



REFUGE NARRATIVE REPORT

May to August, 1950

KODIAK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

F. L. Beals

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Kodiak, Alaska

I GENERAL

A. Weather Conditions

The Kodiak Refuge does not operate a weather station. Weather data is furnished by the Navy Weather Station, NAS Kodiak.

	Snowfall Inches	Precipita. Inches	Temperature - F				
			Mean	Average Maximum	Average Minimum	Extreme Maximum	Extreme Minimum
May	: 0	8.47	40.7	44.3	36.9	62.0	31.0
June	: 0	5.74	47.4	51.7	43.2	63.0	38.0
July	: 0	6.56	51.5	55.3	47.7	72.0	42.0
Aug.	: 0	<u>7.13</u>	55.3	60.6	50.5	74.0	40.0
	: 0	27.90					

May: The total precipitation was 3.53 inches greater than normal and the mean temperature was 1.3 degrees below normal. The average wind velocity was 9.1 knots with peak gusts of 42 knots NW on May 4, and 42 knots ENE on May 23. The prevailing wind direction was east with 35 hours of winds over 20 knots velocity.

June: Precipitation was 1 inch below normal. The mean temperature was 1.5 degrees below normal. Average wind velocity was 8 knots with peak gusts of 41 knots NNW on June 19. Prevailing wind direction was east with 6 hours of winds over 20 knots velocity.

July: Precipitation was 2.84 inches above normal. The mean temperature was 1.5 degrees below normal. Average wind velocity was 6.4 knots with peak gusts of 32 knots NE on July 21. Prevailing wind direction was NE with 9 hours of winds over 20 knots velocity.

August: Precipitation was normal. Mean temperature was normal. The average wind direction was NW with 15 hours of winds over 20 knots velocity.

No snow fell during the report period. Precipitation was 10.65 inches greater than last period.

B. Fires

A small localized fire burned an estimated five hundred acres of tundra between Karluk Village and Sturgeon River Lagoon on the Karluk Indian Reservation and the Kodiak Island Refuge. The fire burned from June 28 to July 1 and was extinguished by rain. Inclement weather prevented Refuge and Alaska Fire Control personnel from entering the area of the burn. Origin of the fire is presumed to result from carelessness on the part of fishermen (commercial) operating in the Sturgeon River Lagoon when the fire started.

II WILDLIFE

A. Migratory Waterfowl

The movements and numbers of migratory waterfowl was observed to be comparable to the corresponding report period of 1949. Nothing new can be added for this period.

B. Upland Game Birds

Rock and Willow Ptarmigan, our only upland game birds, have not greatly altered their population numbers since the corresponding report period last year. Weather conditions have favored brooding and rearing of young. Although the species are gaining favor among local hunters, the total annual take remains low in comparison to the large numbers of birds on the Refuge.

C. Big Game Animals

Sitkan Black-tailed Deer

1. Population and Behavior.

All deer observed this quarter were in excellent physical condition; no evidence of predation by bears or eagles. This period's weather favored survival of adults and fawns. An indication of either movement or increase in population was noted in vicinity of Kizhuyak, Sheratin, and Terror Bays and on Uganik Island this period. It is clear that deer are crowding the boundaries of their present range and expanding to the north and south.

2. Food and Cover.

3. Disease.

No change over previous reports on items 2 and 3 above.

Olympic Elk (Although the elk are not within the boundaries of the Kodiak Refuge, they are included in this report since the Kodiak Refuge Manager is the Service representative assigned responsibility for the management of this introduced species.)

Conditions of weather, food, and cover have been optimum for normal

C. Big Game Animals

Olympic Elk (Cont'd)

increase and survival of the elk herd. A normal calf crop was noted. Location and movement of the herds remains as reported last period.

Reindeer

Nothing new can be added to previous reports.

Kodiak Brown Bear

1. Population and Behavior.

The following bear kill on Kodiak Island by residents and nonresidents, in defense of life or property, or taken on Collectors' Permits, and estimated illegal kills, will provide a working index to population trend:

	1949 <u>May - Aug.</u>	1950 <u>May - Aug.</u>
Resident Hunters	21	43
Nonresident Hunters	16	20
Defense of Life or Property	7	1
Scientific Collectors' Permits	5	0
Estimated Illegal Kill	<u>16</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	65	74

The total take for this period is estimated to be 90% accurate; 10%, or 7 bears, are added, making an adjusted total of 81 bears taken on the Kodiak-Afognak Island Group for the May to August, 1950 season. The fiscal year 1950 hunting season closed June 20.

