

# **State of Alaska FY2002 Governor's Operating Budget**

Department of Fish and Game  
Wildlife Conservation  
Budget Request Unit

## **Wildlife Conservation Budget Request Unit**

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### **BRU Mission**

The Division of Wildlife Conservation's mission is to conserve and enhance Alaska's wildlife and to provide for a wide range of uses for people.

### **BRU Services Provided**

Division management programs include survey and inventory, regulatory, and enhancement projects for big game, small game, furbearer, waterfowl and nongame species. Enhancement projects improve wildlife population welfare factors to provide for increased human use opportunities. Biological information, harvest data, and recommendations are presented to the Board of Game to assist them in making allocation decisions through the regulatory process. Recommendations are also presented to the Federal Subsistence Board to encourage a cooperative approach between state and federal resource allocation.

The division's research program focuses on collecting data with direct management application and provides technical assistance to other agencies and the public.

The division also manages state game sanctuaries, refuges, and critical habitats, provides information to the public and educational materials to schools, and conducts hunter and trapper education programs.

### **BRU Goals and Strategies**

The Division of Wildlife Conservation is responsible for the management of Alaska's wildlife resources. The primary goals of the division are to: (1) protect, maintain, and enhance the wildlife resources of Alaska; and (2) provide for their greatest use by the people, consistent with the sustained yield principle, for the well being of the people and the economy of the state.

The division has experienced increased demands for public services, technical expertise, harvest opportunities, and other uses of wildlife. These increased demands are due to increases in Alaska's population, tourism, subsistence needs on state and private lands, the federal preemption of state management authorities for subsistence uses on federal public lands, recent attempts to extend federal jurisdiction onto state and private lands, potential impacts of endangered species listings on industry, and plans to develop other natural resources. Wildlife habitat is being altered and reduced in populated areas, access and harvest technologies are improving, and indirect adverse impacts to wildlife populations are increasing. These factors are making sustained yield management of Alaska's wildlife resources more expensive and complex.

Maintaining healthy, productive, and usable wildlife populations will require increased scientific capabilities and better understanding of important wildlife species and associated human uses. Data collection and analysis techniques must become more precise and cost effective, particularly in intensive management areas designated by the Board of Game. Development of strategic and operational management plans with ample public input is necessary to establish quantifiable wildlife population and human use objectives and to ensure program continuity toward achieving these objectives. Management must include enhancement projects to mitigate for development, meet increasing demands for consumptive human use of wildlife, and meet growing demands by Alaskan visitors and residents for wildlife viewing opportunities.

Given the above scenario, wildlife information and education programs must be enhanced in the future. Increased public understanding of requirements for healthy and productive wildlife populations will help ensure public support for and voluntary compliance with wildlife conservation regulations. Division information programs are necessary to reduce public confusion regarding complex regulations resulting from "dual" management of Alaska's wildlife resources by state and federal authorities and to promote higher levels of voluntary compliance with regulations.

## Key BRU Issues for FY2001 – 2002

Three major policy issues face the Division of Wildlife Conservation: (1) meeting an increased demand for hunting opportunities; (2) dealing with increased costs and complexities of managing for a state subsistence preference and all other uses while addressing Alaskan concerns arising from federal intervention into management of resident wildlife; and (3) meeting demands of the public for a strong conservation education program, more wildlife viewing opportunities, and management of endangered species.

The division's ability to maintain healthy populations of wildlife is directly related to the ability of Alaska's land and water resources to support these populations. Loss or serious alteration of important wildlife habitats can have direct and long-term economic impact on the state by reducing the sustainable yield of these renewable resources. Because of increasing human populations and the need for an expanded and more diversified economy, the division must work closely with development interests and other agencies. We must effectively mitigate the effects of development through active management programs to ensure adequate protection of wildlife values and continued opportunities for public use of these resources. The process can be effective only if the division can provide the latest information, techniques, and research findings to all parties involved in a quick and efficient manner.

Predation by wolves and bears has a major impact on many wildlife populations in Alaska. The division will work to develop methods to regulate predator populations that are biologically sound, acceptable to the public, and cost effective. Efforts will continue to educate the public about wildlife management and how predation can affect ungulate populations.

Listing species as threatened or endangered can have great adverse economic impacts on Alaska. Our programs have been designed to provide for population recovery of listed species as well as preventing the need for additional listings under the federal endangered species act. A petition from the public to list the Cook Inlet populations of beluga whales as endangered under state law will be a priority issue in FY2001 and 2002. This petition will result in the development of regulations to help implement the state's endangered species law. We will continue to collect information on several species in an effort to insure species are not unnecessarily listed under the federal act.

