

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

Department of Fish and Game  
Subsistence  
Budget Request Unit

## **Subsistence Budget Request Unit**

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### **BRU Mission**

To gather, quantify, evaluate, and report data about uses, users, and methods of subsistence hunting and fishing, and make recommendations on the effects of federal and state laws and regulations on subsistence use.

### **BRU Services Provided**

As mandated in AS16.05.094, the Division of Subsistence is directed to:

- 1) Compile existing data and conduct studies to gather information, including data from subsistence users, on all aspects of the role of subsistence hunting and fishing in the lives of the residents of the state;
- 2) Quantify the amount, nutritional value, and extent of dependence on food acquired through subsistence hunting and fishing;
- 3) Make information gathered available to the public, appropriate agencies, and other organized bodies;
- 4) Assist the department, the Board of Fisheries and Board of Game in determining what uses of fish and game, as well as which users and what methods, should be termed subsistence uses, users, and methods;
- 5) Evaluate the impact of state and federal laws and regulations on subsistence hunting and fishing and, when corrective action is indicated, make recommendations to the department;
- 6) Make recommendations to the Board of Game and Board of Fisheries regarding adoption, amendment and repeal of regulations affecting subsistence hunting and fishing;
- 7) Participate with other divisions in the preparation of statewide and regional management plans so that those plans recognize and incorporate the needs of subsistence users of fish and game.

The division collects and provides information on specific subsistence management issues, including those before the Boards of Fisheries and Game and those pertaining to land management activities by state and federal agencies. The public expects information on subsistence uses to be presented along with information on other uses of fish and wildlife, when allocation and land use decisions are made. The division is the only source in the state for comprehensive, reliable subsistence information on all fish stocks and wildlife populations. The division also provides the public with information about subsistence hunting and fishing regulations, access to the regulatory process, and the differences between the state and federal subsistence programs.

### **BRU Goals and Strategies**

- 1) Provide comprehensive, accurate information on subsistence uses of fish and game in selected communities throughout the state. The division was created by the legislature because successful implementation of the state subsistence law would require a reliable database for making subsistence allocation decisions. Research goals are to document and analyze subsistence uses in Alaska, and to provide information to the general public and to a variety of public agencies, organizations, and decision-making bodies. This is the primary function of the division and will be maintained to the maximum extent possible given available funding.
- 2) Implement the state subsistence law. The division has responsibility for implementing the state subsistence law. This involves following and understanding the legal framework for subsistence implementation, advising the commissioner and other department staff on necessary implementation steps, and guiding the Boards of Fisheries and Game through the implementation process. This involves close coordination with the Department

of Law. Key elements in the implementation process include action by the boards in making customary and traditional use findings, determining the amount reasonably necessary to meet subsistence needs and promulgating regulations that provide a reasonable subsistence harvest opportunity.

### **Key BRU Issues for FY2001 – 2002**

**Dual Subsistence Fisheries Management.** The federal government assumed management of subsistence fishing on federal reserved waters in Alaska on October 1, 1999. The uncertainties of the new federal subsistence fishery management program will require considerable new work for the Division of Subsistence. As lead liaison between the department and the federal program, division staff will work within the department to develop frameworks for interaction between state and federal subsistence fisheries management programs. As repository of subsistence fishery information, the division will be required to provide fisheries information to the dual management program to establish a factual basis for fisheries management. Division staff also will be called upon to comment on the actions and impacts of the new federal program on subsistence uses by Alaskans.

**Dual Subsistence Wildlife Management.** The federal government assumed management of subsistence hunting on federal public lands in Alaska on July 1, 1990. Dual wildlife management has increasingly led to different hunting regulations for state and federal subsistence hunts. The Division of Subsistence has been assigned the lead for the department's coordination and liaison functions with the federal subsistence wildlife management program. This work entails tracking the federal board process to comment on proposals; filing requests for reconsideration when federal decisions are counter to factual analysis; identifying management problems to protect the state's wildlife uses and sustained yield; and providing departmental information throughout the process, including litigation.

