DATA REPORT

AVIAN STUDIES IN THE KUPARUK OILFIELD, ALASKA, 2009

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ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

AND

KUPARUK RIVER UNIT

PREPARED BY

ABR, INC.–ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH & SERVICES
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

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January 2010

Printed on recycled paper.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank Caryn Rea, Senior Staff Biologist, ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc., for her support for the Kuparuk avian studies, and thank the Kuparuk Field Environmental staff for their help with logistical and field support. Sandy Hamilton, Bob Eubank, Robert Wing, and Ken Morris, all of Arctic Air Alaska, Inc., Fairbanks, were our able pilots for the aerial surveys.

Many ABR employees assisted with fieldwork. Our thanks to John Rose for his diligence during the eider and nesting swan aerial surveys, to Alex Prichard for the brood-rearing swan and goose staging surveys, and to Julie Parrett for the nesting swan survey. Thanks also to John Rose, Lauren Attanas, Adrian Gall, Andrew Cyr, JJ Frost, Jeremy Maguire and Jennifer Boisvert for the many hours walking the tundra in search of nesting eiders, to Dorte Dissing for GIS map preparation, Will Lentz for his logistic support, and to Pamela Odom for report preparation.

This report is dedicated to the memory of Betty Anderson who led the project ably from its inception in the early 1990s until her untimely death in October 2009. Her insights in all aspects of these avian studies will be greatly missed.

INTRODUCTION

From 1988–1999, ABR, Inc., conducted avian studies for ARCO Alaska, Inc., in the Kuparuk Oilfield on the Arctic Coastal Plain of Alaska. In 2000–2009, we continued this work under the new operator of the Kuparuk Oilfield, ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc. (formerly PHILLIPS Alaska, Inc.). The emphasis of this study in recent years has been long-term monitoring of the distribution, abundance, and productivity of selected waterfowl populations. Our studies in 2009 focused on three species: Spectacled Eider (*Somateria fischeri*), Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*), and Brant (*Branta bernicla*). These species were selected for study in the oilfields for several reasons. The Spectacled Eider was listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as a threatened species in 1993 and its population status on the North Slope is being monitored in support of the recovery efforts for this species. Annual surveys for Spectacled Eiders began in the Kuparuk Oilfield in 1993. The Tundra Swan has been identified as an indicator species for the health of waterbird populations and their wetlands systems in the oilfields by federal and state agencies. Tundra Swans also use traditional nesting areas that may be affected by oilfield disturbances or new developments. Tundra Swan surveys in the Kuparuk Oilfield began with a preliminary reconnaissance in 1988 and have continued with annual systematic surveys ever since. Finally, Brant populations have been declining in Alaska for over a decade and this species is also considered to be sensitive to disturbance, particularly during the molting and brood-rearing periods. Brant surveys were initiated in the Kuparuk Oilfield in 1988 and have continued annually since then, with some modifications in seasonal and geographic scope (see Brant chapter).

This report summarizes the results of surveys in 2009 for these species. Unlike annual reports prior to 2005, this data report briefly summarizes objectives and annual survey results for each species, including supporting tables and figures, but without further analysis or historical context. Brief methods are provided for the surveys conducted in 2009 (Appendix 1). The reader is referred to presentation of detailed methodologies, analysis, and discussion of results in the 2003 and 2004 annual reports (Anderson et al. 2004, 2005).

CONDITIONS IN THE STUDY AREA

Birds returning to the Kuparuk Oilfield encountered variable breeding conditions in 2009. Mean monthly temperatures in 2009 were 2°C warmer in May but 1°C colder in June than the long-term (21-year) means for those months (Table 1; www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/ncdc.html). Temperatures in late April were unseasonably warm, causing the rivers to start melting. However, temperatures cooled off in early May, slowing the rate of melt (Deb Heebner, BP (Alaska), Inc., pers. comm.). Breakup on the major rivers was earlier than average. Breakup on the Colville River was eight days earlier than average, based on peak water levels on 23 May, compared to the historical peak (Michael Baker, Jr. Inc. 2009). Peak breakup on the Kuparuk River occurred around 14 May, 2 weeks earlier than the historical average of 28 May. Snow was half gone by the end of May and all shallow lakes had melted; the remaining snow melted quickly in the first week of June which was warmer than normal. During the period of waterfowl arrival and peak nest initiation (15 May–15 June), 88 cumulative thawing degree-days were recorded, the sixth warmest in 21 years (range = 19–128 thawing degree-days; Table 1, Figure 1). The high number of cumulative thawing degree-days recorded for this period was influenced by the warm temperatures in the first 12 days of June, when 53 thawing degree-days were recorded, more than half of the total. However, following this unseasonably warm period, temperatures dropped and for 10 days in mid–late June, average temperatures were ≤3°C and winds were 18–29 mph. This cold, windy period occurred during early incubation for Spectacled Eiders, mid–late incubation for Tundra Swans and late incubation for Brant.

*Tables and figures are grouped at the end of each section in the order they are cited in text.

Table 1. Annual mean temperatures (°C) for May and June and cumulative thawing degree-days for 15 May–15 June, Kuparuk Airport, Alaska, 1989–2009.

Year	Mean Temperature (°C) May	Mean Temperature (°C) June	Cumulative Thawing Degree-Days[a]
1989	-7.7	4.3	26
1990	-2.8	5.7	56
1991	-2.5	4.5	22
1992	-5.7	4.6	75
1993	-4.4	4.2	42
1994	-6.3	3.0	54
1995	-2.6	4.7	59
1996	-2.7	6.9	128
1997	-4.8	4.5	60
1998	-2.1	7.0	120
1999	-5.0	3.1	32
2000	-9.3	6.6	37
2001	-10.8	4.1	54
2002	-2.2	4.4	91
2003	-4.6	3.2	34
2004	-5.5	7.2	38
2005	-4.7	3.1	19
2006	-3.1	8.1	117
2007	-7.5	4.2	46
2008	-2.6	7.1	107
2009	-2.9	3.9	88
21-year average	-4.7	5.0	62

[a] Thawing degree-days are calculated as the cumulative number of degrees per day above freezing (0°C) for the period 15 May–15 June.

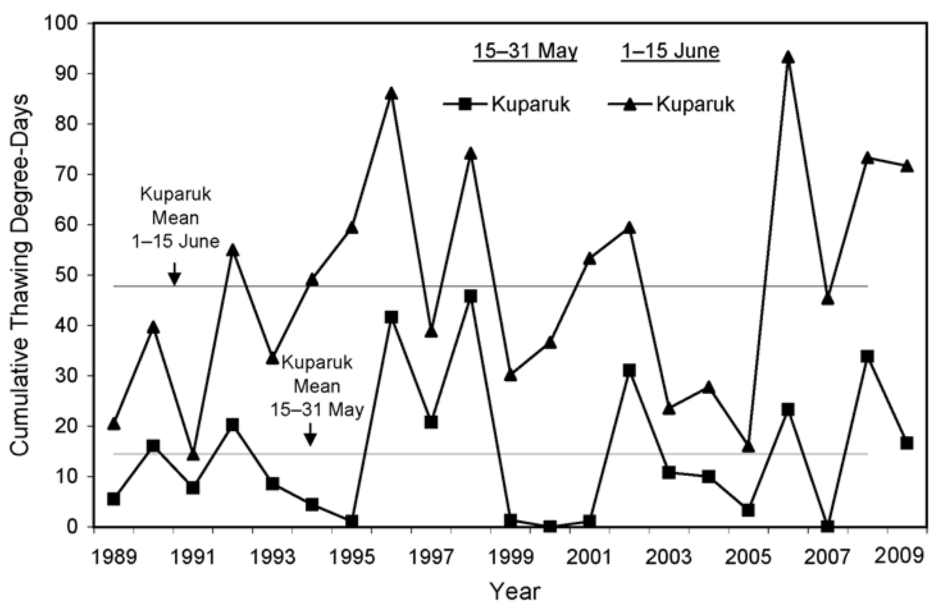

Figure 1. The number of cumulative thawing degree-days recorded between 15–31 May and 1–15 June and mean thawing degree-days for those same periods in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 1989–2009.

SPECTACLED EIDER

The Spectacled Eider is one of four species of eiders that breed in arctic Alaska (Bellrose 1976). Spectacled, King (*S. spectabilis*), and Common (*S. mollissima*) eiders all nest in the oilfields on Alaska's North Slope (Johnson and Herter 1989). Spectacled Eiders have undergone severe declines in abundance, particularly on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in western Alaska (Kertell 1991, Stehn et al. 1993). Based on this decline in abundance, the Spectacled Eider was listed by the USFWS as a "threatened species" on 9 June 1993 (58 FR 27474–27480) under the Endangered Species Act. The USFWS has also developed a Recovery Plan for the Spectacled Eider (USFWS 1996) that outlines the research needs for promoting the recovery of this species. These needs are being partially met by the annual aerial survey for eiders flown by the USFWS on the North Slope along with USFWS-sponsored research on nesting ecology and reproduction conducted on the YKD and industry-sponsored research on the North Slope (including this study and studies on the Colville River Delta).

In this report, we discuss the results of the 2009 Spectacled Eider surveys in the Kuparuk Oilfield. The 2009 season was the 17th year of road and nest searches and the 16th year of aerial surveys (no aerial survey was flown in 1994). The goals of the Spectacled Eider study include 1) monitoring population trends in the oilfields; 2) identifying important nesting habitats and determining how eiders are distributed relative to these habitats and oilfield infrastructure (roads, processing facilities, and drilling pads); and 3) monitoring the breeding biology and nesting success of eiders to determine if productivity is being negatively affected by oilfield activities or by natural processes. The 2009 study had four objectives to meet these goals:

1. conduct road surveys to monitor the distribution and abundance of Spectacled Eiders near facilities in the Kuparuk Oilfield during pre-nesting;
2. conduct an aerial survey for breeding pairs of Spectacled Eiders and determine regional distribution and abundance in the Kuparuk River Operating Unit, and compare the results of the survey with previous ABR aerial surveys (1993, 1995–2008), as well as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service surveys across the Arctic Coastal Plain, to determine population trends;
3. evaluate the relationship between locations of breeding pairs observed during the pre-nesting road surveys and subsequent nest locations, and determine if multiple relocations of breeding pairs help in locating nests; and
4. monitor eider nests using time-lapse cameras to evaluate causes of nesting failures (these data are not reported in this summary, but have been archived for future analysis; three time-lapse cameras were deployed in 2009).

2009 RESULTS

- In the Kuparuk Oilfield, a peak count of 21 Spectacled Eiders was recorded during the complete road survey of the oilfield on 9–10 June 2009 (Figure 2; Appendix 2); this count was a 25% decrease from the peak count of 27 eiders on 7–8 June 2008, but equal to the peak count in 2007. Daily running totals for Spectacled Eiders were at the lower range for counts recorded during previous warm years in the Kuparuk study area (Figure 3). While Spectacled Eiders were already present during the onset of road surveys on 5 June, numbers doubled by 7 June, indicating that the surveys were timed well to catch the arrival of these eiders in the oilfield.
- As in previous years, most Spectacled Eiders in 2009 occurred in the Central Processing Facility No. 2 (CPF-2) area of the Kuparuk Oilfield, with observations in that area clustered around the basin complex west of Drill Site (DS)-2V, near DS-2X, west of DS-2T, and a few observations near DS-2G (Figure 4). For the first time since surveys were initiated in 1993, no pre-nesting Spectacled Eiders were seen in the vicinity of DS-2C or DS-2F. As in previous years, Spectacled Eiders also were

observed in the CPF-1 area, primarily in the large basin complex west of DS-1E, but also in a large basin complex northwest of DS-1D, and around KOC. In the CPF-3 area, Spectacled Eiders were seen in the vicinity of Mine Site E and at several locations along the Oliktok Point Road and in wetlands and basin wetland complexes around CPF-3 (Figure 4).

- Spectacled Eiders were located a mean distance of 131.6 m from oilfield infrastructure (roads, pads, and facilities) in 2009, which was lower than the range of mean distances recorded in previous years (range = 160.2–271.8 m; Table 2).
- Spectacled Eiders used a variety of habitat types during pre-nesting (Table 3), but ~50% of all observations (*n* = 42) were in three major habitats: shallow open water (both with and without islands; 38%) and deep open water with islands (12%). Twenty-six percent of all observations of Spectacled Eiders were in human-modified waterbodies, including drainage impoundments (12%).
- In 2009, an aerial survey was conducted on 10–13 June to locate Spectacled Eiders in the Kuparuk River Unit (Figure 5). During that survey, 26 Spectacled Eiders were counted on the ground in 12 groups (2 additional birds were observed flying; Table 4 and Figure 6). Spectacled Eider densities (non-flying birds only) were 0.04 total birds/km² and 0.02 breeding pairs/km²; these densities were double for total birds and slightly higher for breeding pairs compared to 2008, which were the lowest recorded during the study. Densities of Spectacled Eiders derived from these breeding-pair surveys are reflections of the regional breeding population in the Kuparuk River Unit and may not reflect what is happening in the neighboring Colville River Delta, nor across the Arctic Coastal Plain. For example, Spectacled Eider densities were higher in 2008 than in 2007 on both the Colville River delta (Johnson et al. 2009) and across the Arctic Coastal Plain (Larned et al. 2009), whereas the reverse was true in the Kuparuk Oilfield. Based on 17 years of aerial surveys, the regional population of Spectacled Eiders in the Kuparuk Oilfield appeared to be relatively stable, although highly variable. The numbers increased slightly following record lows in 2008, however, continued monitoring will help determine if the low numbers in 2008 were an anomaly (Table 5; Figure 7). The long-term population of Spectacled Eiders on the North Slope also has been relatively stable in recent years (Larned et al. 2009).
- In late June 2009, seven Spectacled Eider nests and two probable Spectacled Eider nests (based on identification of contour feathers) were found during searches of 10 locations in the oilfield (Table 6; Appendix 3). While searching for Spectacled Eiders, we also found 12 King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) nests, and 5 probable King Eider nests. In 2009, Spectacled Eider nests were located in the CPF-2 area near DS-2C, DS-2T, and DS-2V; in the CPF-1 area near DS-1E; and in the CPF-3 area south of Mine Site E (Figure 8). As in 1993–2008, at least one location supported more than one nesting pair of Spectacled Eiders in 2009 (Table 7). Annual reuse of these areas indicate that traditional "colony sites" are used by Spectacled Eiders in the Kuparuk Oilfield, although some pairs nest singly.
- In all years, Spectacled Eider nests were located close to water. In 2009, the mean distance of nests to the closest water (1.6 m) was lower than the long-term mean (2.0 m, *n* = 17 years) while the mean distance of nests to the nearest waterbody (mean = 10.5 m) was slightly higher than the long-term mean (10.3 m) (Table 8). For these two measurements, 'water' is defined as any type of water, including ephemeral ponds or flooded tundra, whereas a 'waterbody' is a clearly defined, permanent waterbody, such as a small pond or lake. Nests in 2009, as in previous years, continued to be located relatively far

from the closest oilfield infrastructure (mean = 355 m; range = 108–551 m).

