

State of Alaska FY2002 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Natural Resources
Public Services Office
Component

Component: Public Services Office

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Component Mission

The Department of Natural Resources Public Information Centers (PICs) provide one stop shopping for the public to interface with DNR by keeping the public informed and providing easy access to this complex agency. The outcome is to improve the public's ability to use and enjoy the State land and resources.

Component Services Provided

The two Public Information Centers (PICs) provide a place for the public to go to ask questions, pay bills, get forms, and complete research. The PICs are the difference between a complex agency understandable only to experts, and a public-friendly agency where forms, permits, and answers to questions are easily available to everyone.

The services provided under this component allow the department to efficiently conduct business with the public. These centers provide basic essential business functions and services that insure timely processing of applications and payments. They also provide the time consuming public interface to allow other DNR employees to more efficiently conduct their assigned duties without interruption. The PICs make sure the public is able to find and obtain what they need from DNR while at the same time making the public aware of the need, purpose, and value of the State's land and resource assets and their appropriate management.

The Public Information Center's services provide two primary outputs.

- Provide essential services to the public.
- Keep the public informed of DNR programs, policies, regulations, and activities.

Output 1. Provide essential services to the public. The PIC operates two Public Information Centers. The main center is in Anchorage. A smaller center operates in Fairbanks.

The public information centers receive payments from the public for sales, rents, leases, bond pools, royalties, and other activities. They have full receipting capability for any payments made to the divisions. Last fiscal year the PIC staff receipted over 4.6 million dollars in individual transactions. The PICs receive and process applications for land and resource use. In order to alleviate public frustration and lower application processing cycle times, it is essential that the PIC staff is knowledgeable enough to get the correct application for whatever the desired use and to insure that the applicant correctly fills out the application and attaches necessary documentation. Last fiscal year over 230 applications were processed through the PICs. The PICs reserve public use cabins throughout the state for individuals. Annual park passes and decals are sold in these centers. PIC staff provide land research assistance to the public. Not only do they sell land status plats, interpret area plans, and pull case file abstracts, but they provide the personalized assistance required to help the public understand the information given. The public can obtain and purchase maps and publications that help people to understand the resources and management of Alaska's lands. The PICs also provide the primary public contact for department land sales. In all, the PICs provided assistance to well over 15,000 customers during FY00.

Output 2. Keep the public informed of DNR programs, policies, regulations, and activities.

The PIC staff maintain and improve brochures and fact sheets about State land programs and activities requiring authorizations. These fact sheets must be kept current and accurate as programs and regulations change. Through verbal interaction, the PICs provide personal assistance to public to insure that they submit the correct applications necessary for their situation. The public also must be informed of the regulations to facilitate appropriate use of State land and facilities. The PICs utilize current technology to better disseminate DNR information including maintaining the DNR front door web pages. This requires daily upkeep of the web pages to insure accurate and timely information is provided. Through media releases, public service announcements, and interviews the PICs insure effective media coverage on current DNR actions and issues. Through coordination with other agencies and information centers the PICs help the public to understand DNR's interagency relationships and to insure accurate and current DNR information is disseminated. The PICs also provide feedback to DNR employees about public concerns, requests,

desires, or misunderstandings. Essentially the PICs act as two-way information brokers and often as interpreters to "governmentese" or visa versa.

Component Goals and Strategies

Outcome: Public and private use and enjoyment of State land, and resources.

Goals:

1. Provide essential services to the public.

Accurately receipt all payments received in the PIC from the public for sales, rents, leases, bond pools, royalties, and other activities.

Receive and process applications for land and resource use within a two day cycle time and insure that applicants submit the correct applications necessary for their situation.

Provide as many business functions as possible on the internet.

2. Keep the public informed of DNR programs, policies, regulations and activities.

Provide personal assistance and dispense information to the public to insure that they obtain necessary understanding for that which they are seeking.

Utilize current technology to better disseminate DNR information including maintaining the DNR front door web pages.

Insure effective media coverage on current DNR actions and issues.

Key Component Issues for FY2001 – 2002

As much of the public is becoming computer literate, DNR is attempting to shift some of its business practices to be available by internet. The PIC will maximize the use of the internet where possible to disseminate information and to conduct business. Of course the PIC will be integrally involved in maintaining internet sites to keep them current and accurate. But the human component will not be overlooked as this is what most people want. Most people still want that personalized service to help them through the government maze that seems so overwhelming. That is where the PIC will continue to be crucial in maintaining the business traffic over the bridge into the millennium.

The PIC will continue to assist in any projects that streamline government processes for the public and utilize current and future technology to increase efficiencies. We will continue to work with other divisions and sections on a web based application process, GIS utilization, imaging data for easy storage and retrieval, mining claim submission improvements and a restructuring of the DNR web pages. Then we will move to other e-commerce functions such as making public use cabin reservations via the internet.

The PIC will also be closely involved in the expanded land sales program. The PIC will assist in marketing, sales, and implementation of the program.

Major Component Accomplishments for FY2000

The PICs have produced multitudes of satisfied DNR customers, even when they were paying us money. That is because the PIC staff emphasizes customer service. Regardless of the issue or the nature of the contact, the staff endeavors to see customers leaving satisfied knowing they were treated well, professionally, and with respect. This helps improve the overall image of state government that we are here to serve the people of this state.