**Subsistence Law Resolution.** Attempts to find legal resolutions of the dual management situation and the resumption of state management of fish and wildlife on federal lands are likely to continue as important issues in FY2002. Efforts by the administration or the legislature to regain state management and/or legal decisions could change the present management landscape. Division data and expertise will be called upon to provide the factual basis and the necessary analysis that may contribute to a legal resolution of the present management impasse.

**State Subsistence Law Implementation.** The present state subsistence law provides subsistence eligibility to all Alaskans and establishes several non-subsistence use areas in the state. The Division of Subsistence provides a factual basis and analysis of fishing and hunting patterns to support the implementation of the law by the Board of Fisheries and Board of Game. Implementing the present law requires providing information to the boards as they act in several areas: determining customary and traditional uses of fish stocks and wildlife populations; creating regulations that provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence harvests; and constructing and administering Tier II hunting & fishing procedures when stocks and populations are not sufficient to provide for all subsistence uses. Division data provide the basis for Boards of Fisheries and Game deliberations regarding customary and traditional use determinations and subsistence regulations.

### **Major BRU Accomplishments for FY2000**

**Reports Completed.** Division staff completed four technical papers, seven special reports, a video, as well as the periodic updates to the Community Profile Database, the Map Catalog Database, and the Historic Salmon Harvest Database. The technical papers and special projects reports included subsistence harvest and use profiles in selected communities, resource-specific analyses of harvests of salmon, marine mammals and migratory birds throughout the state, and Exxon Valdez oil spill impact related studies.

**Fish and Game Boards Support.** The division provided information to the boards as they deliberated on numerous subsistence proposals and made customary and traditional use determinations in several areas of the state. Positive customary and traditional use determinations for all furbearers, and, brown and black bear in southeast were completed during the 2000/2001 meeting cycle of the Board of Game. The Board of Fisheries reviewed subsistence findings in the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim regions as they focused on recovery plans for the salmon stocks declared disasters in summer 2000.

**Special Assignments.** Division expertise was requested for several special issues including a cabinet level group to address and respond to the disastrous salmon returns in western Alaska. Regional information on subsistence

harvests and uses from the Community Profile Database were presented to the cabinet working group as it developed policy and regulations to respond to the disaster. Another special project involves the development of a long-term relationship with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to elicit consumption and site-use specific information for identified locations around the state. This information will then be used to develop standard procedures to evaluate potential health risk assessment of human uses from contaminated sites and the remediation process of those contaminated sites. The division's expertise and credibility in working with rural communities prompted DEC to seek out this collaborative work with the division.

**Subsistence**  
**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>												
Subsistence	214.1	0.0	0.0	214.1	218.6	0.0	0.0	218.6	219.3	0.0	0.0	219.3
Subs. Special Projects	0.0	799.8	65.4	865.2	0.0	2,088.8	110.6	2,199.4	0.0	2,081.7	110.1	2,191.8
Subs. EVOS Restoration Projects	0.0	0.0	286.8	286.8	0.0	0.0	368.9	368.9	0.0	0.0	368.9	368.9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>214.1</b>	<b>799.8</b>	<b>352.2</b>	<b>1,366.1</b>	<b>218.6</b>	<b>2,088.8</b>	<b>479.5</b>	<b>2,786.9</b>	<b>219.3</b>	<b>2,081.7</b>	<b>479.0</b>	<b>2,780.0</b>

**Subsistence****Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2002**

No changes are anticipated.

**Subsistence****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>218.6</b>	<b>2,088.8</b>	<b>479.5</b>	<b>2,786.9</b>
<b>Adjustments which will continue current level of service:</b>				
-Subsistence	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7
-Subs. Special Projects	0.0	-7.1	-0.5	-7.6
<b>FY2002 Governor</b>	<b>219.3</b>	<b>2,081.7</b>	<b>479.0</b>	<b>2,780.0</b>