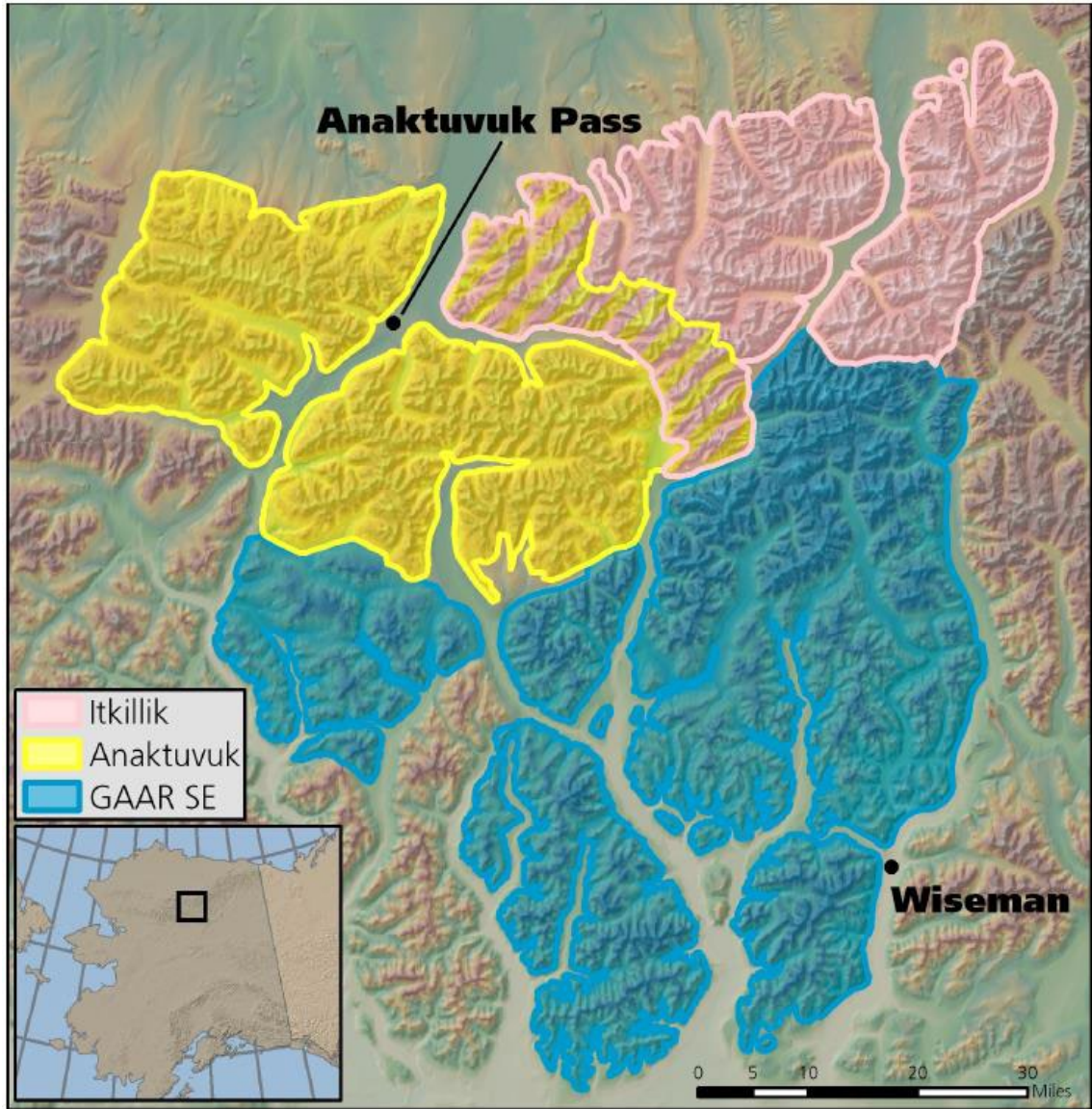


Figure 1- Map of survey areas with pink areas being Itkillik Preserve, the Anaktuvuk Pass area being in yellow, the pink with yellow cross-hatch being an overlapping area with Itkillik Preserve and Anaktuvuk Pass, and blue being the southeastern portion of Park.



