



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Fairbanks Administrative Center
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve
Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve
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July 28, 2023

Office of Subsistence Management
Attn: Subsistence Policy Coordinator
1011 East Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Emergency Special Action Request:

The National Park Service/Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve requests an Emergency Special Action to close harvest of sheep for all users (both State and Federal Subsistence hunts) within Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve in Game Management Unit 20E and Unit 25C for the 2023 hunt to assure the continued viability of the sheep within Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. Such a closure is authorized by 816(b) of ANILCA and under 50 CFR 100.19(a). The relevant regulations are as follows:

Existing Federal Regulation

Unit 20—Sheep

Unit 20E—Residents of Units 20E, 25B, 25C, 25D and Dot Lake, Healy Lake, Northway, Tanacross, Tetlin and Tok. Aug. 10 - Sept. 20
Unit 20E—1 ram with full-curl horn or larger.

Existing Federal Regulation

Unit 25—Sheep

Units 25B and 25C—Residents of Units 20E, 25B, 25C and 25D Units 25B, 25C, and 25D—1 ram with full-curl horn or larger. Aug. 10 - Sept. 20

Proposed Federal Regulation

Unit 20—Sheep

Unit 20E—Residents of Units 20E, 25B, 25C, 25D and Dot Lake, Healy Lake, Northway, Tanacross, Tetlin and Tok. Aug. 10 - Sept. 20
Unit 20E—1 ram with full-curl horn or larger.

**No open season
within Yukon-
Charley Rivers
National Preserve**

Proposed Federal Regulation

Unit 25—Sheep

Units 25B and 25C—Residents of Units 20E, 25B, 25C and 25D Units 25B, 25C, and 25D—1 ram with full-curl horn or larger. Aug. 10 - Sept. 20

**No open season
within Yukon-
Charley Rivers
National Preserve**

Reason for the Action:

The National Park Service conducted a minimum count aerial survey for Dall's sheep July 18th-20th, 2023. The Preserve was last surveyed in July of 2018. The current survey examined the same 7 core mountain units as the previous surveys and the Ogilvie Mountains. Accurate Dall's sheep abundance and demographic data are critical for sustainable management of Dall's sheep populations and their harvest.

In the core area (the 7 units most often surveyed), 72 sheep (32 ewes, 13 lambs, 6 yearlings and 19 rams) were detected. This constitutes a 77% decrease from the long-term average (313 sheep, 1997-2009) prior to the 2010s population decline. The survey areas (5580, Copper Mountain, Diamond Fork, Twin Mountain) with smaller populations experienced the largest declines (93%) compared to the long-term average. No sheep were observed in two of the survey areas (Diamond Fork and Copper Mountain) for the first time. The Charley River, Cirque Lakes, and Sorenson survey areas recorded 68% declines from long-term average.

Contacts:

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Dall's Sheep - 2023 Survey Summary

Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve

Background

The National Park Service conducted a minimum count aerial survey for Dall's sheep July 18th-20th, 2023. The Preserve was last surveyed in July of 2018. The current survey examined the same 7 core mountain units as the previous surveys and the Ogilvie Mountains. Accurate Dall's sheep abundance and demographic data are critical for sustainable management of Dall's sheep populations and their harvest.



Figure 1. A Dall's sheep (NPS / JARED HUGHEY).