- In 2009, nesting success for Spectacled Eiders was 56% (5 of 9 nests; Table 6). Nesting success, which was defined as at least 1 egg hatching, was higher than the long-term mean for this study (mean = 47.1%; *n* = 17 years). A comparison with nesting success for King Eiders indicated that while the long-term mean for nesting success was identical between the species, King Eiders in 2009 experienced poor nesting success (17%) (Table 6). It is uncertain if weather conditions affected eider nesting success in 2009 with different outcomes for Spectacled Eiders compared to King Eiders.
- In 2009, time-lapse cameras that recorded images every 30 sec were installed approximately 30 m from three Spectacled Eider nests (2 at DS-1E, and 1 at DS-2T). All three nests were successful. At one nest (55.02 at DS1E), a gull visited the nest several times on the last day before the female departed and on one of her breaks, the gull was on the nest for almost 2 minutes. This may have lead to partial predation as only 2 membranes were found during the fate check whereas 4 eggs were found during the initial ground search. At all 3 nests, avian predators (Glaucous Gull, Parasitic Jaeger) visited within 1 hour to scavenge at the nest.

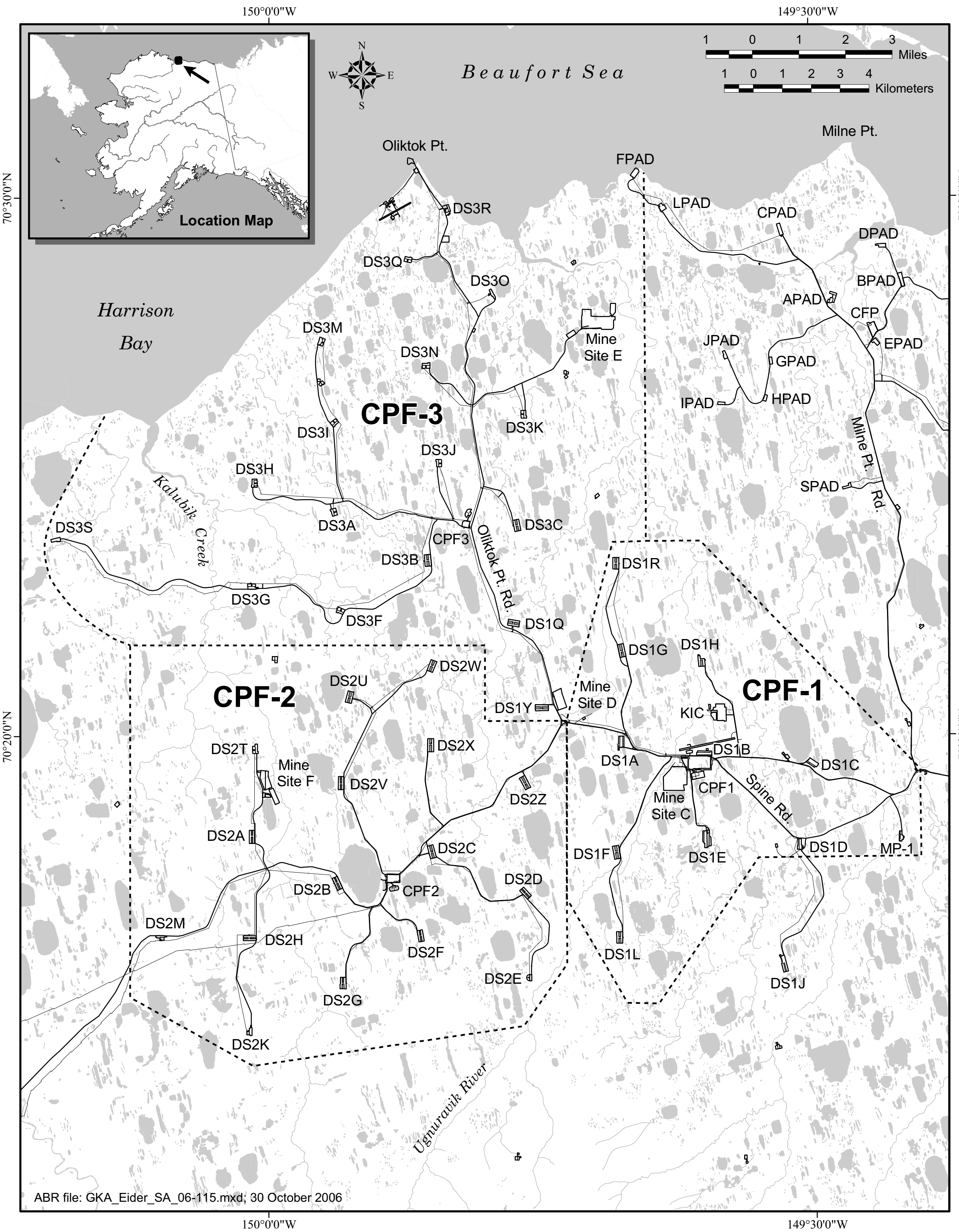

Figure 2. Study area for the Spectacled Eider study in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 2009, showing the road system and boundaries of the three Central Processing Facility (CPF) areas.

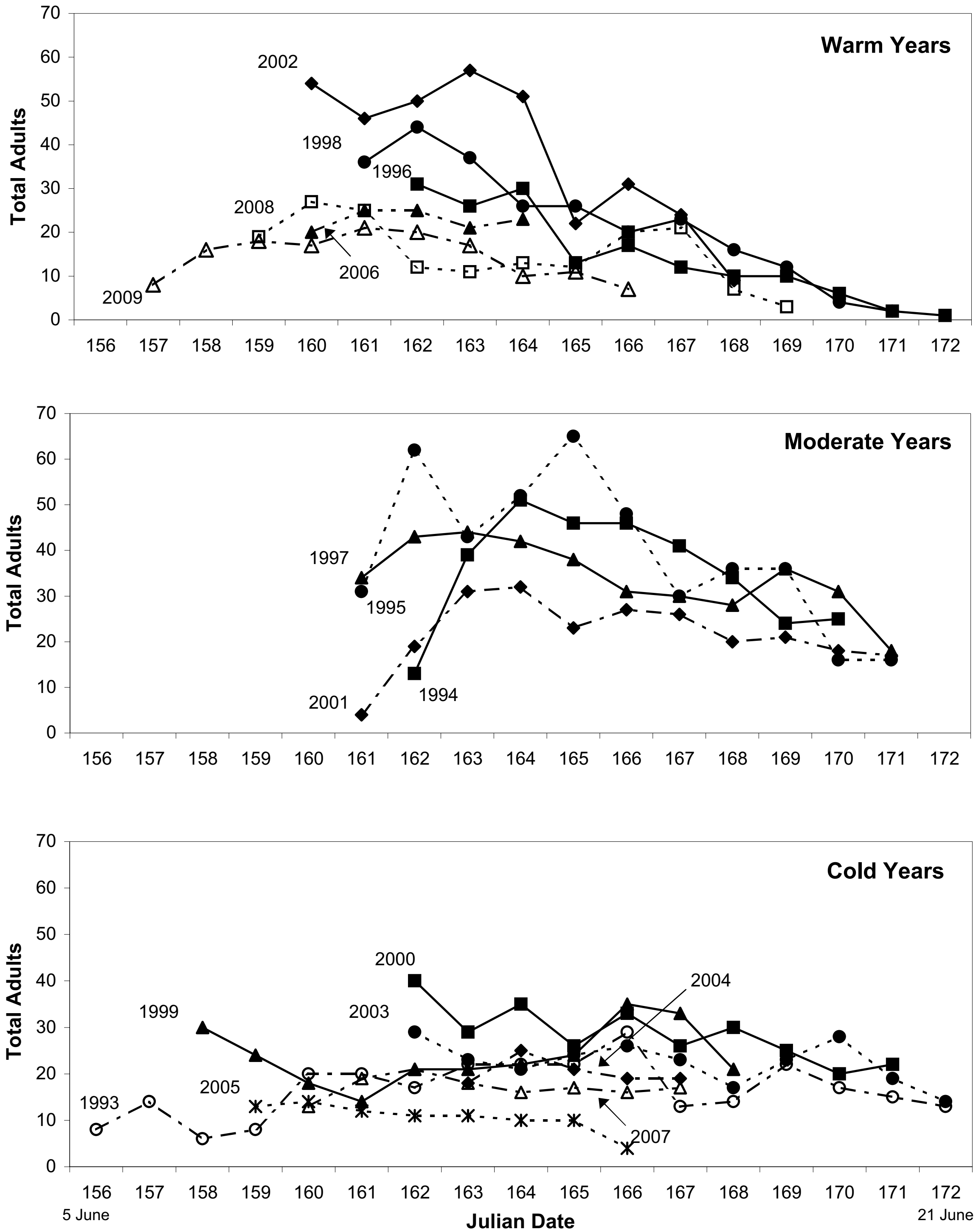

Figure 3. Daily running totals of Spectacled Eiders recorded during road surveys of the Kuparuk Oilfield, early to mid June, 1993–2009. Half of the study area was surveyed each day, thus the running total for the study area was calculated using consecutive days through the sample period. Years were assigned to cold (≤50 cumulative thawing degrees), moderate (>50 and ≤75 cumulative thawing degrees), or warm (>75 cumulative thawing degree days) categories depending on cumulative thawing degree-days between 15 May and 15 June each year.

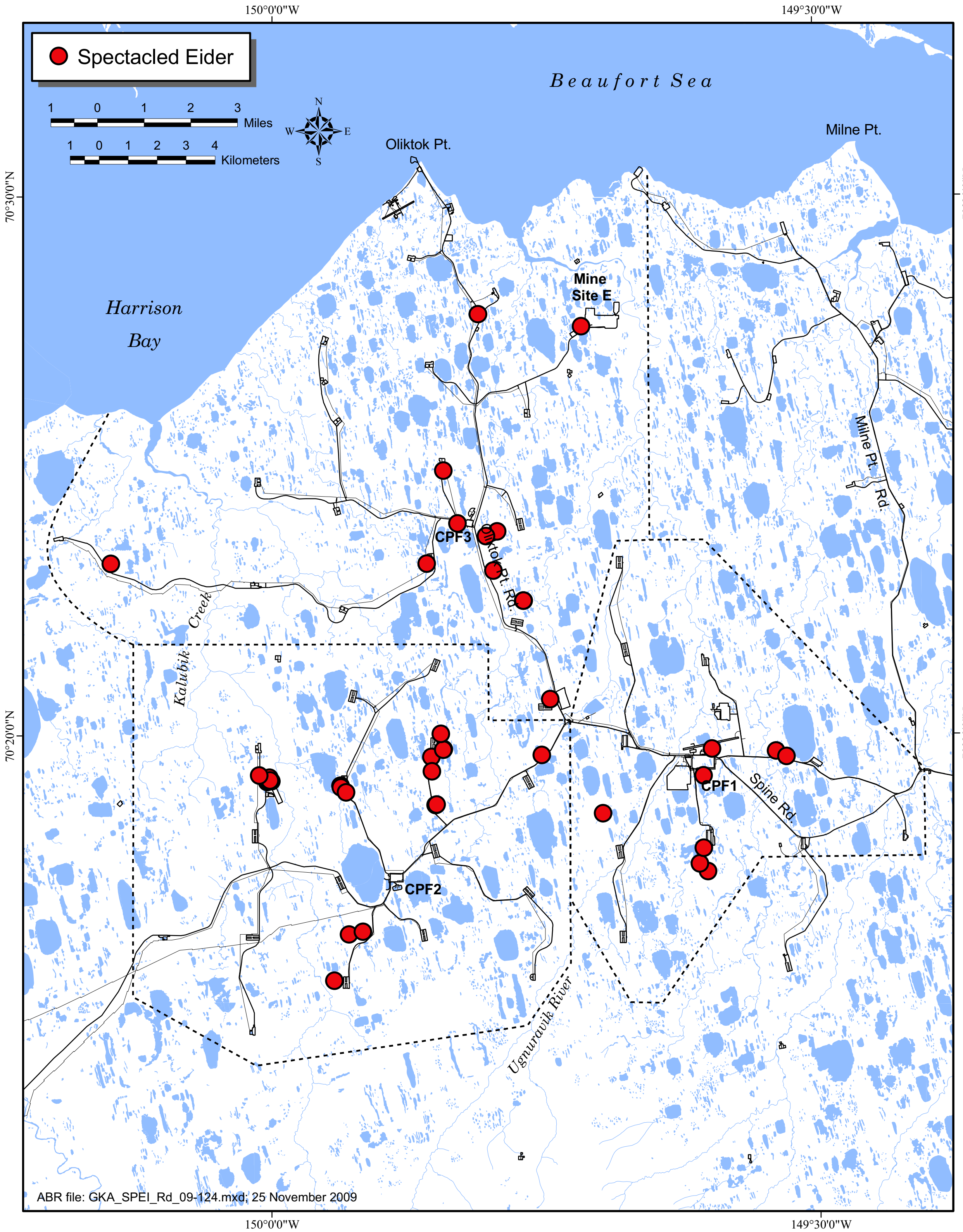

Figure 4. Distribution of Spectacled Eider observations during pre-nesting road surveys in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 5–18 June 2009. Dashed areas delineate the CPF-1, CPF-2, and CPF-3 subareas used for comparisons of abundance and distribution.