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Itkillik Survey Area Counts

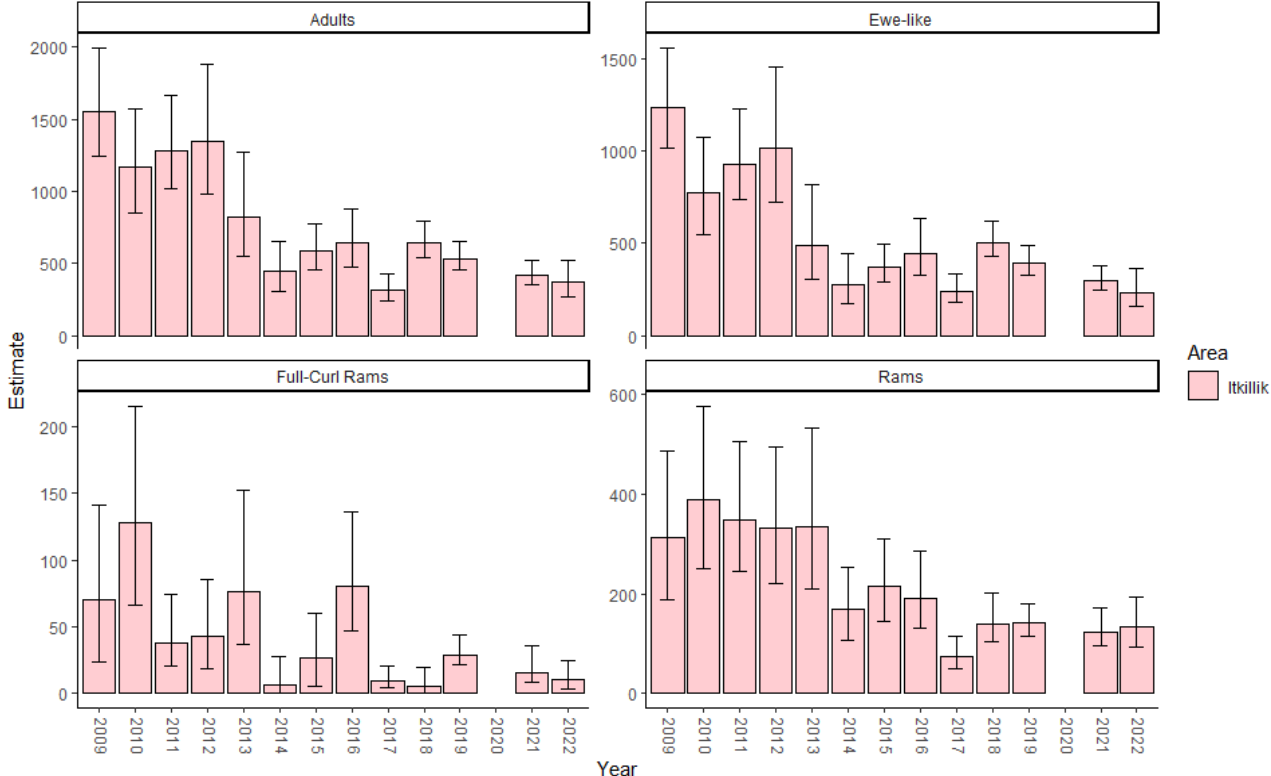


Figure 2- This is a bar graph showing number estimates for each category of sheep type - adults, ewe-like, full curl rams, and non full-curl rams. The bottom of the graphs show the years that surveys were conducted.

