

State of Alaska
FY2004 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Fish and Game
Wildlife Conservation
Budget Request Unit Budget Summary

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 wildlife species that are not hunted. Enhancement projects improve wildlife population welfare factors to provide for increased opportunities for people to harvest or view wildlife. 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 continues to develop new programs in the areas of school and community wildlife education, management of non-game species, and wildlife viewing. These programs are possible due to federal funding for state wildlife grants provided by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Projects within these three program areas are included in the component, Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program.

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 recreational 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 extension of federal jurisdiction onto state lands and waters, 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.

The division is developing an expanded fish and wildlife education program in the public school system. Community education programs will be expanded following the model of the highly successful hunter clinics. We are developing clinics that focus on wildlife viewing, photography and species life history.

The popularity of wildlife viewing by both residents and visitors to Alaska is increasing rapidly. The division will continue work to develop additional viewing areas that are accessible to the public and will not conflict with traditional uses. We are developing viewing guidelines to insure that viewing activities are not detrimental to the wildlife resource.

The importance of wildlife species that are not hunted or trapped is increasing and resulting in the need for more information on species distribution, population size, population trends and habitat requirements. Lack of information has led to efforts to list numerous species that have healthy populations, but we lack good information on these species. We have increased our efforts to collect reliable information on wildlife species that are not hunted, especially species that have the potential to be petitioned for listing as endangered.

Key BRU Issues for FY2003 – 2004

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 habitat 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. 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. We continue to work on development of procedures to address resource management and allocation conflicts between state and federal managers.

Major BRU Accomplishments in 2002

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, planning, and habitat manipulation. The following were among the most notable accomplishments during FY2002:

- Provided opportunities to over 115,000 people to participate in hunting in Alaska. License and tag sales generated nearly \$10 million in revenue to the Fish and Game Fund.
- Held a three-day workshop on bear management issues and research projects in Alaska for biological staff from the Division of Wildlife Conservation and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Alaska Region.

- Completed federal aid research projects during FY02 (Title & Federal Aid project number noted):
 - ✓ Factors Limiting Moose at High Densities in Unit 20A (1.51)
 - ✓ Investigation of Regulating and Limiting Factors in the Delta Caribou Herd (3.42)
 - ✓ Investigation of Wolf Population response to Intensive Trapping in the Presense of High Ungulate Biomass (14.17)
 - ✓ Preparation of Manuscripts on Serilogic Surveys of Alaska Wildlife for Microbial Pathogens (18.72)
- Initiated a planning process for Wolverine Creek (due west of Nikiski across Cook Inlet and about 80 miles southwest of Anchorage) to review the interaction between bears, anglers, and bear-viewing interests.
- Initiated a strategic planning process for the division. Distribution of the plan is scheduled during FY03.
- Completed a brown bear population estimate on northeast Chichagof Island, culminating a 3-year effort designed to update the 1992 estimate. This effort revealed one of the highest brown bear populations ever documented, at approximately 1.7 bears per square mile.
- Completed and distributed for public review a draft of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Cooperative Management Plan.
- Completed the Kodiak Archipelago Bear Conservation and Management Plan.
- Realized a herd size, under the Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Plan, which allowed for reopening of hunts and increases in harvest while still allowing for continued growth of the herd.
- Began to expand division program services and infrastructure to support the growth of field projects related to non-game species and wildlife education.

Key Performance Measures for FY2004

Measure:

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.

Sec 71.b.1. Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

During FY02, big game surveys were completed for 50 populations identified by the Board of Game for intensive management or high levels of human use.

Species	GMU or Herd
Caribou (11)	Central Arctic, Delta, Fortymile, Macomb, Mulchatna, Northern Alaska Peninsula, Nelchina, Southern Alaska Peninsula, Porcupine, Teshekpuk, Western Arctic
Deer (7)	1A, 1C, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8
Moose (32)	9B, 9C, 9E, 12, 13A, 13B, 13C, 13D, 13E, 14A, 14B, 14C, 15A, 15C, 16A, 16B (mainland), 17B, 17C, 18, 19A, 19D East, 20A, 20B, 20D, 20E (Fortymile/Ladue), 21D, 21E, 22, 23, 24, 25D

Notes: 5 AAC 92.108. Multiple individual survey events are conducted for each species. The table serves as a summary for species and location.

Benchmark Comparisons:

A benchmark for this measure is not applicable. The populations identified by the Board of Game can vary from year

to year.

Background and Strategies:

The division collects biological data on a variety of species to ensure continued population viability and harvest levels that are within sustained yield guidelines.

Measure:

The number of hunting and trapping licenses sold and the total revenue generated.

Sec 71.b.2. Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

Number of licenses sold and corresponding revenues generated for 1999-2001 are listed below.

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Hunting & Trapping			
Number of Resident Licenses sold	110,348	113,290	103,324
Resident License Revenue	\$1,815,361	\$1,827,312	\$1,799,055
Number of Non-Resident Licenses sold	14,752	15,954	13,371
Non-Resident License Revenue	\$1,186,541	\$1,273,324	\$1,061,757
Number of Big Game Tags sold	24,779	26,617	24,285
Big Game Tag Revenue	\$5,842,170	\$6,042,230	\$5,227,100

Figures: Calendar Year

Note: Sale figures in 2001 impacted by 9/11/01.

Benchmark Comparisons:

A benchmark for this measure is not applicable.

Background and Strategies:

This measure will seek to document trends in license sales.

