State of Alaska
FY2013 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Fish and Game
Sport Fisheries
Results Delivery Unit Budget Summary

Sport Fisheries Results Delivery Unit

Contribution to Department's Mission

The mission of the Division of Sport Fish is to protect and improve the state's recreational fisheries resources.

Core Services

- Fisheries Management: Ensure the sustained use of Alaska's recreational fisheries while optimizing social and economic benefits.
- Fisheries Research: Promote excellence in fisheries research.
- Fisheries Enhancement: Diversify recreational fishing opportunities via supplemental production of hatchery-reared fish.
- Angler Access: Protect and improve public access to recreational fisheries resources.
- Information and Education Services: Inform and educate the public about recreational fishing with an emphasis on exceptional customer service.
- Fish Habitat: Conserve habitat to sustain recreational fisheries resources.

Results at a Glance

(Additional performance information is available on the web at http://omb.alaska.gov/results.)

End Result A: Sustain recreational fishing opportunities while optimizing social and economic benefits from these opportunities.

Target #1: Maintain a positive trend in sport fishing trip-related expenditures.
Status #1: Achievement of the Sport Fish target to maintain a positive trend in total sport fishing trip-related expenditures cannot be determined at this time. There were $567.2 million in expenditures in 2007, and a repeat survey is planned in FY2014, subject to availability of funds.

Target #2: Maintain at least 75% of anglers satisfied with their sport fishing experiences.
Status #2: In 2007, the last year the Sport Fish data was collected, 81.3% of anglers surveyed were satisfied with their sport fishing experiences, exceeding the target of 75%.

Target #3: Sell 450,000 sport-fishing licenses annually.
Status #3: The Sport Fish target to sell 450,000 sport fishing licenses was not met in 2010 (2% below target). There were 486,401 licenses sold in 2008, 447,385 in 2009, and 442,209 in 2010.

Target #4: Maintain 2.5 million angler days of recreational fishing effort annually.
Status #4: The Sport Fish target of 2.5 million angler days of recreational fishing effort was not met in 2010 (20% below target). There were 2,315,601 angler-days of effort in 2008, 2,216,445 in 2009, and 2,000,121 in 2010.

Strategy A1: Sustain uses of wild fish stocks that benefit recreational fisheries using management based on published scientifically sound assessments.

Target #1: Meet or exceed threshold harvest or catch levels in 16 or more of 21 use performance categories.
Status #1: The Sport Fish target to meet or exceed threshold harvest or catch levels in 16 or more of 21 use performance categories was not met in 2010 (38% below target). There were 13 categories that met threshold levels in 2008, 12 in 2009, and 10 in 2010.

Target #2: Publish 90% or more of Sport Fish Division internally peer-reviewed management-based reports within three calendar years of the calendar year of completion of data collection.
Status #2: Of 69 Sport Fish internally peer-reviewed management-based reports published in 2010, 45 (65%) were based on data collection that was completed three or fewer years previous to 2010 (2007). This does not meet the target of 90%. 76%, 89%, and 85% of reports published in 2007, 2008, and 2009 were based on data collection completed three or fewer years previous.

Strategy A2: Maintain recreational fishing opportunities via supplemental hatchery production.

Target #1: Maintain the number actively stocked (currently being stocked according to the stocking plan, but not

necessarily on an annual basis) lakes with hatchery fish at a level equal to or greater than the 1999-2003 average.

Status #1: According to Sport Fish data, there were 248 lakes actively stocked with hatchery fish in FY2011, compared to the average of 296 lakes in 1999-2003, so the target was not met.

Target #2: Maintain the number of enhanced anadromous salmon fisheries actively stocked with hatchery fish at a level equal to or greater than the 1999-2003 average.

Status #2: According to Sport Fish data, there were 37 anadromous salmon fisheries actively stocked with hatchery fish in FY11, which meets the target of 34 fisheries (the 1999-2003 average).

Strategy A3: Conserve, manage, maintain, and enhance habitat to sustain fish resources.

Target #1: Eradicate at least one aquatic invasive fish species in a given lake or stream every three years.

Status #1: According to Sport Fish data, aquatic invasive fish species were not eradicated in any lakes or streams in 2010, thus the target was not met.

Target #2: Annually enhance five miles of priority-catalogued fish habitat by improving fish passage.

Status #2: According to FY2011 Sport Fish data, three culverts were replaced, improving fish passage to 7.6 miles of priority-catalogued fish habitat. This meets the target of five miles.

Target #3: Annually rehabilitate or protect at least 1,500 feet of stream bank and riparian habitat.