Itkillik Survey Area Ratios

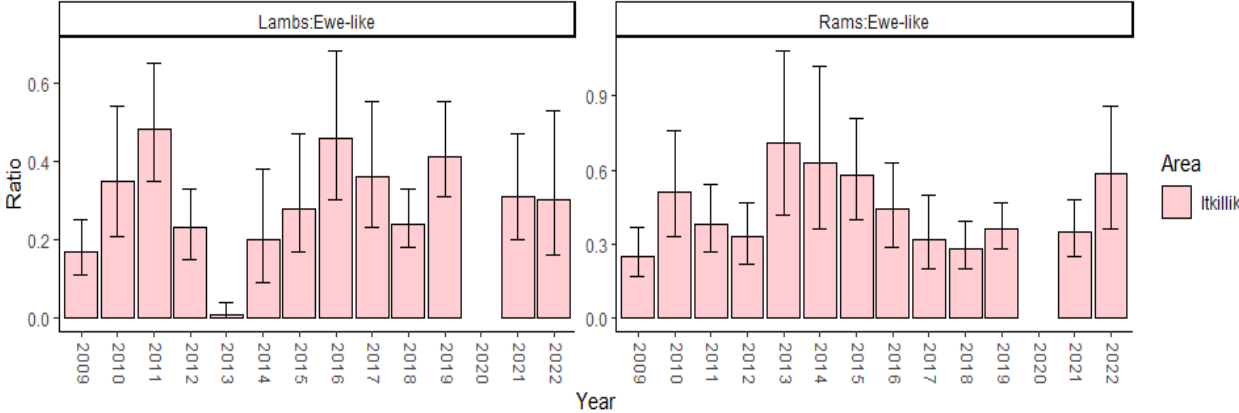


Figure 3- This is a bar graph that shows number of lambs per ewe-like sheep(left) and the number of rams per ewe-like sheep (right) which creates a ratio number. The bottom of the graphs show the years that the surveys were conducted.



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Anaktuvuk Pass Area Counts

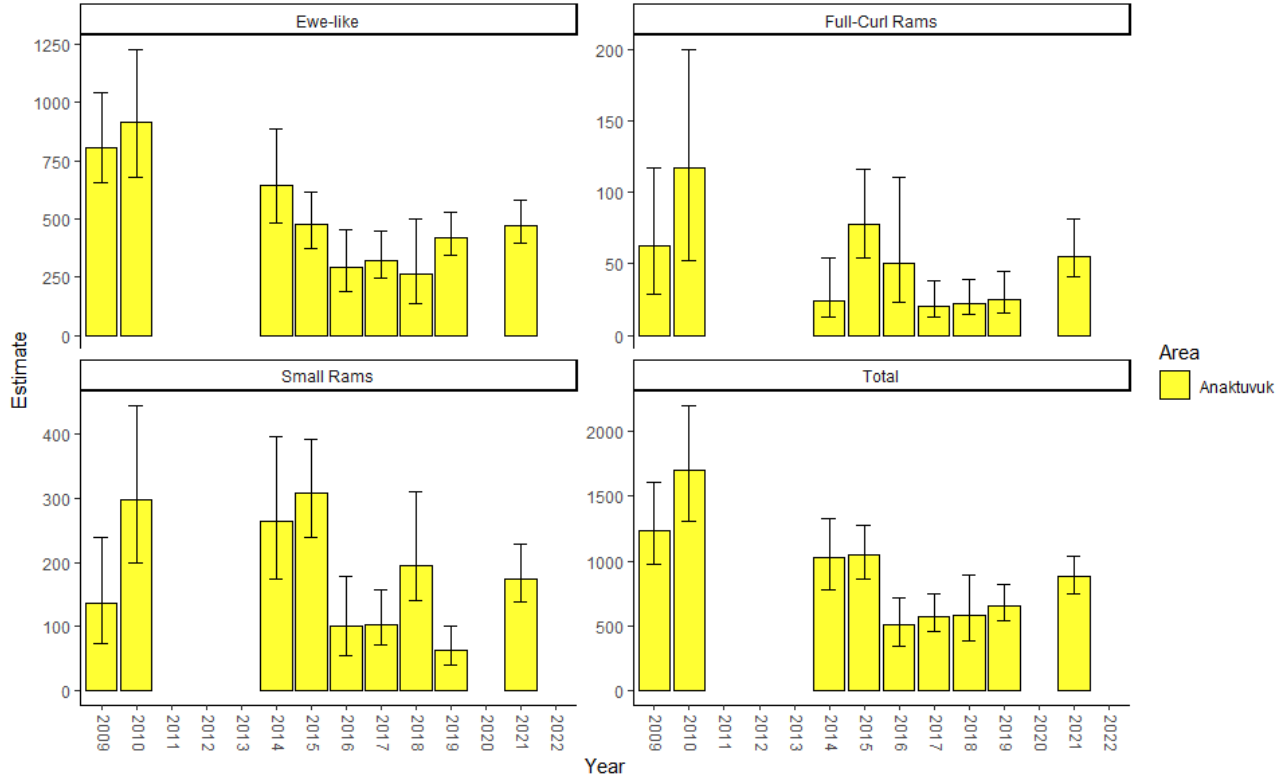


Figure 4- This is a bar graph showing number estimates for each category of sheep type - ewe-like, full-curl rams, & small rams as well as the total # of sheep counted. The bottom of the graphs show the years the surveys were conducted.