The majority of the Alaska State Park public use cabins were rented by the PICs. The knowledgeable PIC staff spent the time necessary to make sure people rented the cabins best suiting their needs and abilities. People want so much

more than just a fact sheet on the cabins, they want local knowledge of conditions, when the fish run, how's the hike, is the beach nice for kids, and much more. From the comments the PIC receives, it is obvious that they help make those recreational visits special.

Many people came to the PICs not knowing exactly what they wanted or not understanding how to get something from DNR. The PIC worked with the customers to provide the information needed and helped people through the permitting and regulatory process as needed. The PIC staff have spent the hours necessary to assist people researching land status or teaching customers how to conduct their own research. If customers had to speak with others beyond the PIC, the PIC staff refined the questions to focus the time spent with other DNR staff. This has prevented numerous hours of interrupted DNR staff time. This in turn helped produce efficiency in DNR by improving cycle times.

The PICs assisted over 15,000 customers in person, processed over 230 applications, and receipted over \$4.6 million in revenues in FY00. In addition, the PIC produced over 150 media releases and 7 internal DNR newsletters. The PIC staff assisted in three land sales during FY00. The PIC assisted in developing and maintaining the new DNR web pages that more efficiently relay information to the public. The PIC web page alone receives over 4,000 hits per month whereas the DNR site as a whole is receiving over 49,000 visits per month. The PIC was able install appropriate technology hardware to utilize the new computerized land records system.

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

The PIC provides the public, contact and outreach required by the statutory authority of other components. It has no specific statutory authority.

Key Performance Measures for FY2002

Measure: Number of customers assisted in person.
(Not yet addressed by Legislature.)

Benchmark:

Historical data indicates an average of 15,000 customers are served in person on an annual basis.

Background and Strategies:

The Public Information Center was created several years ago by combining all the service counters from each division into one central location. This makes the public interface much more efficient for the customer and creates efficiencies for other DNR employees. The Public Information Centers take in payments, process applications, assist the customers with research, and refer people to the proper DNR contacts or other agencies.

Measure: Number of customers assisted by the PIC web pages.
(Not yet addressed by Legislature.)

Benchmark:

Approximately 40,000 customers are served by the PIC web pages annually.

Background and Strategies:

As the public becomes more literate with computers and the internet, DNR seeks to utilize this tool to disseminate information and to conduct business processes. With Alaska residents as disperse as they are in this big state, we must utilize current technologies to better serve our remote clientele. The Public Information Center still plays a key role in this internet interface with the public as people still need assistance in finding what they seek. The PIC staff will continue to make the front door pages of DNR's web pages as user friendly, informative and efficient as possible.

DNR offers many services on the internet. Land records, plats, geologic reports, and other research tools are available. Customers can make bill payments on line for many contractual services and mining claims. Our land sale programs utilize the internet to distribute brochures and other pertinent information. Many applications, fact sheets

and other program information is available for customers. We are currently developing ways to accept applications on line to reduce paper handling and to provide a better service to customers.

Status of FY2001 Performance Measures

	<i>Achieved</i>	<i>On track</i>	<i>Too soon to tell</i>	<i>Not likely to achieve</i>	<i>Needs modification</i>
• Number of customers assisted.					X

Public Services Office
Component Financial Summary

All dollars in thousands

	FY2000 Actuals	FY2001 Authorized	FY2002 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	0.0	304.5	309.9
72000 Travel	0.0	1.0	3.0
73000 Contractual	0.0	9.0	25.5
74000 Supplies	0.0	2.0	7.0
75000 Equipment	0.0	0.0	3.0
76000 Land/Buildings	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	0.0	316.5	348.4
Funding Sources:			
1007 Inter-Agency Receipts	0.0	316.5	348.4
Funding Totals	0.0	316.5	348.4

Estimated Revenue Collections

Description	Master Revenue Account	FY2000 Actuals	FY2001 Authorized	FY2001 Cash Estimate	FY2002 Governor	FY2003 Forecast
Unrestricted Revenues						
None.		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Unrestricted Total		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Restricted Revenues						
Interagency Receipts	51015	0.0	316.5	316.5	348.4	348.4
Restricted Total		0.0	316.5	316.5	348.4	348.4
Total Estimated Revenues		0.0	316.5	316.5	348.4	348.4

Public Services Office

Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2002

The only change in services is in the way we budget for DGGs's receipts. Rather than pay for Public Service Offices expenditures out of the DGGs budget we are requesting an increment of \$29.8 in I/A receipts to show these expenditures in this component.

Summary of Component Budget Changes

From FY2001 Authorized to FY2002 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2001 Authorized	0.0	0.0	316.5	316.5
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Year 2 Labor Costs - Net Change from FY2001	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.2
Proposed budget increases:				
-Interagency Receipts Support for the Public Services Office Component	0.0	0.0	32.1	32.1
FY2002 Governor	0.0	0.0	348.4	348.4

Public Services Office

Personal Services Information

Authorized Positions			Personal Services Costs	
	FY2001 Authorized	FY2002 Governor		
Full-time	6	6	Annual Salaries	225,617
Part-time	0	0	COLA	3,422
Nonpermanent	0	0	Premium Pay	0
			Annual Benefits	90,368
			<i>Less 2.98% Vacancy Factor</i>	<i>(9,507)</i>
			Lump Sum Premium Pay	0
Totals	6	6	Total Personal Services	309,900

Position Classification Summary

Job Class Title	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Juneau	Others	Total
Information Officer III	1	0	0	0	1
Natural Resource Off I	1	1	0	0	2
Natural Resource Tech II	2	1	0	0	3
Totals	4	2	0	0	6