

**State of Alaska
FY2003 Governor's Operating Budget**

**Department of Fish and Game
Subsistence
Budget Request Unit Budget Summary**

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 impacts of federal and state laws and regulations on subsistence uses and users.

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 FY2002 – 2003

Dual Subsistence Fisheries Management. The federal government assumed management of subsistence fishing on federal reserved waters in Alaska on October 1, 1999. Coordination with the new federal subsistence fishery management program requires considerable new work for the Division of Subsistence. As lead liaison between the department and the federal program, division staff work within the department to develop frameworks for interaction between state and federal subsistence fisheries management and research programs. Division staff serve on research coordination and planning teams and proposal review work groups. 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 are also 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 FY2003. Efforts by the administration and the legislature to regain state management and/or legal decisions could change the present management landscape. Division data and expertise are prepared to 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 in 2001

Reports Completed. Division staff completed four technical papers, 15 special reports and CD-ROMs, 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 reviewed customary and traditional use and amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence determinations in several areas of the state. The Board of Game reviewed reasonable opportunity and Tier II Management options for sheep, moose and caribou populations in the southcentral region. The Board of Fisheries reviewed and amended the amount necessary for subsistence findings for nine salmon stocks in the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim, and Bristol Bay 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 a joint effort with the 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.

Lastly, the division took the lead in objecting to the federal rural determination of the entire Kenai peninsula. The Federal Subsistence Board reversed this determination based primarily on information and comments submitted by the division.

Key Performance Measures for FY2003

Measure:

Percentage of Alaska communities in each region for which fisheries harvest data are collected and reported.
Sec 73.b.1. Ch 90 SLA 2001(HB 250)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

- 10% in Southeast
- 5% in Southcentral
- 60% in Southwest
- 95% in Interior
- 95% in Western
- 55% in Northwest
- 25% in Arctic
-

Benchmark Comparisons:

This performance measure does not lend itself to comparisons with other agencies or jurisdictions because Alaska is the only state with a subsistence priority law.

Background and Strategies:

Subsistence salmon fisheries harvest data are collected annually in certain regions of the state (Western, Interior, Southwest, Northwest) and sporadically in other parts, as funding and project schedules allow. The regions with annual assessment generally are those with the greatest dependence on key species, such as salmon. Harvest information for other regions is collected as multiple purpose projects are activated. The aim is to develop a schedule of regional updates of harvest data, as resources are available. The division maintains a statewide subsistence harvest assessment report that contributes to the statewide harvest report of all uses.

Measure:

Percentage of Alaska communities in each region for which wildlife harvest data are collected and reported.
Sec 73.b.2. Ch 90 SLA 2001(HB 250)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

- 40% in Southeast
- 10% in Southcentral
- 100% in Southwest
- 45% in Interior
- 25% in Western
- 15% in Northwest
- 25% in Arctic
-

Benchmark Comparisons:

This performance measure does not lend itself to comparisons with other agencies or jurisdictions because Alaska is the only state with a subsistence priority law.

Background and Strategies:

Subsistence wildlife harvest data are collected annually in certain regions of the state (Southwest, Interior, and Arctic) and sporadically in other parts, as funding and project schedules allow. The regions with annual assessment generally are those for which funding is available due to controversial or allocation concerns, such as big game in the Interior. The aim is to develop a schedule of regional updates of harvest data, as resources are available. Harvest information for other regions is collected as multiple purpose projects are activated.

Measure:

Percentage of subsistence proposals at meetings of the Board of Fisheries and the Board of Game for which subsistence data are assessed and recommendations are made.
Sec 73.b.3. Ch 90 SLA 2001(HB 250)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

- 100% in Southeast
- 100% in Southcentral
- 100% in Southwest
- 90% in Interior
- 75% in Western
- 100% in Northwest
- 100% in Arctic
-

Benchmark Comparisons:

This performance measure does not lend itself to comparisons with other agencies or jurisdictions because Alaska is the only state with a subsistence priority law

Background and Strategies:

Subsistence data from harvest assessment projects are used to analyze impacts of subsistence proposals to the Boards of Fisheries and Game. There are some areas or issues for which the division has not collected data or the data is outdated due to regulatory changes in the intervening years or uses are known to have changed but details are unknown. The division attempts to anticipate information needs of the boards and public through extensive public contacts such as local fish and game advisory committees and local harvest monitors. This information is useful to plan research priorities and schedules to address these issues as each board responds to public proposals. The goal is to have current subsistence information for every proposal that comes before each board.

Measure:

Number of proposed statutory and regulatory changes by federal and other state entities for which subsistence data are assessed and recommendations are made.
Sec 73.b.4. Ch 90 SLA 2001(HB 250)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

- 75 in Southeast
- 25 for Southcentral
- 25 for Southwest
- 30 in Interior
- 7 in Western
- 9 in Northwest
- 5 in Arctic
-

Benchmark Comparisons:

This performance measure does not lend itself to comparisons with other agencies or jurisdictions because Alaska is the only state with a subsistence priority law.

Background and Strategies:

Subsistence data from harvest assessment projects are used to analyze impacts of subsistence proposals to the Boards of Fisheries and Game and the Federal Subsistence Board. There are some areas or issues for which the division has not collected data or the data is outdated due to regulatory changes in the intervening years or uses are known to have changed but details are unknown. The division attempts to anticipate information needs of the boards and public through extensive public contacts such as local fish and game advisory committees, federal subsistence regional advisory councils, and local harvest monitors. This information is useful to plan research priorities and schedules to address these issues as each board responds to public proposals. The goal is to have current subsistence information for every proposal that comes before each board.

Subsistence
BRU Financial Summary by Component

All dollars in thousands

	FY2001 Actuals				FY2002 Authorized				FY2003 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
Formula Expenditures												
None.												
Non-Formula Expenditures												
Subsistence	218.5	0.0	0.0	218.5	219.3	0.0	0.0	219.3	224.1	0.0	0.0	224.1
Research & Monitoring	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	924.0	0.0	497.5	1,421.5
Subs. Special Projects	0.0	889.5	24.6	914.1	0.0	2,081.7	110.1	2,191.8	0.0	2,253.5	110.7	2,364.2
Subs. EVOS Restoration Projects	0.0	0.0	327.8	327.8	0.0	0.0	368.9	368.9	0.0	0.0	369.2	369.2
Totals	218.5	889.5	352.4	1,460.4	219.3	2,081.7	479.0	2,780.0	1,148.1	2,253.5	977.4	4,379.0

Subsistence**Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2003**

The Subsistence Research and Monitoring Component was moved to this BRU.

Subsistence**Summary of BRU Budget Changes by Component****From FY2002 Authorized to FY2003 Governor***All dollars in thousands*

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2002 Authorized	219.3	2,081.7	479.0	2,780.0
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Subsistence	4.8	0.0	0.0	4.8
-Research & Monitoring	924.0	0.0	497.5	1,421.5
-Subs. Special Projects	0.0	21.8	0.6	22.4
-Subs. EVOS Restoration Projects	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
Proposed budget increases:				
-Subs. Special Projects	0.0	150.0	0.0	150.0
FY2003 Governor	1,148.1	2,253.5	977.4	4,379.0