Anaktuvuk Pass Survey Area Ratios

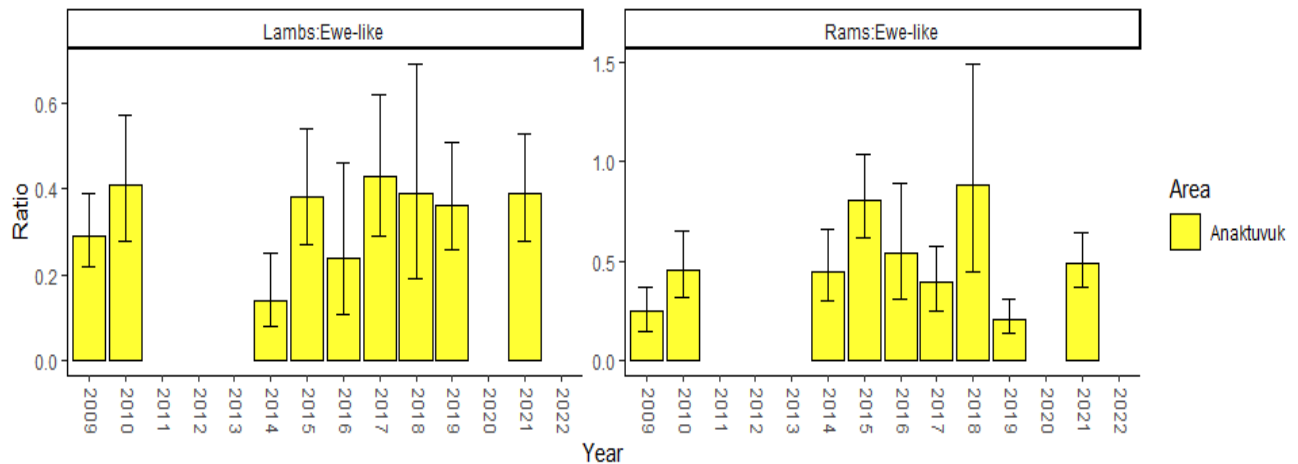


Figure 5- This is a bar graph that shows number of lambs per ewe-like sheep (left) and the number of rams per ewe-like sheep (right) which creates a ratio number. The bottom of the graphs show the years that the surveys were conducted.



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Southeastern Gates Survey Area Counts