Table 2. Mean distances (m) of Spectacled Eider observations to oilfield facilities during pre-nesting in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 1993–2009. Only observations within the 500-m road survey area are included.

Year	Mean	SD	Range	*n* [a]
1993	231.3	125.9	9–506	115
1994	244.8	126.0	23–478	70
1995	223.0	139.2	7–500	94
1996	245.4	139.2	16–504	46
1997	271.8	124.8	50–499	80
1998	259.3	118.2	17–538	67
1999	195.2	130.3	13–495	66
2000	252.6	134.6	21–494	71
2001	264.5	125.6	13–483	53
2002	229.6	146.2	9–494	76
2003	254.8	152.9	9–495	68
2004	186.7	133.7	3–415	29
2005	261.3	146.4	8–457	22
2006	225.6	142.5	6–498	34
2007	194.6	142.7	4–459	38
2008	160.2	147.5	3–483	47
2009	131.6	102.5	2–431	36

[a] *n* = number of observations.

Table 3. Habitat use (% of observations) of pre-nesting Spectacled Eiders in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 2009. Includes all observations (both within and outside the 500-m survey area).

Habitat[a]	Percentage of Observations
FRESH WATERS	
Deep Open Water without Islands	4.8
Deep Open Water with Islands or Polygonized Margins	11.9
Shallow Open Water without Islands	26.2
Shallow Open Water with Islands or Polygonized Margins	11.9
Sedge Marsh	4.8
BASIN WETLAND COMPLEXES	
Old Basin Wetland Complex	4.8
MEADOWS	
Nonpatterned Wet Meadow	2.4
Patterned Wet Meadow	2.4
Moist Sedge-Shrub Meadow	4.8
HUMAN MODIFIED	
Drainage impoundment	11.9
Human-created waterbody	14.3
Number of Observations	42

[a] Habitat types follow hierarchical habitat classification described in Roth et al. (2007, 2008)

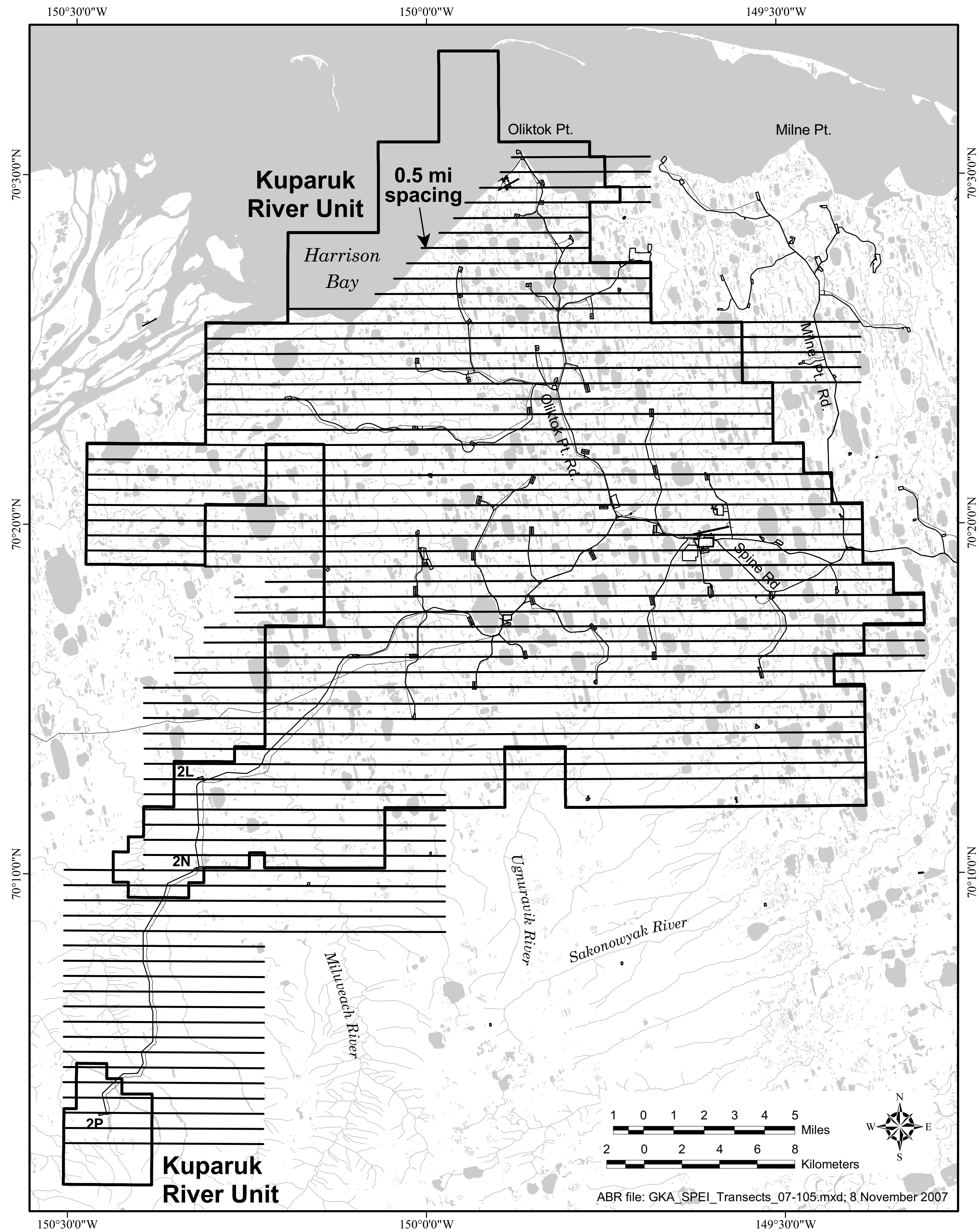

Figure 5. The aerial survey area for Spectacled Eiders in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 2009. Transects were spaced 0.5 miles apart. Survey transects were extended in 2008 to conform to the western boundary of the newer Kuparuk River Unit boundary (some areas no longer in the new unit boundary were still surveyed).

Table 4. Numbers and densities (per km²) of Spectacled Eiders recorded during a pre-nesting aerial survey of the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 10–13 June 2009.

	Non-flying	Flying	All Birds
Numbers Observed			
Males	14	2	16
Females	12	0	12
Total Birds	26	2	28
Observed Pairs	11	0	11
Number of Sightings	14	2	16
FWS Indicated Total Birds[a]	28		
Density (birds/km²)[b]			
Breeding Pairs[c]	0.02	<0.01	0.03
Total Birds[d]	0.04	<0.01	0.04
FWS Indicated Total Birds	0.04		

[a] FWS Indicated Total Birds is calculated according to the standard protocol (USFWS 1987a); flying birds are not counted.

Total indicated birds = (lone males × 2) + (flocked males × 2) + (pairs × 2) + (group total × 1).

1) "lone males" are single, isolated males without a visible associated female;
2) "flocked males" are two or more males in close association (limited to 2–4 males per flock; no females in the flock);
3) a "pair" is a male and female in close association; and
4) a "group" is three or more of a mixed-sex grouping of the same species in close association, which cannot be separated into singles or pairs (one female with two males was considered to be a pair and a lone male, and one female with three males was considered to be a pair and two lone males).

[b] Density calculated based on a total area surveyed of 640.4 km².

[c] Number of breeding pairs = total males counted not in flocks (flock > 4 males).

[d] Unadjusted density of total birds = total birds/km² surveyed.

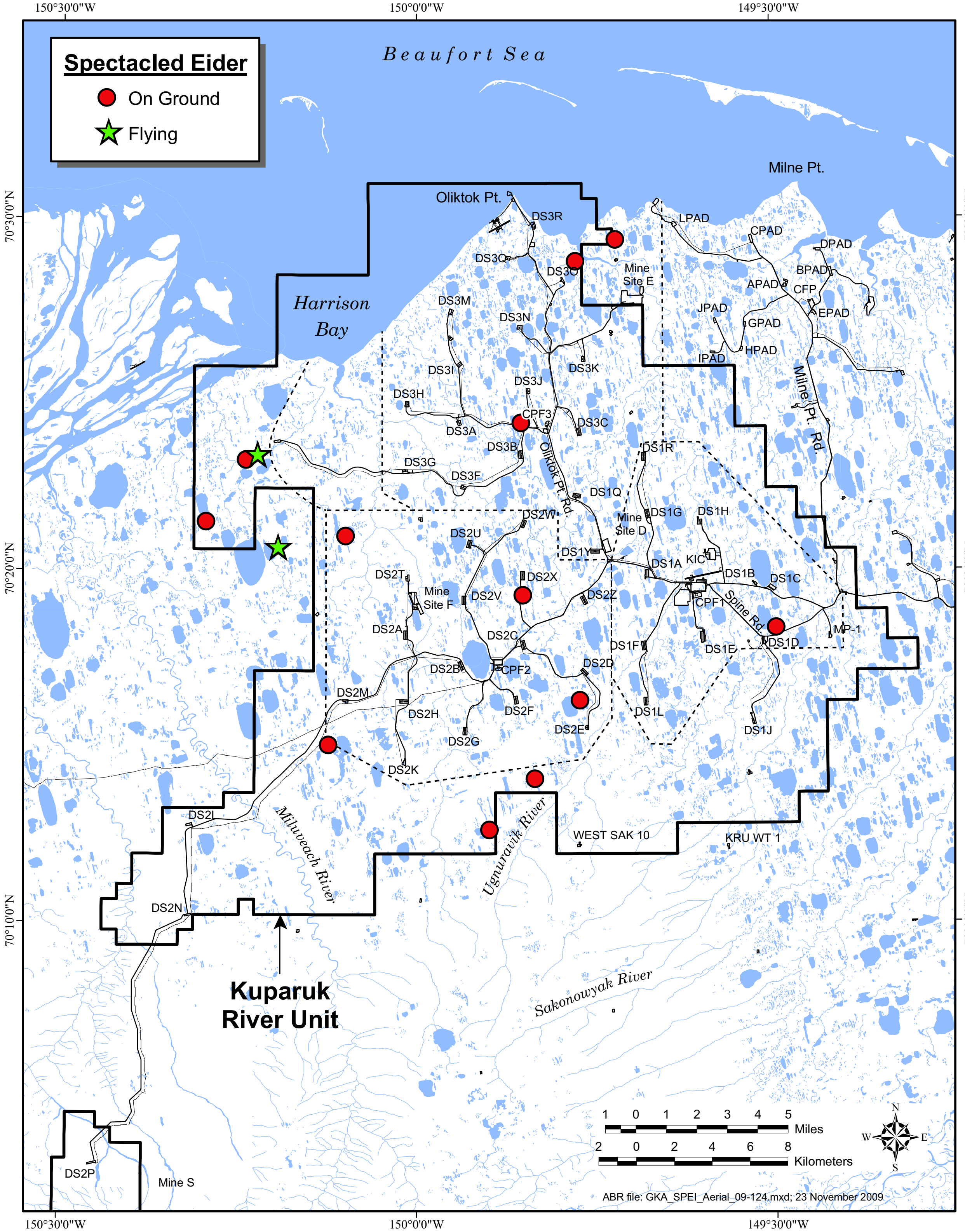

Figure 6. Distribution of Spectacled Eiders observed on the aerial survey of the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 10–13 June 2009.

Table 5. Numbers and densities (per km²) of Spectacled Eiders recorded during pre-nesting aerial surveys of the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 1993, 1995–2009.

Year	Numbers of Eiders Observed					Density (birds/km²)[a]			
	Non-flying Birds	Flying Birds	Total Birds	FWS Indicated Total Birds[b]	Number of Sightings	Breeding Pairs[c]	Total Birds[d]	FWS Indicated Total Birds	Survey Dates (June)
1993 – First Survey	79	46	125	91	66	0.14	0.24	0.17	12 & 15
1993 – Second Survey	24	17	41	34	26	0.06	0.08	0.06	18–20
1995	32	2	34	39	17	0.04	0.06	0.07	14–16
1996	22	18	40	32	24	0.05	0.07	0.06	10–14
1997	33	18	51	40	24	0.06	0.09	0.07	12–14, 16
1998	43	15	58	50	32	0.06	0.10	0.09	11–12, 14
1999	26	50	76	50	23	0.08	0.14	0.09	12–13
2000	36	24	60	40	27	0.07	0.11	0.08	13–14
2001	54	7	61	58	28	0.07	0.12	0.11	14–16
2002	22	5	27	32	22	0.03	0.04	0.06	13–15
2003	27	4	31	44	23	0.04	0.05	0.08	15–16
2004	24	3	27	38	21	0.04	0.05	0.07	17–18
2005	14	4	18	20	12	0.02	0.03	0.04	13–15
2006	21	3	24	24	14	0.03	0.05	0.05	12–13
2007	46	2	48	27	27	0.04	0.07	0.08	12–14
2008	14	7	21	20	14	0.02	0.02	0.03	13–15
2009	26	2	28	28	14	0.03	0.04	0.04	10–13

[a] Density calculated based on total area surveyed of 525.1 km² (1993), 550.5 km² (1995–1998), 525.4 km² (1999–2006), and 640.4 km² (2007–2009); the 1998 densities were calculated for the smaller study area used in 1995–1997 because no eiders were recorded in the expanded Tarn area surveyed at 50% coverage in 1998.