Measure:

The percentage of Alaska residents between the ages of 16 and 59 who purchase hunting or trapping licenses.

Sec 71.b.3. Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

According to the 2000 US Census Bureau report there are 400,610 Alaska residents between the ages of 18 and 64 years of age. ADF&G license sales records indicate that 103,324 residents purchased hunting and trapping licenses in 2001. Therefore, 25.8% of residents in the 18 to 64 age group purchased hunting and trapping licenses in 2001.

Benchmark Comparisons:

A benchmark for this measure is not applicable.

Background and Strategies:

This measure will provide an informational trend for this segment of the Alaska resident population.

Measure:

The number of drawing permits applied for each year and the total number of drawing permits issued by species.

Sec 71.b.4. Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

Species	Applicants	Permits Awarded
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Bison	18,962	199
Brown Bear	5,116	432
Caribou	5,038	646
Elk	3,146	407
Goat	8,560	672
Moose	31,325	1,675
Muskox	1,606	55
Sheep	12,811	712
Total	86,564	4,798

Note: Data from calendar year 2002 for regulatory year 2002/03

Benchmark Comparisons:

A benchmark for this measure is not applicable.

Background and Strategies:

This measure will seek to document trends in drawing permit applications and permits.

Measure:

The number of tier II permits applied for each year and the total number of tier II permits issued by game management unit.

Sec 71.b.5 Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

Game Mgmt Unit	Species	Applied	Issued
09C	Caribou	386	361
13	Caribou	7,734	2,003
15	Goat	84	43
01D	Moose	226	200
13	Moose	1368	150
15	Moose	17	4
16	Moose	1,119	400
19A	Moose	17	14
20B	Moose	280	100
20D	Moose	56	15
25D	Moose	58	49
22B	Musk Ox	133	7
22C	Musk Ox	167	6
22D	Musk Ox	241	40
22E	Musk Ox	72	21
23	Musk Ox	89	15
26A	Musk Ox	38	9
	Total	12,085	3,437

Note: Data from calendar year 2002 for regulatory year 2002/03

Benchmark Comparisons:

A benchmark for this measure is not applicable.

Background and Strategies:

This measure will seek to document trends for Tier II applications and permits.

Measure:

The total number of visitors visiting the state's wildlife viewing areas at Pack Creek, McNeil River, and Creamer's Field.

Sec 71.b.6. Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

Access to Pack Creek and McNeil River is limited. Permits are required before traveling to either sanctuary.

- Stan Price (Pack Creek) Bear Sanctuary: 1,400;
- McNeil River Falls: 230;

Access to Creamer's Field is unlimited as it is continuously open and available to the public.

- Creamer's Field: 30,000+ visitors used the trail system and several thousand unrecorded visitors viewed waterfowl, migratory birds, moose, and fox from the parking lot. The figure is conservative as the refuge has numerous access points and counting devices are not positioned at every point of entry.

Benchmark Comparisons:

A benchmark for this measure is not applicable.

Background and Strategies:

This measure will seek to document trends in the viewing of wildlife at these three areas.

Wildlife Conservation
BRU Financial Summary by Component

All dollars in thousands

	FY2002 Actuals				FY2003 Authorized				FY2004 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
<u>Formula Expenditures</u>	None.											
<u>Non-Formula Expenditures</u>												
Wildlife Conservation	252.6	7,069.7	10,460.9	17,783.2	0.0	8,100.0	9,200.0	17,300.0	0.0	8,488.4	8,777.2	17,265.6
WCRP	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	32.3	4,000.0	1,004.0	5,036.3	0.0	4,512.6	1,040.5	5,553.1
W.C. Special Projects	0.0	3,423.4	583.1	4,006.5	0.0	3,801.9	665.7	4,467.6	0.0	4,625.7	1,376.5	6,002.2
W.C. CIP Position Costs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	159.0	159.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
W.C. EVOS Restoration Projects	0.0	0.0	78.8	78.8	0.0	0.0	547.5	547.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Assert/Protect State's Rights	0.0	0.0	143.2	143.2	0.0	0.0	210.6	210.6	0.0	0.0	482.9	482.9
CARA Implementation	0.0	816.4	0.0	816.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Totals	252.6	11,309.5	11,266.0	22,828.1	32.3	15,901.9	11,786.8	27,721.0	0.0	17,626.7	11,677.1	29,303.8

Wildlife Conservation
Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2004

No service level changes are anticipated.

Wildlife Conservation
Summary of BRU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2003 Authorized to FY2004 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2003 Authorized	32.3	15,901.9	11,786.8	27,721.0
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Wildlife Conservation	0.0	313.4	-447.8	-134.4
-WCRP	0.0	12.6	6.5	19.1
-W.C. Special Projects	0.0	673.8	188.7	862.5
-W.C. CIP Position Costs	0.0	0.0	-159.0	-159.0
-W.C. EVOS Restoration Projects	0.0	0.0	-547.5	-547.5
-Assert/Protect State's Rights	0.0	0.0	272.3	272.3
Proposed budget decreases:				
-WCRP	-32.3	0.0	0.0	-32.3
Proposed budget increases:				
-Wildlife Conservation	0.0	75.0	25.0	100.0
-WCRP	0.0	500.0	30.0	530.0
-W.C. Special Projects	0.0	150.0	522.1	672.1
FY2004 Governor	0.0	17,626.7	11,677.1	29,303.8