The federal "takeover" of traditional state management authorities continues to have major impacts on the division and the management of wildlife in Alaska. Procedures need to be developed to address resource management and allocation conflicts between state and federal managers.

Most funds used by the division are generated from the sale of hunting and trapping licenses and tags and from federal aid receipts from the excise tax on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. The division has received \$255.3 million in general funds for the past 2 years. While this is only about 1.5 percent of the budget, it provides funds for important programs in watchable wildlife, endangered species, and management of marine mammals. The other significant source of funds for the division is in the special projects component. The division receives about \$4.5 million from federal agencies and private organizations to conduct research or provide specific management activities that help meet our mission. The majority of these funds are used for research on marine mammals.

All expenditures of federal aid and fish and game funds by other divisions must, by statute, be clearly identified as RSAs in the Sport Fish and Wildlife Conservation Division budgets. In FY2002, these RSAs are documented in the budget request.

Congress passed legislation in early November, 2000 to add \$50 million to the Pittman-Robertson (PR) portion of the Fish and Wildlife Restoration Fund for the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA). These funds are allocated to state wildlife agencies by a formula. The Division of Wildlife Conservation expects to receive an additional \$2.4 million in federal PR receipts in FY2002.

The division will submit a budget amendment to the legislature early in 2001 to further detail the planned expenditure of the CARA funds. The intent of Congress in providing these additional funds is to address the unmet funding needs for management of species that are not hunted, wildlife education, and wildlife related outdoor recreation. The division is in the process of obtaining recommendations from staff and the public on what type of programs, within these three general areas, they desire. Our budget amendment request will incorporate these recommendations.

### Major BRU Accomplishments for FY2000

In its effort to conserve and enhance wildlife and provide for a wide range of uses for the greatest benefit of people, the division continued to concentrate on biological data collection, public services, and habitat manipulation. The following were among the most notable accomplishments for FY2000:

1. Provided opportunities to over 100,000 people to participate in hunting in Alaska. Sold over 30,000 resident, non-resident, and alien hunting and trapping licenses. Approximately 70,000 combination licenses such as Resident Sport Fish/Hunt/Trap licenses were also sold. These license sales and tag sales generated nearly \$10 million in revenue to the Fish and Game Fund.
2. 104,000 drawing and Tier II hunts were applied for and 25,000 drawing and Tier II permits were issued. Over \$500.0 in revenue was generated for the Fish and Game Fund.
3. Trained 1,100 new hunters in basic hunter education program.
4. Trained 650 hunters in advanced hunter education program.
5. Provided special hunting clinics for 450 hunters to improve their skills.
6. Provided information packets to over 5,000 non-resident hunters that plan to hunt in Alaska.
7. Responded to over 70,000 in-person inquiries at various offices about hunting, trapping, and opportunities to observe wildlife.
8. Responded to over 160,000 telephone inquiries at various offices about hunting, trapping, and opportunities to observe wildlife.
9. Estimated visitors at Pack Creek = 1,300-1,400 per year; McNeil River = 230 per year; Potter's Marsh = 30,000-40,000 per year; and Creamer's Refuge = 30,000 visitors using the trail system and several thousand unrecorded visitors viewing waterfowl from the parking lot.
10. Completed habitat improvement projects that included prescribed burns and mechanical manipulation to benefit moose and ruffed grouse.
11. Produced 3 public information/education videos on arctic caribou research, Alaskan wolf ecology, and big game skinning and meat preparation.
12. Collected biological data on a variety of species to ensure continued population viability and harvest levels that are within sustained yield guidelines. Big game surveys were done for 54 populations identified by the Board of Game for intensive management or high levels of human use.