[b] FWS Indicated Total Birds is calculated according to the standard protocol (USFWS 1987a) as described in Table 4; flying birds are not counted.

[c] Number of breeding pairs = total males counted (flying and non-flying combined).

[d] Unadjusted density of total birds = total birds/km² surveyed (flying and non-flying combined).

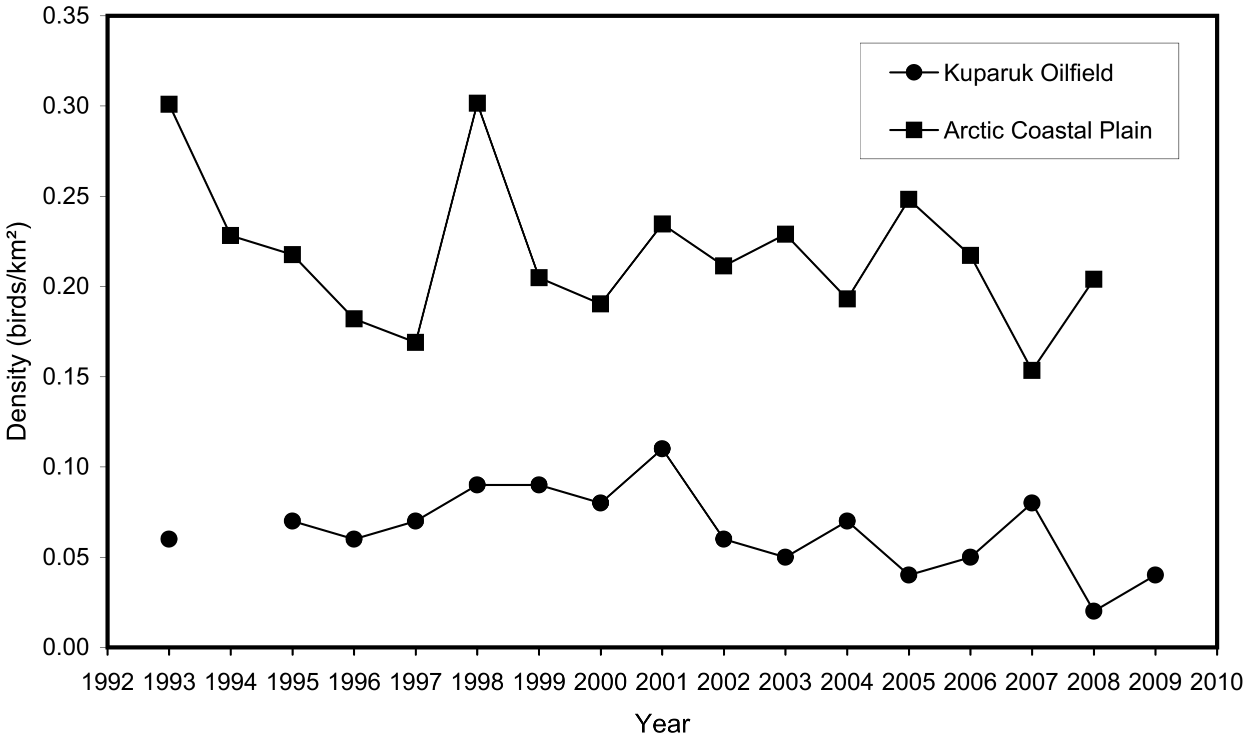

Figure 7. Trends in Spectacled Eider densities (indicated total birds/km²) based on aerial surveys of the Kuparuk River Unit (this study) and across the entire Arctic Coastal Plain, June 1993–2008. A visibility correction factor is not used for these data.

Table 6. Numbers and fates of eider nests and annual search effort (i.e., number of areas searched) in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 1993–2009.

Year	Total Nests[a]	Number Successful	Percent Successful	Search Effort [b]
SPECTACLED EIDER				
1993	17	6	35.3	33
1994	14	5	35.7	24
1995	14	4	28.6	17
1996	16	7	43.8	17
1997	11	3	27.3	13
1998	12	5	41.7	10
1999	5	3	60.0	11
2000	11	7	63.6	13
2001	8	1	12.5	10
2002	18[c]	9	50.0	11
2003	17[d]	8	47.1	13
2004	4	0	0.0	10
2005	13[e]	12	92.3	9
2006	8	5	62.5	12
2007	8	2	25.0	9
2008	6	0	0.0	10
2009	9	5	55.6	10
Mean	11.2	5.1	41.7	
KING EIDER				
1993	16	12	75.0	
1994	19	6	31.6	
1995	8	1	12.5	
1996	17	7	43.8[f]	
1997	14	1	7.1	
1998	20	5	25.0	
1999	13	2	15.4	
2000	19	8	42.1	
2001	17	3	20.0[g]	
2002	26	11	42.3	
2003	16	4	25.0	
2004	17	4	23.5	
2005	13	7	53.8	
2006	21	7	33.3	
2007	21	2	9.5	
2008[h]	33	14	45.2	
2009	17	3	17.6	
Mean	18.1	5.1	41.7	

[a] Includes nests for known and probable (based on feather identification) species, but does not include unidentified eider nests (all failed): 1993 = 4 nests; 1994 = 2 nests; 1997 = 2 nests, 2006 and 2007 = 4 nests, and 2009 = 2 nests.

[b] Number of distinct areas in the Kuparuk Oilfield searched for Spectacled Eider nests. No areas were searched specifically for King Eiders. UAF researchers searched 3 areas in 2004 and 1 area in 2005 without ABR assistance.

[c] Five nests found by Laura Phillips, UAF, during her nest searches for King Eiders were included in this total.

[d] Three nests found by Laura Phillips, UAF, during her nest searches for King Eiders were included in this total.

[e] One nest found by Rebecca McGuire, UAF, during her nest searches for King Eiders was included in this total.

[f] One nest was still active when last checked; therefore, nesting success was based on 16 nests total.

[g] Two nests had unknown fates; therefore, nesting success calculated for 15 nests total.

h Two nests had unknown fates; therefore, nesting success calculated for 31 nests total.

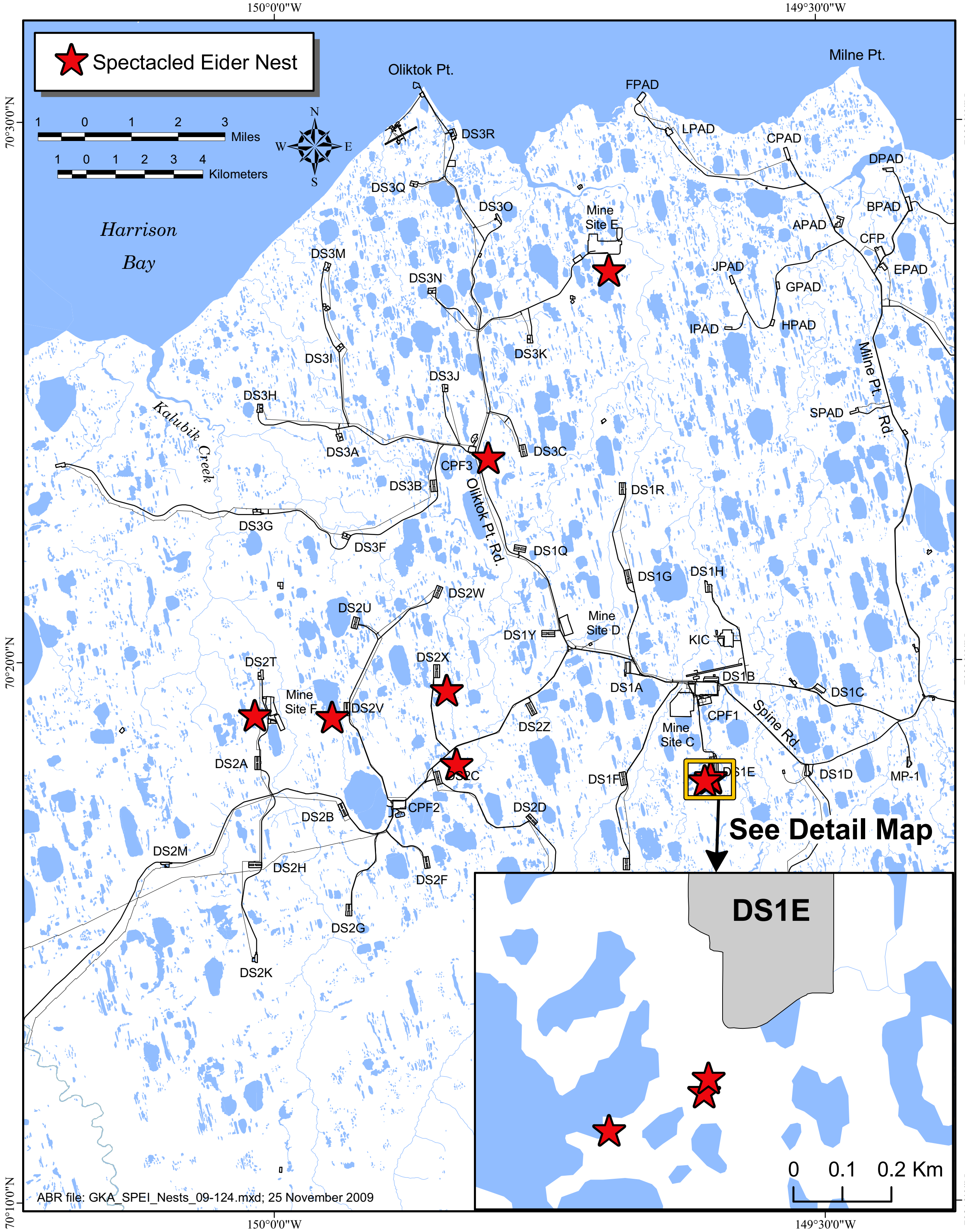

Figure 8. Locations of Spectacled Eider nests in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 2009. Two of the nests were determined to be Spectacled Eider based on feather identification.

Table 7. Numbers of Spectacled Eider nests by location in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 1993–2009.

Nesting Location	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
COLONIES[a]																	
S of DS-1E	0	1	0	0	0	2 (1)	1	0	0	5	2	0	2	2	2 (1)	1	3
N of DS-1Y	2 (1)	2 (1)	1 (1)	1	1 (1)	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
E of DS-2C	5 (2)	4 (2)	4	4 (1)	3 (2)	2	1	1	4 (3)	0 (2)	2	1	0	1	1 (1)	1	1
N of DS-2F	1 (1)	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0[c]	0	0
N of DS-2K	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
W of DS-2V	0	0	1 (1)	2	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	3	0	3 (2)	2 (2)	1
S of DS-2T	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	3	0	4	1	0	1	1 (1)
S of DS-2X	2	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (2)	2 (2)	1	1 (1)	1	0	2 (1)	0	0	1	1	0	1
W of DS-2X	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(CPF-3 Brant Colony)	2 (2)	2 (1)	0	3 (2)	1 (1)	4 (3)	0	1 (1)	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	1 (1)	1
S of Pit E	0	0	2 (1)	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	1 (1)	0	1	1 (1)		1 (1)
ANNUAL LOCATIONS[b]																	
N of CPF-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N of DS-2H	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
DS-3N	0	0	0	1	1 (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DS-3Q	0	1 (1)	1 (1)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N of CPF-3	1 (1)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

[a] Colonies were locations that supported more than one nesting pair in at least one year.
[b] Annual locations supported one pair in more than one year.
[c] One nest that may have been a Spectacled Eider was located here, but species could not be confirmed with feather samples

Table 8. Distances (m) of Spectacled Eider nests to the nearest water, waterbody, and oilfield infrastructure (road or pad) in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 1993–2009.

Feature	Known Nests				All Nests [a]			
Year	Mean	SD	Range	*n*	Mean	SD	Range	*n*
WATER								
1993	3.0	3.2	0.2–10	8	2	2.4	0.2–10	17
1994	0.7	1.2	0.1–4	8	0.8	1	0.1–4	14
1995	2.4	2	0.5–7	9	2.1	2	0.5–7	15
1996	0.6	0.8	0.1–3	12	1	1.6	0.1–6	16
1997	5.4	9.7	0.1–20	4	2.9	5.8	0.1–20	7
1998	0.8	0.7	0.1–2	6	2.3	4.2	0.1–15	12
1999	5.7	10.8	0.5–25	5	5.7	10.8	0.5–25	5
2000	0.7	0.5	0.1–1.5	8	1	0.9	0.1–3	11
2001	0.8	0.7	0.2–2.0	5	1	1	0.1–3	8
2002	0.5	0.5	<0.1–2	15	0.4	0.4	<0.1–2	18
2003[b]	2.5	5	0.1–20	15	2.6	4.9	0.1–20	16
2004	0.5	0.5	0.1–1	3	2.9	4.8	0.1–10	4
2005	3.0	8.1	0.1–30	13	3	8.1	0.1–30	13
2006	0.2	0.2	0.1–0.5	6	0.3	0.2	0.1–0.5	8
2007	0.6	0.8	0.1–1.5	3	4.2	10.4	0.1–30	8
2008	0.4	0.1	0.3–0.5	3	0.4	0.3	0.1–1	6
2009	1.5	1.8	0.1–5	7	1.6	1.6	0.1–5	9
WATERBODY								
1993	3.7	3.5	0.2–10	8	2.5	2.7	0.2–10	17
1994	1.3	1.9	0.1–5	8	2.5	5.2	0.1–20	14
1995	8.4	6.2	0.5–15	9	9.6	8.2	0.5–30	15
1996	0.6	0.8	0.1–3	12	2	3.8	0.1–15	16
1997	5.4	9.7	0.1–20	4	4.4	6.4	0.1–20	7
1998	1.4	1.9	0.1–5	6	3.9	5.5	0.1–15	12
1999	16.3	21.3	0.5–50	5	16.3	21.3	0.5–50	5
2000	17.1	27.3	0.1–75	8	13.8	23.6	0.1–75	11
2001	13.6	20.6	1.0–50	5	11.5	16.8	1.0–50	8
2002	4.6	11	<0.1–40	15	3.9	10.1	<0.1–40	18
2003[b]	24.8	36.9	0.2–100	15	23.6	35.9	0.2–100	16
2004	2.1	0.5	0.3–4	3	3.7	4.5	0.3–10	4
2005	27.2	31.4	0.5–100	13	27.2	31.4	0.5–100	13
2006	6.9	10.6	0.3–25	6	10.2	15.2	0.3–40	8
2007	0.7	0.7	0.1–1.5	3	12.8	17.2	0.1–40	8
2008	31.8	27.3	0.4–50	3	16.2	24.3	0.1–50	6
2009	9.4	9.8	0.1–25	7	10.5	10.3	0.1–25	9

Table 8. Continued.