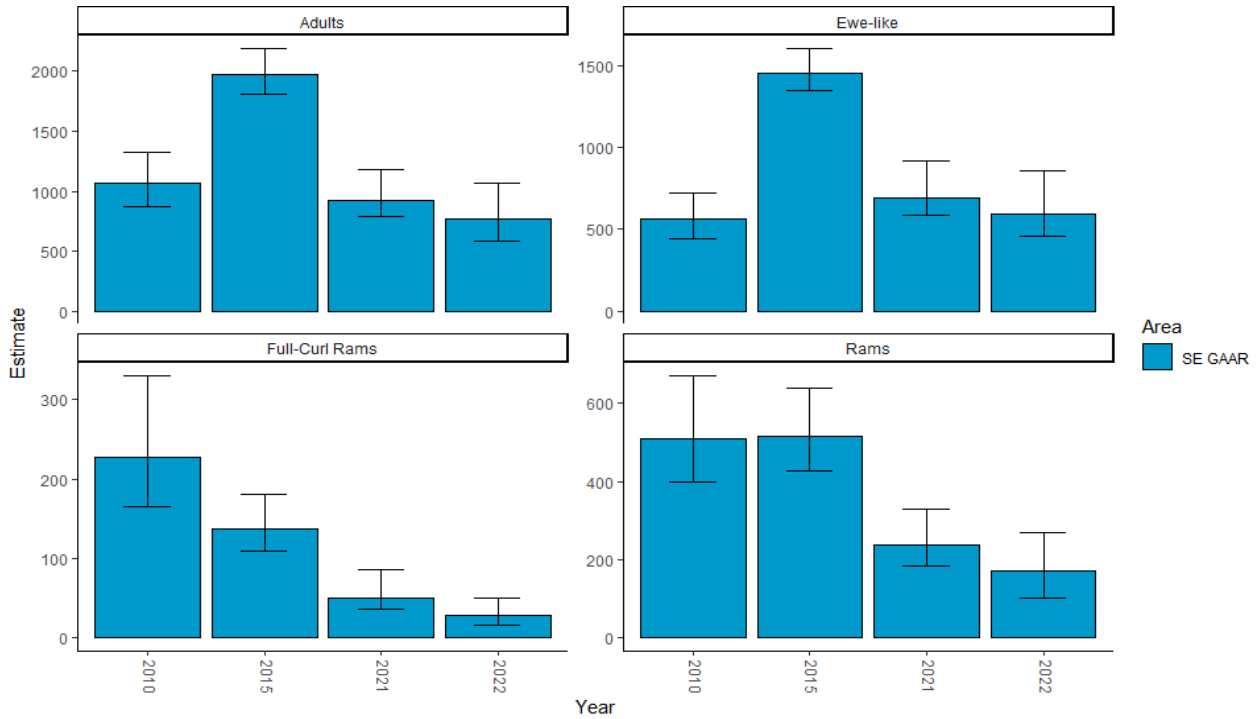


Figure 6- This is a bar graph showing number estimates for each category of sheep type - adults, ewe-like, full-curl rams, and non full-curl rams. The bottom of the graphs show the years that the surveys were conducted.

Southeastern Gates Survey Area Ratios

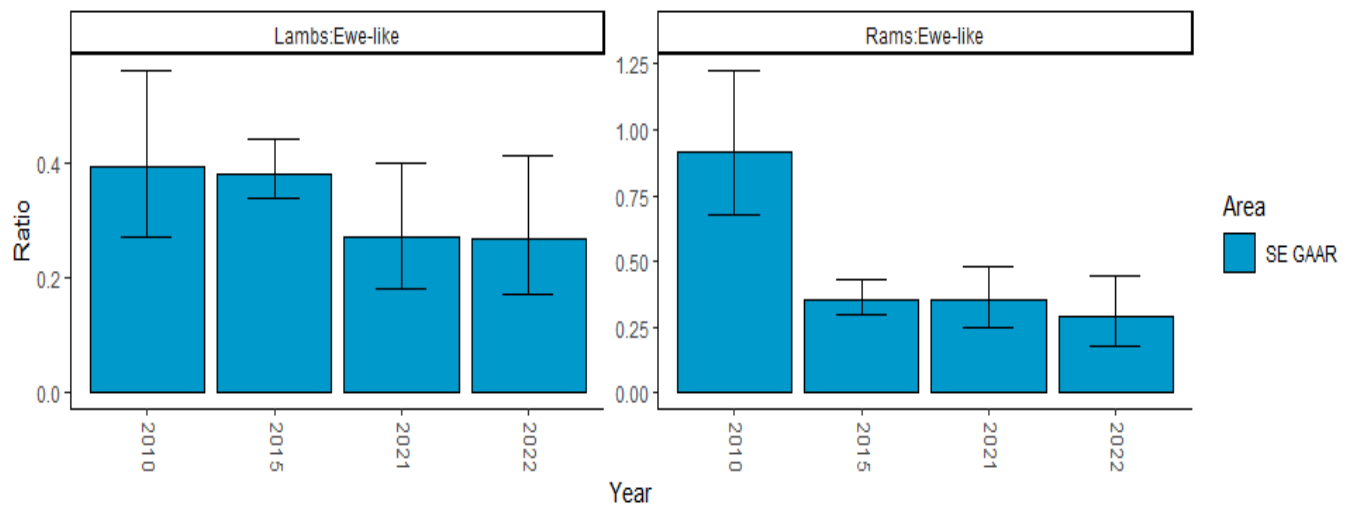


Figure 7- This is a bar graph that shows number of lambs per ewe-like sheep (left) and the number of rams per ewe-like sheep (right) which creates a ratio number. The bottom of the graphs show the years that the surveys were conducted.