### 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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assure continued wildlife harvest opportunity and meet sustainable production and harvest goals set by division managers and Board of Game</li> </ul>		X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide greater public access to wildlife information resources through improved communication tools and public involvement techniques.</li> </ul>		X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage subsistence hunting on state-managed lands.</li> </ul>		X			

	<i>Achieved</i>	<i>On track</i>	<i>Too soon to tell</i>	<i>Not likely to achieve</i>	<i>Needs modification</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect, restore, or enhance habitat to ensure continued production of wildlife resources for the use and enjoyment of Alaskans.</li> <li>• The number of big game surveys completed for populations identified by the Board of Game as important for providing high levels of human consumptive use</li> <li>• The number of hunting and trapping licenses sold and total revenue generated.</li> <li>• The number of drawing permits applied for and the total number of permits issued.</li> <li>• The number of visitors to the wildlife viewing areas at Pack Creek, McNeil River, Potter's Marsh, and Creamer's Field.</li> </ul>	X	X			

**Wildlife Conservation**  
**BRU Financial Summary by Component**

All dollars in thousands

	FY2000 Actuals				FY2001 Authorized				FY2002 Governor			
	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds
<b>Formula Expenditures</b> None.												
<b>Non-Formula Expenditures</b>												
Wildlife Conservation	295.0	6,150.0	10,324.9	16,769.9	251.6	6,260.0	10,807.9	17,319.5	253.7	7,017.2	10,569.8	17,840.7
CARA Implementation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,425.0	0.0	2,425.0
W.C. Special Projects	14.9	1,941.0	328.5	2,284.4	17.9	2,575.1	381.1	2,974.1	0.0	3,775.4	662.2	4,437.6
W.C. CIP Position Costs	0.0	0.0	198.6	198.6	0.0	0.0	302.0	302.0	0.0	0.0	302.7	302.7
W.C. EVOS Restoration Projects	0.0	0.0	405.9	405.9	0.0	0.0	544.4	544.4	0.0	0.0	544.8	544.8
Assert/Protect State's Rights	0.0	0.0	200.7	200.7	0.0	0.0	206.0	206.0	0.0	0.0	206.0	206.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>309.9</b>	<b>8,091.0</b>	<b>11,458.6</b>	<b>19,859.5</b>	<b>269.5</b>	<b>8,835.1</b>	<b>12,241.4</b>	<b>21,346.0</b>	<b>253.7</b>	<b>13,217.6</b>	<b>12,285.5</b>	<b>25,756.8</b>

## Wildlife Conservation

### Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2002

In the Wildlife Conservation component additional federal dollars are available under the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and an increment to receive these funds is requested. The funds will be used for wildlife education, public services, and species management projects. Three new seasonal positions, four new non-permanent positions, and increased staff-months for existing seasonal and non-permanent positions are requested with this increment. The additional federal funds will also help offset the decrease in Fish and Game Funds proposed for FY2002. The net increase to the Wildlife Conservation Component is \$521.2.

Congress has approved additional funding for the Sea Lion Recovery and Harbor Seal Investigations projects which will increase federal funds in the Special Projects Component by \$1,200.0 for FY2002. There will be four new full-time and two seasonal positions associated with these increased funds. These funds are received under a grant from the National Marine Fisheries Service. Wildlife Conservation has budgeted \$17.9 of General Fund Program Receipts each year in the Special Projects Component for the sale of the Wildlife Notebook Series, Field Care of Big Game Meat video, and other small products. AS 16.05.110 allows the deposit of such receipts into the Fish and Game Fund. Since the production of these materials was funded from Fish and Game Fund dollars, it has been determined that these receipts should be deposited directly into the fund and expenditures for distribution and reprinting of these items be funded from that source. The FY2002 budget request will eliminate General Fund Program Receipts in this component and replace that fund source with Fish and Game Fund. Fish and Game Fund receipt authority for anticipated receipts and expenditures has been transferred from the Wildlife Conservation Component.

## Wildlife Conservation

### Summary of BRU Budget Changes by Component

#### 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>
<b>FY2001 Authorized</b>	<b>269.5</b>	<b>8,835.1</b>	<b>12,241.4</b>	<b>21,346.0</b>
<b>Adjustments which will continue current level of service:</b>				
-Wildlife Conservation	2.1	17.2	-63.1	-43.8
-W.C. Special Projects	-17.9	0.3	81.1	63.5
-W.C. CIP Position Costs	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.7
-W.C. EVOS Restoration Projects	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4
<b>Proposed budget decreases:</b>				
-Wildlife Conservation	0.0	0.0	-175.0	-175.0
<b>Proposed budget increases:</b>				
-Wildlife Conservation	0.0	740.0	0.0	740.0
-CARA Implementation	0.0	2,425.0	0.0	2,425.0
-W.C. Special Projects	0.0	1,200.0	200.0	1,400.0
<b>FY2002 Governor</b>	<b>253.7</b>	<b>13,217.6</b>	<b>12,285.5</b>	<b>25,756.8</b>