Feature Year	Known Nests				All Nests [a]			
	Mean	SD	Range	*n*	Mean	SD	Range	*n*
OILFIELD INFRASTRUCTURE								
1993	540	149	353–742	8	500	180	123–742	17
1994	514	206	162–801	8	498	209	162–855	14
1995	427	102	239–591	9	430	156	208–823	15
1996	420	194	114–872	12	425	178	114–872	16
1997	521	144	345–662	4	479	221	82–900	7
1998	372	85	345–662	4	454	160	212–718	12
1999	398	167	194–598	5	398	167	194–598	5
2000	325	160	138–666	8	349	154	138–666	10[c]
2001	549	390	315–1,240	5	491	306	315–1,240	8
2002	384	200	52–723	15	407	194	52–723	18
2003	463	217	177–896	16	456	212	177–896	17
2004	478	298	129–804	3	499	247	219–804	4
2005	389	157	68–665	13	389	157	68–665	13
2006	406	108	264–531	6	409	94	264–537	8
2007	334	89	233–402	3	407	106	233–546	8
2008	252	114	142–369	3	364	146	142–501	6
2009	317	144	108–469	7	355	149	108–551	9

[a] All nests includes known and probable (based on feathers) nests.
[b] One Spectacled Eider nest did not have distance to the nearest waterbody or water.
[c] One probable Spectacled Eider nest excluded from the analysis because its precise location was unknown.

TUNDRA SWAN

Tundra Swans are an important component of the waterbird community in northern Alaska. In addition, the health of the Tundra Swan population in the oilfields is considered an indicator of the overall health of waterbird populations and their wetland ecosystems. Accordingly, swans have received considerable attention from both the oil industry and regulatory agencies, especially when planning and permitting new developments. ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc., traditionally has included Tundra Swans in their environmental planning for the oilfields. For example, nest and brood locations for Tundra Swans are identified on environmental sensitivity maps for oil-spill response in the Kuparuk and Prudhoe Bay oilfields, and avoidance of traditional swan nest sites is a consideration when planning new infrastructure. Current and long-term information on the local abundance, distribution, productivity, and population trends of swans are essential to these planning programs and assessments. After preliminary reconnaissance surveys in 1988, ABR has monitored these population parameters annually since 1989 in a number of areas, including the Kuparuk study area, by conducting systematic aerial surveys during nesting and brood-rearing (Anderson et al. 2009).

The Tundra Swan study had two objectives in 2009:

1. locate and map the distribution of nests and enumerate adults during nesting; and
2. locate and map the distribution of broods, enumerate adults and young, and assess productivity of swans during brood-rearing.

2009 RESULTS

- Aerial surveys were flown to collect information on Tundra Swan abundance and distribution during the nesting and brood-rearing periods in 2009. The nesting survey was conducted during 20–25 June 2009 and the brood-rearing survey during 18–21 August 2009.
- To streamline analysis and allow comparable annual datasets, we divided the 2009 data into two study areas with historically different levels of survey effort. The 'Kuparuk' study area (2,380 km²) comprised all regions that were consistently surveyed in all years of the study, including a section that was formerly part of the Oil and Gas Lease 54 (Figure 9). The 'South Kuparuk' study area (375 km²) comprised areas with inconsistent coverage prior to the last several years. The South Kuparuk data are presented in Appendix 4 and results for the Kuparuk study area are reported below.
- During the nesting aerial survey, 512 Tundra Swans were recorded at 318 locations in the Kuparuk study area (Table 9; Appendix 5). The number of swans was the third highest recorded since 1989 and swan density (0.22 swans/km²) in 2009 was 22% higher than the long-term mean for the study area (Appendix 6). Although the number of swans observed in 2009 was relatively high, it was 12% lower than the record high number (580) of swans observed in 2008. The number of adult swans in the Kuparuk study area has increased significantly since 1989 ($r^2 = 0.37$, $P < 0.01$).
- In 2009, 96 Tundra Swan nests (0.04 nests/km²) were found in the Kuparuk study area (Figure 10), a 5% decrease from 2008 (Table 9), but 10% higher than the 21-year mean (87.3 nests; 1989–2009). Since 1989, total numbers of nests has increased significantly in the oilfield ($r^2 = 0.25$ $P = 0.02$), although numbers have fluctuated annually. The annual number of swan nests is highly correlated with spring temperatures encountered by swans during the arrival and nest initiation period (15 May–15 June), with fewer nests being active during years with low cumulative thawing degree-days and more nests being active during years with high cumulative thawing degree-days (Figure 11). The continued high number of nests in 2009 likely was influenced by favorable weather conditions in the study area at the time when swans would be initiating nests (i.e., rapid

snow melt at the end of May and warmer than average temperatures in early June).

- During the brood-rearing survey, 896 swans (828 adults and 68 young) were observed at 374 locations in the Kuparuk study area (Table 10; Appendix 7). The total number of swans recorded during brood-rearing in 2009 was 28% higher than the 20-year mean (701 total swans), but 6% lower than the record numbers in 2008 (964). The number of adults increased 61% between June and August 2009, due to a substantial increase in the number of nonbreeding adults (+110%) accompanied by a 57% decrease in the number of breeding adults. The decrease in the number of breeding adults between June and August 2009 probably reflects the conversion of breeding swans into the failed/nonbreeding swan count. These latter swans would consist of those with nests that failed or broods that were lost before the August survey, as well as swans that had never attempted breeding.
- In 2009, 33 broods (68 young) of Tundra Swans were counted in the Kuparuk study area (Table 10, Figure 12). The number of broods in 2009 was the lowest recorded in the oilfield since monitoring began in 1989. Not only was the number of broods low, the mean brood size of 2.1 young/brood (range = 1–5 young) was 9% lower than the 20-year mean (2.3 young/brood) and the third lowest mean brood-size recorded during the study. The percentage of broods with three or more young (24%) was 41% lower than the long-term mean and second lowest percentage ever recorded. Young swans represented only 8% of the total swans in 2009, compared to the long-term average of 24%. Approximate nesting success of 34% in 2009 was poor by comparison with the long-term average of 80%. Annual nesting success and clutch size of Tundra Swans have been correlated to weather conditions in the nesting area, with cool springs typically associated with lower nesting success than warmer springs. However, poor weather conditions during late incubation have been known to offset the influence of warm springs and affect nesting success. In 2009, early snowmelt and above average temperatures that were favorable to swans during nest initiation may have been counteracted by the cold, windy period in mid–late June 2009, although no direct cause-and-effect relationship can explain the low nesting success this year.

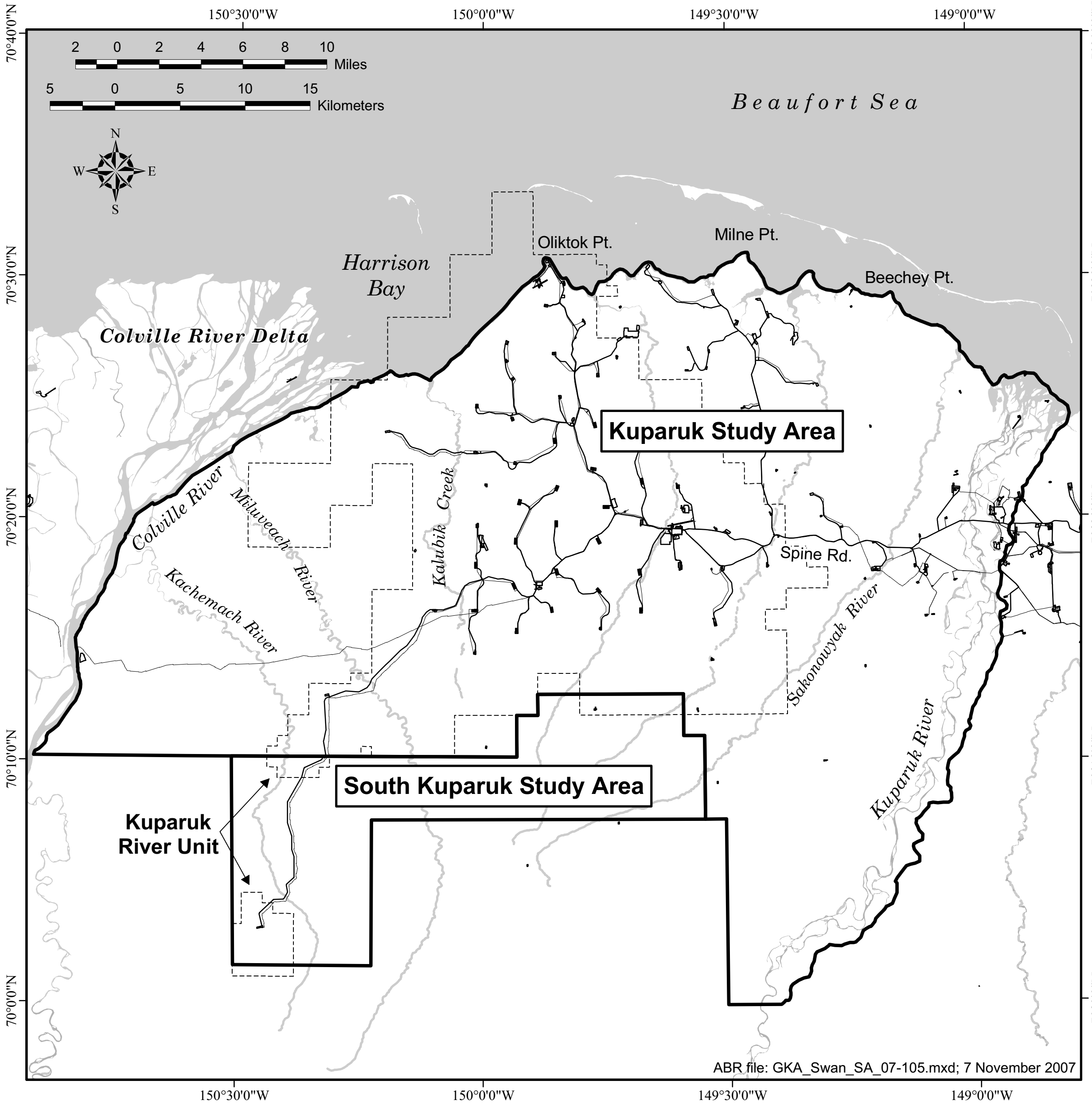

Figure 9. The aerial survey areas for Tundra Swans in the Greater Kuparuk Area, Alaska, 2009.

Table 9. Numbers of Tundra Swans and nests observed during June aerial surveys in the Kuparuk study area, Alaska, 1989–2009. Swans and nests recorded in the South Kuparuk study area are presented in Appendix 4 and a more detailed description of survey results for 2009 is presented in Appendix 5.

		Observed Number of Adults			Estimated Number of Adults[a]	
Year	Nests	With Nests	Without Nests	Total	Breeders	Nonbreeders
1989	45	71	190	261	90	171
1990	77	126	170	296	154	142
1991	81	115	275	390	162	228
1992	79	128	233	361	158	203
1993	70	118	231	349	140	209
1994	50	67	257	324	100	224
1995	107	181	284	465	214	251
1996	122	215	269	484	244	240
1997	75	121	242	363	150	213
1998	108	203	372	575	146	359
1999	73	119	235	354	170	208
2000	85	142	361	503	166	333
2001	83	149	280	429	166	263
2002	115	195	294	489	230	259
2003	74	114	309	423	148	275
2004	92	141	244	385	184	201
2005	89	149	248	397	178	219
2006	95	142	235	377	190	187
2007	116	189	323	512	232	280
2008	101	165	415	580	202	378
2009	96	152	360	512	192	320

[a] The estimated number is based on the assumption that all nests are attended by a nesting pair, so breeders = nests × 2, whereas nonbreeders = total adults – breeders.