A breakdown of the bear kill into sexes, excluding the estimated illegal kill, for the report period is as follows:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Sex ?</u>
Resident Hunters	28	13	2
Nonresident Hunters	18	2	0
Defense of Life or Property	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	47	15	2

The bear kill on the Kodiak-Afognak Island Group, broken down into districts, for the report period, is as follows:

<u>No. Bears</u>	<u>Districts</u>
17	Kodiak Is. "Off the Refuge" area (Kizhuyak to Ugak Bays)
2	Afognak and Shuyak Islands (one bear taken on each island)
5	Kizhuyak Bay (on the Refuge side)
8	Uganik Bay and Island, including Terror Bay
14	Uyak, Zachar, and Spiridon Bays

C. Big Game Animals

Kodiak Brown Bear (Bear-kill by districts - Cont'd)

<u>No.Bears</u>	<u>Districts</u>
9	Karluk Lake and drainage
1	Akalura Lake
1	Olga Bay
2	Ugak Bay ("On the Refuge" side of bay)
2	Old Harbor and Big Creek area
1	Barling Bay
2	Three Saints Bay

The relatively heavy take on the "Off the Refuge" area of Kodiak Island resulted from resident hunting. This has proven a good control measure in reducing the bear population near centers of population and in ranching areas. A good cub crop is evident and the large take has not appreciably reduced the area's total population. Record-size trophies and trophies 10 feet square and over are becoming more and more difficult to find.

D. Fur Animals

Red fox and color phases, land otter, weasel, and muskrats have not changed in population or distribution since the corresponding report period last year.

Beaver on Kodiak Island are slowly extending their range deeper into Refuge areas. Live colonies and increased activity was observed on Uganik Island. Fresh cuttings and bank dens were noted along the main stream at the head of Terror Bay. A beaver was caught incidental to trapping land otter in Barling Bay and numerous bank dens and fresh cuttings were noted in the same area. Fresh cutting and bank activity was observed along Big River in Midway Bay (Old Harbor area). No dams or lodges were noted in any of the new areas. Personal observations were not made on Spruce Island, where trapping was heavy last winter; conditions and recovery of population there is not known but on all other areas trapped the population is large, healthy, and apparently can stand another season of equal or larger take.

Sea Otter

Observations and reports, as yet unverified by personal observations, indicate small scattered groups of resident animals off Point Banks, Sea Otter Island, and Sea Lion Rock — all in the vicinity of Shuyak Island — and in vicinity of Sud Island in the Barren Island group.

E. Predacious Birds (Crows, Ravens, Magpies, and Eagles)

No change over last year's report for corresponding period.

III REFUGE DEVELOPMENT MAINTENANCE

A. Physical Development

The Refuge Jeep I-19905 paint job started last period was completed by contract labor this period. Decals were placed near the doors but not on them.

The Refuge resident quarters and garage were painted by contract labor.

The Refuge patrol vessel, "Shearwater II", was beached, scraped, and painted from keel to mast head by Refuge personnel.

Minor maintenance repairs on residence quarters, automotive, and floating equipment was performed by Refuge personnel.

A 10-H.P. Evinrude outboard motor (surplus) was received from the Regional Office and put into use this summer. It has not performed satisfactorily and requires a regulation-sized lower unit before normal performance can be expected.

A new "knock-down" plyboard skiff was purchased on open market and flown to Red River Lake, where it was assembled and used all summer on the Bear Study Project.

IV ECONOMIC USE OF REFUGE

No Permits have been issued for the Kodiak Refuge.

No new or additional information can be added relative to the status of the reindeer grazing lease at the south end of the Refuge.

V FIELD INVESTIGATIONS

A. Progress Report

The first annual population index survey for Kodiak Brown Bears on the Refuge was conducted by Refuge Manager Beals and Assistant Refuge Manager Breuser between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. May 15, 1950 in Uyak Bay. The tally for this, the first of such annual counts, was eleven bears.

Observations for the above survey were made from the "flying bridge" of the "Shearwater II" while she was **cruising** at an approximate speed of six knots. Visibility was average for the area and binoculars were employed by both observers. The areas under observation were clear of snow from sea level to approximately 806 feet elevation and brush was free of leaves.

A Kodiak Brown Bear study project was inaugurated this period. The primary purpose of the project was to study, compile, and evaluate all phases of the life history of the species. Under "food habits" emphasis was placed on bear-salmon relationship, following a work plan outlined and used by Shuman at Karluk Lake.