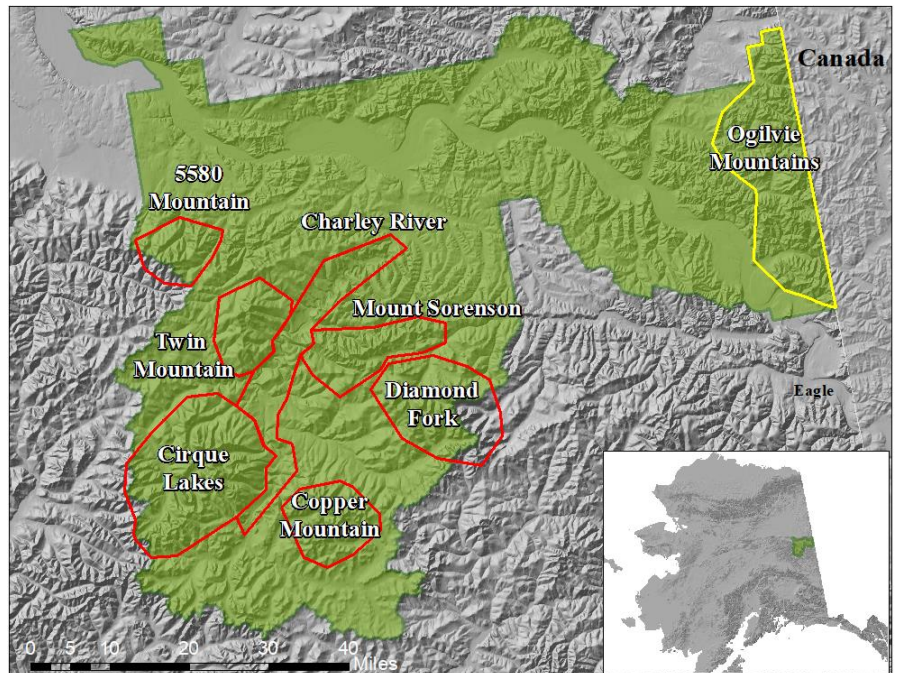


Figure 2 Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve (green) and core sheep survey unit boundaries (red polygons). The yellow polygon represents the Ogilvie Mountains survey area.

Population Estimates

In the core area (the 7 units most often surveyed), 72 sheep (32 ewes, 13 lambs, 6 yearlings and 19 rams) were detected. This constitutes a 67% decrease from the last survey (221 sheep, 2018) and 77% decrease from the long-term average (313 sheep, 1997-2009) prior to the 2010s population decline. The survey areas (5580, Copper Mountain, Diamond Fork, Twin Mountain) with smaller populations experienced the largest declines (93%) compared to the long-term average. No sheep were observed in two of the survey areas (Diamond Fork and Copper Mountain) for the first time. The Charley River, Cirque Lakes, and Sorenson survey areas recorded 68% declines from long-term average. In the Ogilvie Mountains, 26 sheep were detected (18 ewes, 4 lambs, 0 yearlings, and 4 rams) resulting in a 28% decline since the 2018 survey.

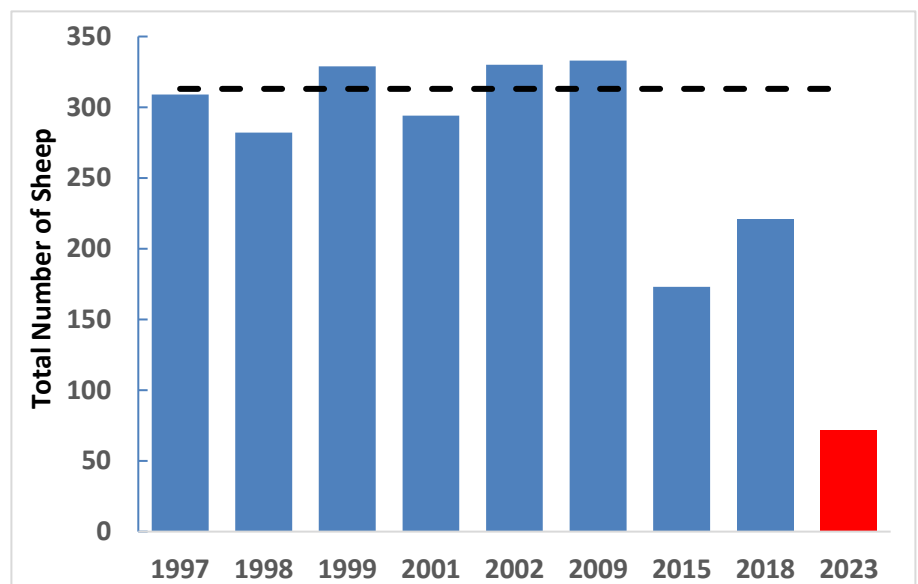


Figure 3. Dall's sheep population trends in the core 7-unit area of Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, 1997-2018. Black dash line is the average for years prior to the 2015 population decline (i.e., 1997-2009) and the red bar is the current (2023) survey.

More Information

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