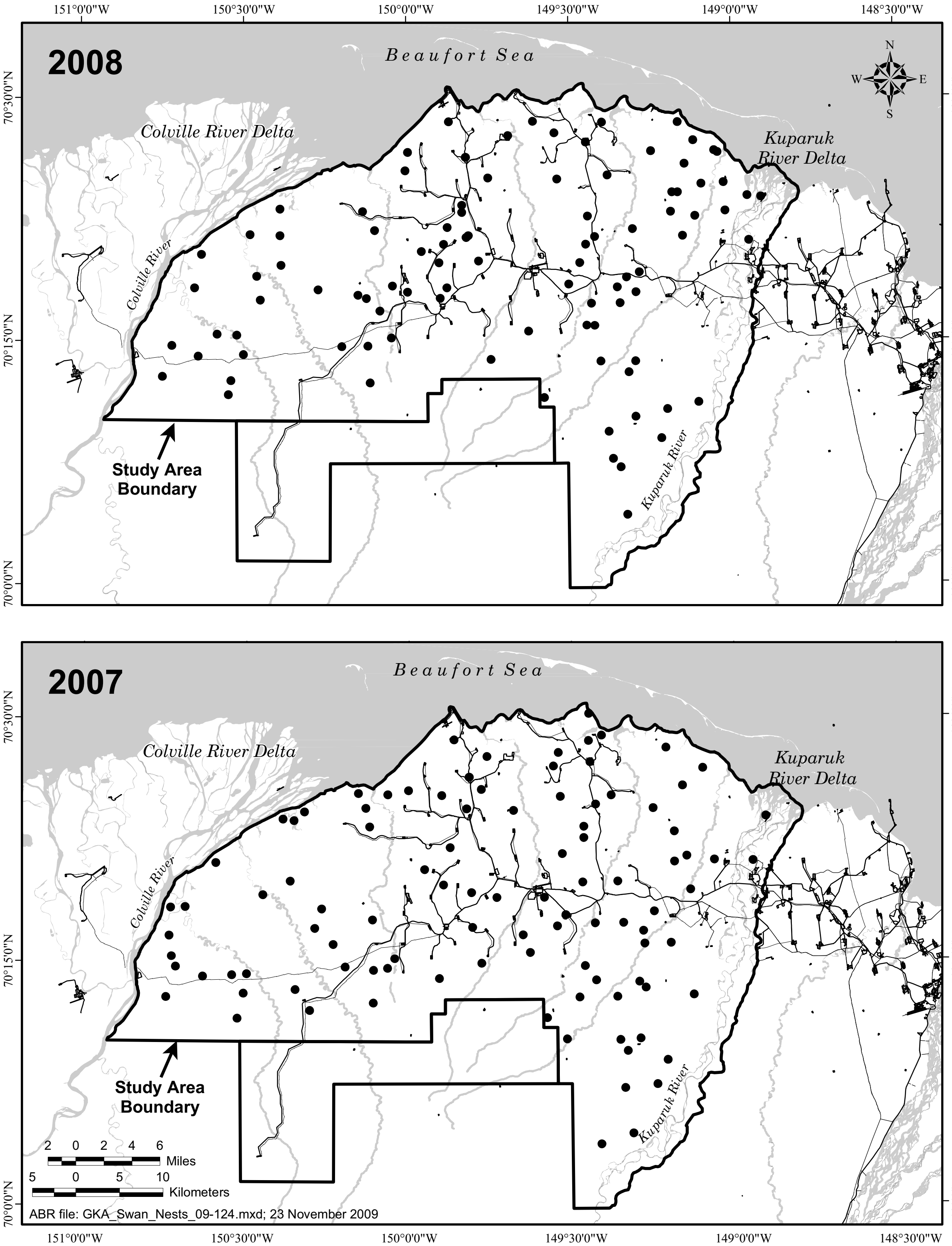

Figure 10. Locations of Tundra Swan nests observed in the Kuparuk and Kuparuk South study areas, Alaska, June 2008 and 2009 (see Figure 9 for study area boundaries).

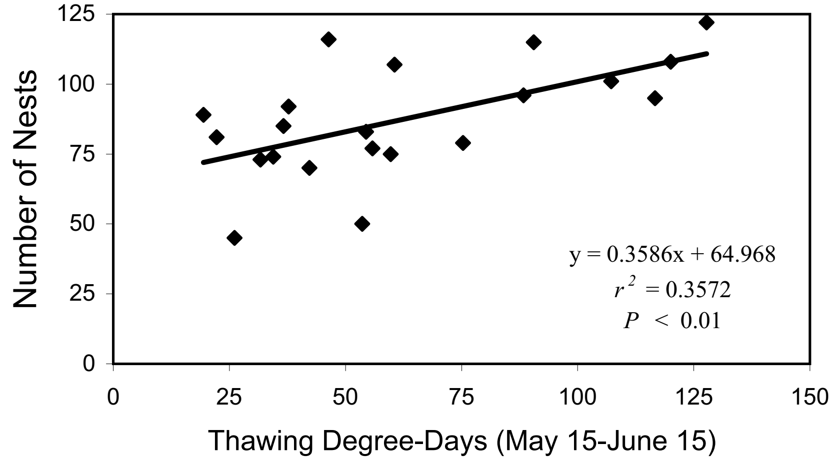

Figure 11. Numbers of Tundra Swan nests by year in relation to cumulative thawing degree-days between 15 May–15 June, in the Kuparuk study area, Alaska, 1989–2009.

Table 10. Numbers of Tundra Swans and broods observed during August aerial surveys in the Kuparuk study area, Alaska, 1989–1993, 1995–2009. No brood-rearing survey was conducted in 1994. Swans and broods recorded in the South Kuparuk study area are presented in Appendix 4 and a more detailed description of survey results for 2009 is presented in Appendix 7.

				Observed Adults					Estimated Adults[a]	
Year	No. Broods	No. Young	Mean Brood Size	With Broods	Without Broods	Total	Total Swans	Percent Young	Breeders	Non-breeders
1989	45	103	2.3	84	319	403	506	20.4	90	313
1990	75	208	2.8	147	285	432	640	32.5	150	282
1991	69	175	2.5	134	373	507	682	25.7	138	369
1992	73	194	2.7	145	339	484	678	28.6	146	338
1993	72	179	2.5	141	332	473	652	27.5	144	329
1995	82	222	2.7	159	343	502	724	30.7	164	338
1996	99	271	2.7	187	331	518	789	34.3	198	320
1997	60	134	2.2	118	483	601	735	18.2	120	481
1998	74	172	2.3	141	391	532	704	24.4	148	384
1999	45	110	2.4	92	372	464	574	19.2	90	374
2000	56	113	2.0	107	579	686	799	14.1	112	574
2001	71	151	2.1	141	413	554	705	21.4	142	412
2002	69	173	2.5	137	342	479	652	26.5	138	341
2003	60	113	1.9	118	358	476	589	19.2	120	356
2004	97	211	2.2	185	385	570	781	27.0	194	376
2005	57	111	1.9	111	346	457	568	19.5	114	343
2006	87	171	2.0	135	318	483	654	26.1	174	309
2007	81	180	2.2	158	416	574	754	23.9	162	412
2008	97	256	2.6	182	508	690	946	24.5	194	496
2009	33	68	2.1	65	763	828	896	7.6	66	762

[a] The estimated number is based on the assumption that all nests are attended by a nesting pair, so breeders = nests × 2, whereas nonbreeders = total adults – breeders.

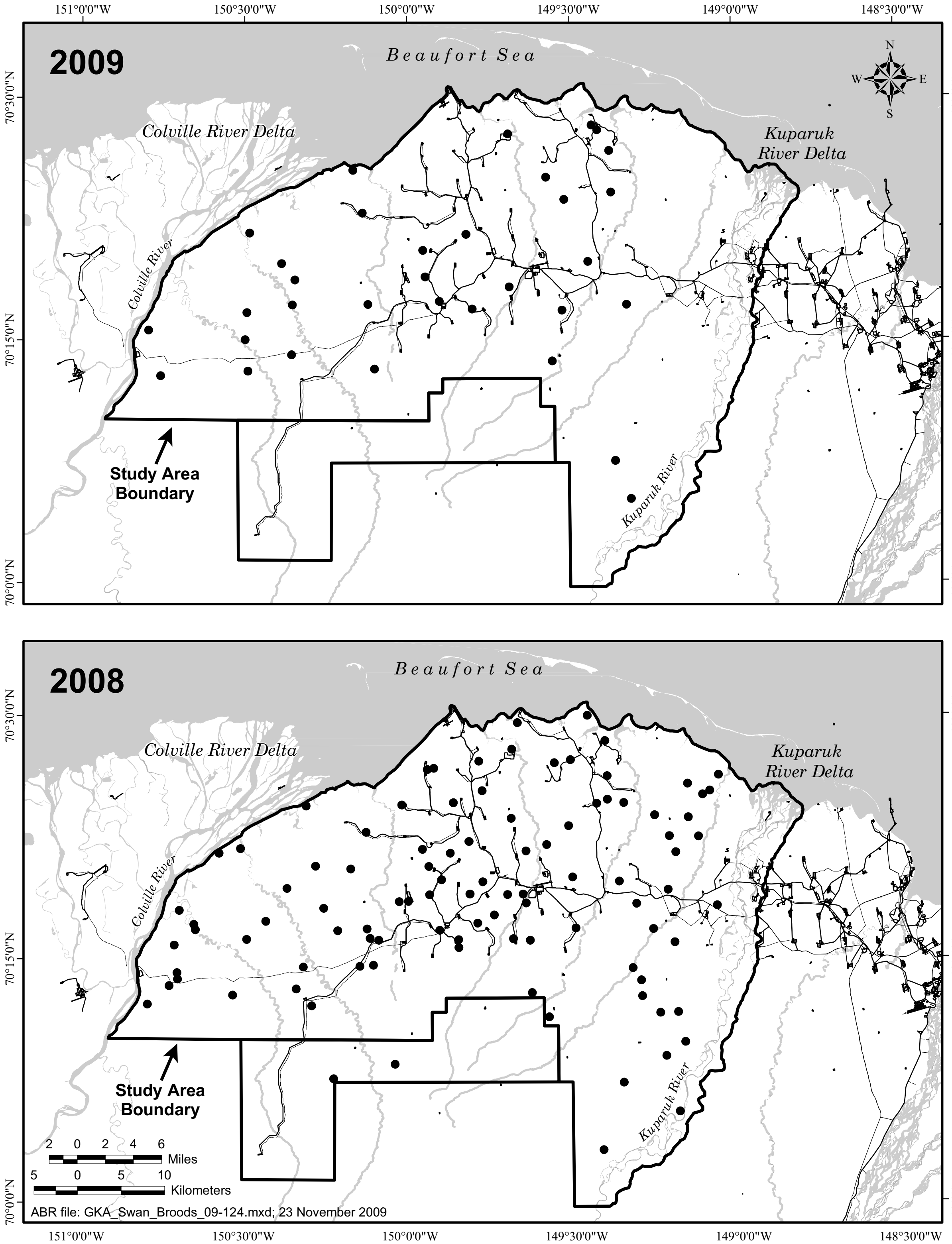

Figure 12. Locations of Tundra Swan broods observed in the in the Kuparuk and Kuparuk South study areas, Alaska, August 2008 and 2009 (see Figure 9 for study area boundaries).

BRANT

A small percentage (<5%; Sedinger et al. 1993) of the Pacific Flyway population of Brant breeds on the Arctic Coastal Plain of Alaska. Prior to the mid-1980s, information on the distribution, abundance, and nesting success of Brant in this area was collected only sporadically. In 1966, King (1970) surveyed the entire Arctic Coastal Plain of Alaska and saw large flocks of nonbreeding Brant (~25,000 total). Flocks of nonbreeders also were noted in previous years by Hansen (in King 1970). Unlike Hansen, however, King also saw brood-rearing groups of Brant, indicating the presence of a nesting population on the coastal plain. In the late 1970s to early 1980s, Gavin (1977, 1980) also noted locations of nesting Brant during aerial surveys of the central Arctic Coastal Plain where oil production was taking place.

Within the oilfields, Brant can be found breeding in scattered smaller colonies (e.g., Surfcote and near Lake Colleen in Prudhoe Bay, near CPF-3 and DS-2C in Kuparuk, and near C Pad in the Milne Point area) and in several larger colonies (e.g., Howe Island on the Sagavanirktok River delta, and on the northern Colville River Delta). Locations of breeding colonies outside the oilfields are less well known, but some have been mapped in areas surveyed between Kasegaluk Lagoon and the western Colville River Delta (Ritchie et al. 2008). Brood-rearing and molting areas used by Brant are better known, as they are usually located in the relatively limited coastal salt marshes along the Beaufort Sea, including the Fish Creek area, Colville River Delta, Oliktok Point and Milne Point areas, the mouth of the Putuligayuk River, and the Sagavanirktok River. Although the vast majority of molting Brant on the Arctic Coastal Plain are located at Teshekpuk Lake (Bollinger and Derksen 1996), most areas that support brood-rearing Brant on the coastal plain also have small groups of molting birds (i.e., usually failed or nonbreeding birds from nearby nesting colonies) (Ritchie et al. 2008).

Since the mid-1980s, Brant have received considerable attention from both the oil industry and regulatory agencies because of the substantial declines in the Pacific Flyway population that principally breeds on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta (Raveling 1984, Sedinger et al. 1993). Brant are traditional in their use of nesting and brood-rearing areas and, hence, are potentially vulnerable to changing conditions in those areas. Brant during brood-rearing, in particular, are sensitive to various types of disturbance associated with oil development, including noise, and vehicular and aircraft traffic. For example, studies in the Lisburne Development Area in Prudhoe Bay found that Brant were more responsive to vehicular disturbances at greater distances during brood-rearing than they were during pre-nesting and nesting (Murphy and Anderson 1993). In contrast, Brant nesting in a colony near Central Processing Facility 3 (CPF-3) in the Kuparuk Oilfield were not significantly disturbed by noise from that facility (Hampton et al. 1988). Thus, the specific disturbance type and relative distance of birds to the disturbance are important factors in determining the relative effects of oilfield-related disturbance on Brant.

Beginning in 1988, surveys supported by ARCO Alaska, Inc. (now ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.), have focused specifically on the distribution of nesting and brood-rearing Brant within the Kuparuk Oilfield. Since the early 1990s, aerial surveys have been conducted almost annually during brood-rearing. The objective of the 2009 brood-rearing survey was to count Brant adults and goslings and to locate their brood-rearing/molting areas between Heald Point and the Miluveach River along the Arctic Coast.

