



Dall's Sheep 2020 Survey

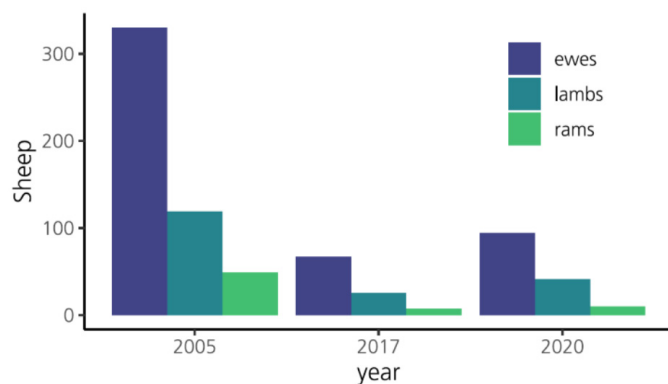
Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve

Survey Details

The National Park Service conducted an aerial survey for Dall's sheep in Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve between July 14th and July 19th, 2020. Due to Covid-19, the standard survey protocol which requires a pilot and observer was not used. Instead, a lone pilot based out of Galbraith Lake conducted a minimum count survey of portions of the Itkillik study area. Thirty five of 55 Itkillik subunits were flown in approximately 32 hours of flight time (See map right). Some units were avoided to prevent disturbing hunters and others were inaccessible due to persistent fog.

Results

The pilot observed 237 ewe-like sheep, 82 lambs, and 46 rams (12 full-curl), for a total of 365 sheep. The lamb to ewe-like sheep ratio was 0.34, which is average for this population. Compared to counts from a similar survey conducted in 2017, it appears that sheep numbers are essentially stable. However, results from this pilot-only survey should be interpreted with caution due to the less rigorous protocol.

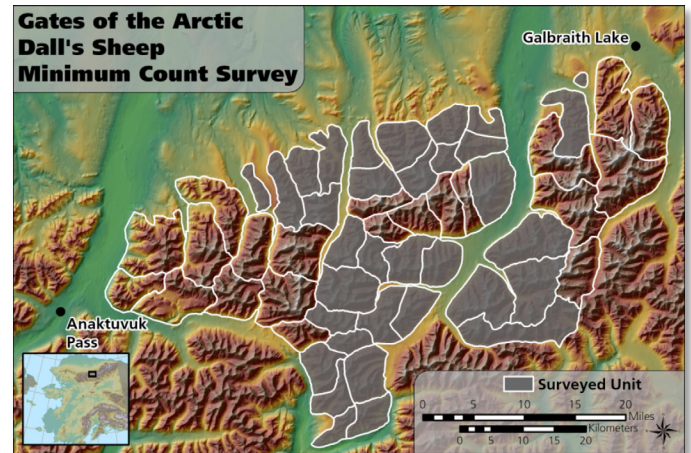


Dall's sheep counted in aerial surveys in a subset of the Itkillik subarea within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Alaska. The 2005 and 2017 data were resampled to match the 2020 survey area.

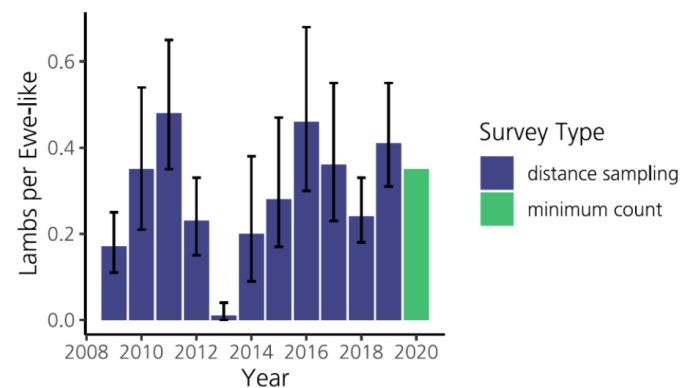
Future Surveys

We will continue surveys in these study areas annually because the Itkillik is our core long term dataset. We plan to return to a distance sampling protocol using both a pilot and observer once it is appropriate to end mitigations for Covid-19. As part of a

five-year rotation, the survey area will be expanded to cover more of Gates of the Arctic National Park in 2021.



Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve Study Areas. Only portions of the Itkillik study area were surveyed in 2020.



Lamb to ewe-like ratio in the Itkillik subarea within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Alaska. Error bars are Bayesian Credible Intervals.

Contact Information

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