Studies this summer followed two lines:

1. Inland lake Sockeye salmon spawning systems, where a counting weir was

A. Progress Report (Kodiak Brown Bear Study Project - Cont'd)

set up to obtain more accurate data on spawned and unspawned bear-killed salmon. John E. Lutz, Biological Aid, conducted field studies at Red River Lake between June 22 and September 10, and prepared a written report on his findings which was evaluated and incorporated in the report on the second line of investigation by Kim Clark, Biological Aid.

2. Marginal stream salmon spawning systems along Shelikof Strait and on Afognak Island. No weir was employed. These spawning systems were used by Dog, Humpback, Coho, and Sockeye salmon. Kim Clark and Frank Beals conducted the field work from base camp aboard the "Shearwater II" in Terror Bay and Sheratin Bay on Kodiak Island, and from boat and field camps at Afognak Bay (Litnik) and Afognak River, Afognak Island. Clark prepared and evaluated the report which covered a working period from July 17 to October 1. Good, but not conclusive, data were secured.

VI PUBLIC RELATIONS

A. Recreational Uses

The Refuge does not maintain public recreational facilities.

B. Refuge Visitors

May 12 Talmadge Nelson, Land Office, Anchorage
May 21-22 Clarence Rhode, Regional Director, FWS, Juneau
May 21-22 Dan Ralston, Law Enfmt. Supervisor, FWS, Juneau
May 21-22 Douglas Swanson, Asst. Law Enf. Supervisor, FWS, Juneau
May 29 L. T. Main, Public Land Office, Anchorage)
May 29 Don Wilcox, " " " ") Here a week or more.
May 29 Talmadge Nelson, " " " ")
June 1 Chas. H. Jones, Alaska Native Service, Juneau
June 1 Jack J. Jenkins, " " " " "
June 6 Jack Yates, RFD 2, Box 15, Gladwater, Texas (nonresident hunter)
June 8-15 Harold E. Andersen, Dist. Supt., U.S. Forest Service, Cordova
June 8-15 Spencer N. Israelson, Forestry Aid, " " "
June 19 Paul E. Thompson, FWS, Washington, D.C.
June 19 Fergus Hoffman, "Seattle Post Intelligence", Seattle, Wash.
June 21 Lewis G. MacDonald, Fisheries Supvsr., Alaska Dept. of Fisheries, Juneau
June 22 Delano Brusstar, FWS, Washington, D.C.
July 12 Talmadge Nelson, Public Land Office, Anchorage, Alaska
July 12 Donald W. Erickson, FWS, Washington, D.C.
July 21 C. L. Anderson, Alaska Dept. Fisheries, Juneau
July 22 Larry Kolloen, FWS, Seattle, Washington
July 25 Howard Baltzo, Asst. Regional Director, FWS, Juneau
July 27 Dick Shuman, Fisheries Mgt. Supervisor, FWS, Juneau
July 27 Frank Hynes, " " Biologist, FWS, Juneau
Aug. 26-23 Dave Spencer, Refuge Supervisor, Kenai, Alaska

VI PUBLIC RELATIONS (Cont'd)

C. Refuge Participation

None.

D. Hunting

The fiscal year 1950 hunting season for Brown Bears closed June 20, 1950. All other species of animals and birds were closed to hunting this period. Twenty-one nonresident hunters were in the field; all secured Kodiak bear trophies. Forty-one resident hunters secured trophies. The exact number of resident hunters in the field is not known, but it is known that it was large.

E. Fishing

Fishing conditions were favorable and pressure was above normal over the corresponding period last year. On the Refuge the heaviest fishing occurred on Karluk and Frazer Lakes where military personnel concentrated, via aircraft. Other smaller lakes and streams received only average utilization.

F. Violations and Enforcement

One case was successfully completed, involving Dennis Cessna, nonresident Civil Service employee, N.O.B. Kodiak, in taking a Kodiak Brown Bear without required license or registered guide. A fine of \$50.00 was imposed by the U.S. Commissioner.

One Registered Guide examination was given to Joe Zentner, cattle rancher, Kodiak.

Twenty-eight Resident and twenty-one Nonresident Permits for exporting Brown Bear trophies were issued.

VII OTHER ITEMS

None.

December 22, 1950

Submitted by Frank R. Beals
Refuge Manager

Approved W. K.
act
Wildlife Management Supervisor