2009 RESULTS

- One aerial survey was conducted on 29 July 2009 along three sections of the Beaufort Sea coast between the Sagavanirktok and Colville rivers to locate brood-rearing areas used by Brant and to count numbers of adults and goslings (Figure 13). Brant were counted in 4 brood-rearing (adults with young) groups and 13 molting (adults without young) groups between the Sagavanirktok and Colville rivers, for a total count of 683 birds (597 adults and 86 goslings; Table 11, Figure 14).
- The 683 adult Brant counted in 2009 was well below the annual mean during the 20 years of surveys (1,496), and was the second lowest total ever recorded, including

the second lowest count of adults in brood-rearing groups and the second lowest count of non- or failed-breeding Brant (i.e., molting groups of adults only). Productivity was also low. Brant goslings comprised 13% of the total number of Brant counted, which was the second lowest percentage ever recorded and well below the annual mean of 33%. The total number of Brant goslings (86) was the second lowest total for goslings and was substantially lower than the annual mean of 535 goslings.

- In Section 4 (Kuparuk River to Kalubik Creek), 427 Brant (371 adults and 56 goslings) were recorded, the fourth lowest count for this section since the surveys began in 1989. Goslings comprised 13% of all birds and 25% of birds in brood-rearing groups, the lowest percentages ever recorded and well below the annual means of 38% and 41%, respectively. The number of goslings in the section (56) was the second lowest ever recorded, considerably below the annual mean of 397 goslings. The number of molting adults without young (198) was the highest ever recorded, reflecting the low productivity of local Brant in 2009.
- During the Brant brood-rearing survey, 7 groups (481 adults and 84 young) of Snow Geese (*Chen caerulescens*) were observed near the Colville River and 1 group (113 adults and 0 young) was observed in Prudhoe Bay. The 481 adult Snow Geese just east of the Colville River represented an increase over previous counts in Section 5, and reflected growth of the nesting colony of Snow Geese on the Colville River Delta in recent years (Johnson et al. 2009). However, the count of 84 goslings represented a sharp decline from 2008 levels (341 goslings in section 5; Anderson et al. 2009), indicating much lower productivity of Snow Geese in the region in 2009.

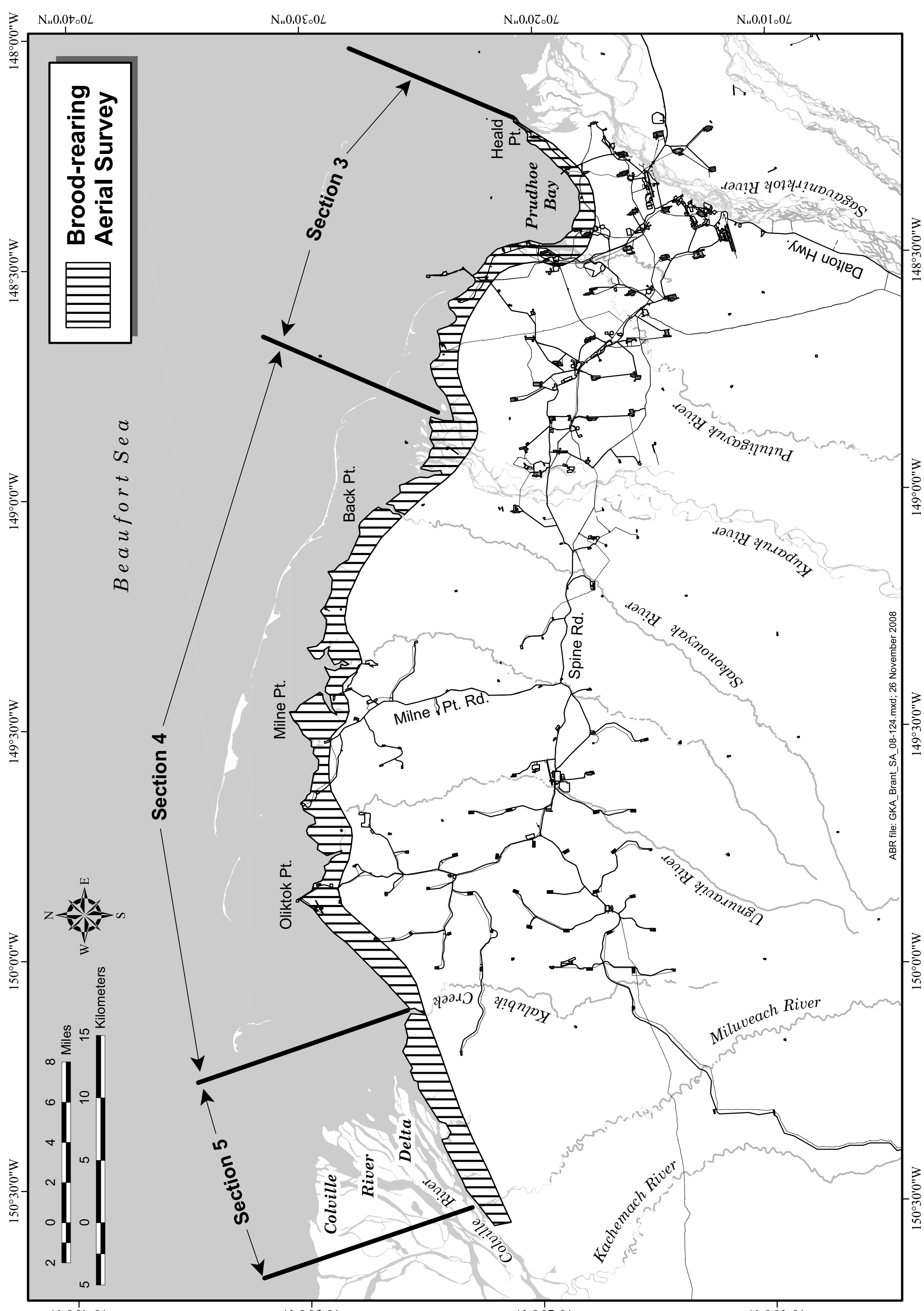

Figure 13. Study area for the aerial survey for brood-rearing/molting Brant between the Colville and Sagavanirktok rivers, Alaska, July 2009.

Table 11. Numbers of brood-rearing (adults and young) and molting (adults only) groups of Brant observed during aerial surveys in late July and early August along coastal sections between the Colville and Sagavanirktok rivers, Alaska, 1989–2009. Counts were either from visual observations or aerial photographs taken during the surveys.

	Section 3 Heald Point to Kuparuk River				Section 4 Kuparuk River to Kalubik Creek				Section 5 Kalubik Creek to Miluveach River				Total Survey Area			
	Brood-rearing		Molting		Brood-rearing		Molting		Brood-rearing		Molting		Brood-rearing		Molting	
Year[a]	Adults	Young	Adults	Total	Adults	Young	Adults	Total	Adults	Young	Adults	Total	Adults	Young	Adults	Total
1989	291	171	2	464	357	255	5	617	109	86	0	195	757	512	7	1,276
1990	484	360	0	844	648	663	0	1,311	177	205	0	382	1,309	1,228	0	2,537
1991	351	102	9	462	381	279	49	709	234	276	0	510	966	657	58	1,681
1992	391	112[b]	119	622[b]	160	124	0	284	0	0	0	0	551	236	119	906
1993	105	68	238	411	607	536	69	1,212	31	46	0	77	743	650	307	1,700
1994	216	148	150	514	492	414	21	927	0	0	0	0	708	562	171	1,441
1995	229	12	56	297	831	718	20	1,569	22	33	0	55	1,082	763	76	1,921
1996	ns[c]	ns	ns	ns	594	533	0	1,127	12[d]	18[d]	0[d]	30[d]	606	551	0	1,157
1997	109	51	140	300	294	232	82	608	ns	ns	ns	ns	403	283	222	908
1998	40	23	143	206	370	290	42	702	192	218	0	410	602	531	185	1,318
1999	269	160	300	729	504	367	16	887	0	0	0	0	773	527	316	1,616
2000	252	120	82	454	706	712	0	1,418	0	0	0	0	958	832	82	1,872
2001	143	16	69	228	344	140	0	484	124	32	0	156	611	188	69	868
2002	50	6	350	406	55	24	99	178	0	0	0	0	105	30	449	584
2003	60	22	349	431	751	616	0	1,367	124	81	0	205	935	719	349	2,003
2004	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
2005	407	133	24	564	901	743	42	1,686	28	33	0	61	1,,336	909	66	2,311
2006	135	64	347	546	197	69	34	300	0	0	0	0	332	133	381	846
2007	102	32	370	504	853	401	120	1,374	0	0	0	0	955	433	490	1,878
2008	98	47	266	411	1,039	759	86	1,884	62	64	0	126	1199	870	352	2,421
2009	84	2	104	190	173	56	198	427	25	28	13	66	282	86	315	683

[a] Numbers for 1989–1993 and 1996 are a mean from two surveys; numbers for 1994, 1995, 1997–2008 are from one survey only.
[b] Includes an inland group seen by ground observers.
[c] ns = not surveyed.
[c] This section only surveyed once that year.

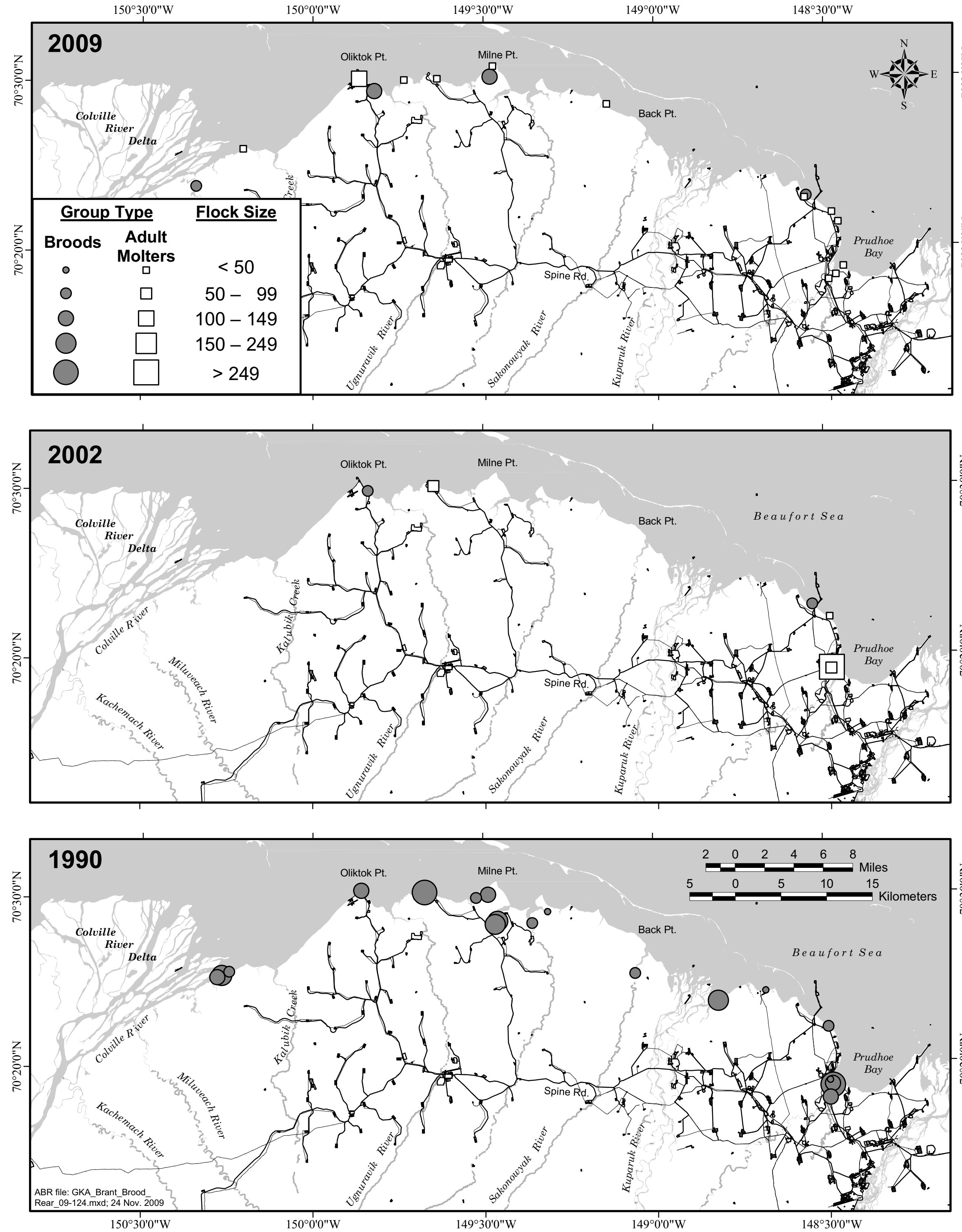

Figure 14. Locations and sizes of brood-rearing (adults and young) and molting (adults only) groups of Brant between the Colville and Sagavanirktok rivers, Alaska, in 1990, 2002, and 2009. The years other than 2009 are for comparison only: 1990 for high numbers of brood-rearing Brant and 2002 for low numbers. Only the survey in 1990 that was flown on a similar date was included for comparability with the single surveys in 2002 and 2009.

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Appendix 1. Methods for avian surveys in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 2009.

Brief summaries of methods used for aerial and road surveys, and ground nest searches and nest fate assessments for eiders are presented below; complete methods are presented in Anderson et al. (2004, 2005).

Aerial Surveys

The following table summarizes the aerial survey methods used for conducted for pre-nesting eiders, nesting and brood-rearing Tundra Swans, and for brood-rearing/molting Brant.

Species	Eiders	Tundra Swan		Brant
Season	Pre-nesting	Nesting	Brood-rearing	Brood-rearing
Aircraft	C-185/206	C-185/206	C-185/206	SuperCub/Scout
Flight Altitude	30–50 m	150 m	150 m	
Flight Speed	145 kph	145 kph	145 kph	
Number of Observers	2	2	2	1
Survey Type	E-W transects (fixed-width)	E-W transects[a] (fixed-width)	E-W transects[a] (fixed-width)	Coast and selected embayments
Transect Spacing	0.5 miles	1.6 km	1.6 km	None, circling of larger groups
Transect Width	400 m (200 m each side)	800 m (400 m each side)	800 m (400 m each side)	na
Percentage Coverage of Study Area	50%	100%	100%	na
Data Collection Media	Photo-mosaic maps/ audio tape	Photo-mosaic maps/USGS topographic maps/ aerial photographs taken of nest sites	Photo-mosaic maps	USGS topographic maps/ aerial photographs taken of large groups

[a] This survey followed the standard protocol of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for swan surveys (USFWS 1987b, 1991).

Eider Road Surveys

Road surveys in the Kuparuk Oilfield encompassed all habitats within ~500 m of the road system. The road to the farthest south Meltwater drill site (DS-2P) was surveyed only once to look for areas of suitable habitats for eiders; if none was found, this area was not included in subsequent surveys. In brief, the methodology for road surveys was for a single observer in a truck to drive the roads and count and map (on 1:1000-scale photo-mosaic maps of the oilfield, and electronically on an ArcPad ®-equipped computer) all eiders seen, regardless of distance from the road. In addition to the main roads (Spine Road, Oliktok Point Road) in the oilfield, we surveyed all secondary roads to drill and mine sites, and surveyed around the perimeter of the gravel pad at each drill site to count any eiders near the pad but not visible from the road. The entire study area was surveyed every two days (1/2 of area each day). All observations of eiders were digitized and added to the geographic information system (GIS) database initiated in 1993. Distances of Spectacled Eider observations to the nearest oilfield facility (road or pad) were determined using GIS.

Eider Nest Searches and Nest Fate

Ground searches for eider nests were conducted at selected locations based on where repeated sightings of breeding pairs occurred during the road surveys and where nests were located in

Appendix 1. Continued.

2008. Searchers walked the perimeters of all waterbodies in the selected area and searched for active (females present and incubating) or failed (nest scrapes or bowls) eider nests. Most Spectacled Eiders nest within 25 m of waterbodies, but searches extended out to at least 50 m to ensure coverage. Artificial eggs implanted with temperature sensors (thermistored eggs) were placed in active Spectacled Eider nests for later analysis of incubation constancy. Three time-laps digital cameras (Reconyx R-75) were deployed at active Spectacled Eider nests and located within 30 m of the nest and programmed to record 1 image every 30 seconds.

During July, all nests that still were active when initially located were revisited to determine their final fate (apparent nest success). A nest was considered to be successful if at least one egg hatched (based on presence of a membrane[s] separated from the shell [indicative of hatch] in the nest bowl). Thermistored eggs were retrieved during the nest-fate visit and data were downloaded in the field office for later analysis. The time-lapse cameras were also retrieved when the nests were checked for nest fate and the data (jpeg files) downloaded to DVDs for later review in the office to determine incidences of nest predation. All nest locations were digitized and added to the GIS database. Distances of nests were estimated to the nearest water (any type) and permanent waterbody and nest locations were mapped on the aerial photographs or maps (1:1000), or GPS coordinates were taken at the nest site, so that distance to the nearest oilfield facility (road or pad) could be determined later using GIS.

Tundra Swan analyses

For the analysis of the tundra swan survey data, some assumptions were made. One assumption was that a pair of swans is associated with each nest or brood. The raw survey data includes many observations of a single swan with either a nest or brood, but it is likely that the other swan is out of view at the time of the survey. Therefore, the summaries presented include both the raw survey data and an estimation of the actual number of breeding and non-breeding swans. Breeders are estimated by multiplying the number of nests (or broods) by 2 and non-breeders are estimated by subtracting the estimated number of breeders from the total number of adult swans seen. Estimated nesting success falls into 3 categories: good, fair and poor and is calculated by the number of broods seen divided by the number of nests. This is an estimate only as the brood-rearing survey occurs late in the brood-rearing period, so can not account for brood loss during the intervening time from hatching. Good estimated nesting success is ≥80%, fair success is ≥ 60% and <80%, and poor success <60%.

Data Management and GIS Protocols

After the field surveys are completed all data are entered into databases and proofed. Data collected without accompanying GPS locations (generally all field-mapped data, such as from road surveys and aerial surveys) are provided to the GIS staff for digitizing using the Kuparuk basemap. Final maps are prepared for proofing by the field project leader and standard CPAI protocols are followed in the preparation of databases, metadata, and other map products that are submitted to CPAI for addition to their centralized geodatabase. All field photographs are also compiled following CPAI protocols and submitted along with the databases and GIS products.

Appendix 2. Numbers of Spectacled Eiders counted on road surveys in the Kuparuk Oilfield, Alaska, 5–15 June 2009. Eiders seen ≤500 m from the survey route and those seen >500 m are reported separately because only eiders seen ≤500 m were used in the analyses.

	≤500 m					>500 m					Total				
Date	Males	Females	Total	Pairs	n	Males	Females	Total	Pairs	n	Males	Females	Total	Pairs	n
5 June	4	4	8	4	4						4	4	8	4	4
6 June															
7 June	9	7	16	7	8						9	7	16	7	8
8 June	1	1	2	1	1						1	1	2	1	1
9 June	8	6	14	6	7	1	0	1	0	1	9	6	15	6	8
10 June	3	3	6	3	3						3	3	6	3	3
11 June	4	4	8	4	3	3	3	6	2	3	7	7	14	6	6
12 June	2	0	2	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	3	0	3	0	3
13 June	3	2	5	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	4	3	7	3	4
14 June	3	1	4	1	3						3	1	4	1	3
15 June	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	3	1	2
Total	38	29	67	29	35	7	4	11	3	7	45	33	78	32	42

Appendix 3. Nest-site characteristics for successful and failed eider nests in the Kuparuk Oilfield, 2009.

							Distance to Nearest (m)		
Species	General Location	Nest Fate	Clutch Size	Number of Membranes	Habitat	Waterbody Type	Waterbody	Water	Oilfield Infrastructure[a]
Spectacled Eider	DS-!E	Successful	4	3	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	2.0	2.0	138
Spectacled Eider	DS-!E	Successful	4	2	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	12.0	0.2	108
Spectacled Eider	DS-!E	Successful	2	2	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	20.0	1.0	317
Spectacled Eider	DS-2C	Successful	5	1	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	5.0	5.0	447
Spectacled Eider	DS-2V	Successful	6	5	Deep Open Water	Deep Open Water	0.1	0.1	407
Spectacled Eider	DS-2X	Failed	3	0	Old Basin Wetland Complex	Shallow Open Water	2.0	2.0	469
Spectacled Eider	CPF-3 Brant Colony	Failed	1	0	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	25.0	0.1	332
Probable Spectacled Eider	DS-2T	Failed	?	0	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	25.0	1.0	421
Probable Spectacled Eider	South of Pit E	Failed	?	0	Nonpatterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Water with Islands	3.0	3.0	551
King Eider	DS-!E	Failed	?	0	Shallow Water with Islands	Shallow Water with Islands	1.0	1.0	328
King Eider	DS-!E	Successful	?	5	Shallow Water with Islands	Shallow Water with Islands	0.2	0.2	246
King Eider	DS-!E	Failed	?	0	Shallow Water with Islands	Shallow Water with Islands	1.0	1.0	277
King Eider	DS-!E	Failed	?	0	Nonpatterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Water with Islands	0.3	0.3	349
King Eider	DS-2C	Unknown[b]	3	?	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	1.0	1.0	676
King Eider	DS-2C	Failed	4	0	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	5.0	1.0	488
King Eider	DS-2C	Successful	?	1	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	1.0	1.0	552
King Eider	CPF-3 Brant Colony	Failed	?	0	Patterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Water with Islands	5.0	1.0	544
King Eider	CPF-3 Brant Colony	Failed	4	0	Patterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Open Water	5.0	3.0	619
King Eider	CPF-3 Brant Colony	Successful	5	4	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	10.0	10.0	364
King Eider	CPF-3 Brant Colony	Failed	?	0	Shallow Water with Islands	Shallow Water with Islands	3.0	3.0	682
King Eider	South of Pit E	Failed	?	0	Nonpatterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Water with Islands	1.0	1.0	511
Probable King Eider	CPF-3 Brant Colony	Failed	?	0	Sedge Marsh	Sedge Marsh	10.0	10.0	309
Probable King Eider	CPF-3 Brant Colony	Failed	?	0	Shallow Water with Islands	Shallow Water with Islands	1.0	1.0	199
Probable King Eider	CPF-3 Brant Colony	Failed	?	0	Patterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Open Water	5.0	2.0	705
Probable King Eider	South of Pit E	Failed	?	0	Nonpatterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Water with Islands	0.4	0.4	296
Probable King Eider	South of Pit E	Failed	?	0	Nonpatterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Open Water	2.0	2.0	445
Unknown Eider	South of Pit E	Failed	?	0	Nonpatterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Water with Islands	0.7	0.7	471
Unknown Eider	South of Pit E	Failed	?	0	Nonpatterned Wet Meadow	Shallow Water with Islands	1.0	1.0	503

[a] Oilfield infrastructure includes roads, pads, and processing facilities.
[b] Unknown fate nests were active when found bunt not checked for final nest fate due to logistical constraints.

Appendix 4. Numbers of Tundra Swans, nests and broods observed during June aerial surveys in the South Kuparuk study area, Alaska, 1989–2009.

	Nesting				Brood-rearing					
		Observed Number of Adults					Observed Number of Adults			
Year	Number of Nests	with Nests	without Nests	Total	Number of Broods	Number of Young	with Broods	without Broods	Total	Total Swans
1989		2	2	4				2	2	2
1990	1							2	2	2
1991			5	5						
1992			2	2						
1993										
1994										
1995										
1996		1	1	2						
1997	1		2	2				1	1	1
1998	1		7	7	1	1	1			1
1999		2	5	7				7	7	7
2000	1		2	2				3	3	3
2001		2	2	4				2	2	2
2002	1	1	5	6	1	1	2		2	3
2003	1		4	4				3	3	3
2004			6	6						
2005		1	4	5				2	2	2
2006	1	2	5	7				2	2	2
2007	1	2	2	4	1	4	2		2	6
2008	0	0	7	7	2	6	4	3	7	13
2009	0	0	6	6	0	0	0	6	6	6

Appendix 5. Numbers of Tundra Swans and nests recorded (by USGS quadrangle) during aerial surveys in the Kuparuk and South Kuparuk study area, Alaska, 20–25 June 2009.

Location (USGS Quadrangle)	Adults with Nests				Adults without Nests					
	Pairs	Single Adults	Total	Number of Nests	Pairs	Single Adults	Flocks	Flocked Swans	Total	Total Swans
Beechey Point										
A-4	6	4	16	10	11	11	1	3	36	52
A-5	1	2	4	3	8	5	0	0	21	25
B-4	15	10	40	25	27	22	1	3	79	119
B-6	19	12	50	31	27	32	2	6	92	142
Harrison Bay			0	0						
A-1	3	3	9	6	4	8	0	0	16	25
A-2	2	1	5	3	3	5	0	0	11	16
B-1	9	7	25	16	22	19	4	19	82	107
B-2	1	1	3	2	4	6	3	15	29	32
Total	56	40	152	96	106	108	10	46	366	518

Appendix 6. Densities (number/km²) of Tundra Swans nests and adults observed during June aerial surveys in the Kuparuk study area, Alaska, 1989–2009. Densities are not calculated for the smaller South Kuparuk study area (357.7 km²).

		Adults		
Year	Nests	with Nests	without Nests	Total
1989	0.02	0.03	0.08	0.11
1990	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.12
1991	0.03	0.05	0.12	0.16
1992	0.03	0.05	0.10	0.15
1993	0.03	0.05	0.10	0.15
1994	0.02	0.03	0.11	0.14
1995	0.04	0.08	0.12	0.20
1996	0.05	0.09	0.11	0.20
1997	0.03	0.05	0.10	0.15
1998	0.03	0.09	0.16	0.24
1999	0.04	0.05	0.10	0.15
2000	0.03	0.06	0.15	0.21
2001	0.03	0.06	0.12	0.18
2002	0.05	0.08	0.12	0.21
2003	0.03	0.05	0.13	0.18
2004	0.04	0.06	0.10	0.16
2005	0.04	0.06	0.10	0.17
2006	0.04	0.06	0.10	0.16
2007	0.05	0.08	0.14	0.22
2008	0.04	0.07	0.17	0.24
2009	0.04	0.06	0.15	0.22

Appendix 7. Numbers of Tundra Swans and broods recorded (by quadrangle) during aerial surveys in the Kuparuk and South Kuparuk study areas, Alaska, 18–21 August 2009.

Location (USGS Quadrangle)	Brood Groups						Non-brood Groups					Total		
	Pairs	Single Adults	Total Adults	Broods	Young	Mean Brood Size	Pairs	Single Adults	Flocks	Flocked Swans	Total Adults	Adults	Swans	Percent Young
Beechey Point														
A-4	2	0	4	2	3	1.5	27	6	3	15	75	79	82	3.7
A-5	1	0	2	1	1	1.0	9	5	3	9	32	34	35	2.9
B-4	3	0	6	3	5	1.7	53	11	13	51	168	174	179	2.8
B-5	12	1	25	13	29	2.2	69	20	13	100	258	283	312	9.3
			0								0			
Harrison Bay			0								0			
A-1	3	0	6	3	11	3.7	10	4	2	10	34	40	51	21.6
A-2	1	0	2	1	2	2.0	6	8	1	3	23	25	27	7.4
B-1	9	0	18	9	16	1.8	37	16	13	54	144	162	178	9.0
B-2	1	0	2	1	1	1.0	5	2	3	23	35	37	38	2.6
Total	32	1	65	33	68	2.1	216	72	51	265	769	834	902	7.5