Status #3: According to Sport Fish data, there were 6,408 feet of stream bank and riparian habitat rehabilitated or protected in FY2011, which exceeds the target of 1,500 feet.

Strategy A4: Maintain and improve access to public resources.

Target #1: Complete a total of five priority boating access projects per year over a five-year period.

Status #1: According to Sport Fish data, five priority boating access projects were completed in FY2007, five in FY2008, five in FY2009, five in FY2010, and six in FY2011. This meets the target of five projects completed per year over a five-year period.

Target #2: Review 100% of legal access related documents received (Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act conveyances, native allotment conveyances, municipal conveyances, subdivision plats and section line easements) within specified timeframes.

Status #2: According to Sport Fish data, 90% (623 out of 629) of all federal, state, and municipal/borough land actions (excluding those subject to Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act provisions) were reviewed within the required timeframe, which narrowly misses the target of 100%.

Target #3: Develop recommendations to maintain public access to fish and wildlife resources for 100% of those actions that potentially affect public access to fish and wildlife resources.

Status #3: According to Sport Fish data, recommendations were developed within the required timeframe for 100% (293/293) of actions that potentially affect public access to fish and wildlife resources, which meets the target.

Strategy A5: Inform and educate the public about management-related issues, recreational fishing opportunities, angling skills, and conservation of Alaska's aquatic species.

Target #1: Maintain participation at 5,000 participants in angling-skills-oriented programs annually.

Status #1: The Sport Fish target of 5,000 participants in angling-skills-oriented programs annually was met in 2010 (700% above target). There were 29,723 participants in 2008, 34,219 in 2009, and 41,872 in 2010.

Target #2: Implement 15 Division of Sport Fish communication plans that address specific activities annually.

Status #2: The Sport Fish target to implement 15 division communication plans was not met in FY2011. There were eight plans implemented in FY2009 (first year monitored), 15 in FY2010, and eight in FY2011.

Target #3: Create or renovate five informational topics on the Division of Sport Fish website each year that provide current information on management, research or sport fishing opportunities; and update 100% of time-sensitive topics appropriately.

Status #3: According to Sport Fish data, there were a large number of informational topics created or renovated during a major website redesign in FY2011, and 99% of time-sensitive topics were updated appropriately. This meets the target of five topics and narrowly misses the target of 100% update success.

Major Activities to Advance Strategies

- Utilize annual area management review process to identify data needs and gaps; prioritize projects; and review management actions.
- Identify consistent methodology between regions for identifying data needs and gaps.
- Facilitate public participation in Alaska Board of Fisheries regulatory processes, and Local Advisory Committees.
- Implement and conduct research programs to assess fish production.
- Communicate recreational angler preferences to decision-making bodies.
- Educate recreational anglers regarding regulations.
- Identify opportunities where proposals can be submitted through the Alaska Board of Fisheries that result in less complexity for our regulations.
- Post regulatory signage at access sites.
- Develop enforceable regulations and emergency orders to achieve management objectives utilizing all available information.
- Develop and regularly update geographically-based local area fishing guides in addition to regulation summary books.
- Develop field detection, monitoring, and eradication programs for invasive species.
- Develop and support community-based invasive species monitoring programs.
- Use an operational planning process to ensure that projects are scientifically and statistically reviewed and approved.
- Explore the use of alternative research technologies, methods and analyses as appropriate.
- Create and implement an electronic system to sell and track fishing licenses and permits.
- Conduct surveys to estimate use patterns (e.g., harvest and effort data, angler satisfaction) from guided and non-guided recreational anglers.
- Develop a range of fishing opportunities, recognizing variation among anglers relative to income, age, experience, ability, and opportunity sought.
- Promote and facilitate publication in peer-reviewed journals.
- Adhere to the policies on genetics, pathology, lake stocking, and for waters bearing anadromous fish.
- Assess effects of anadromous and freshwater stockings on wild fish.
- Implement prioritized regional stocking plans.
- Develop best management practices for standard hatchery operating procedures.
- Conduct post-stocking assessment of product performance in prioritized water bodies.
- Protect & defend access through state & federal land water use planning, review land use actions, & research of navigable waters & historic trails.
- Identify and prioritize lands/easements that currently or could provide public access.
- Construct prioritized access projects (boating and nonboating).
- Inform and instruct recreational anglers in Alaska's fishing opportunities and provide experience-based skill-building exercises.
- Conduct innovative recreational angler recruitment and retention initiatives.
- Identify opportunities to develop urban, youth, and family fishing programs.
- Deliver exceptional customer service.
- Administer Alaska's Anadromous Water Catalog.
- Provide recommendations to minimize impacts to aquatic and riparian habitats of fisheries-related public access projects.
- Conduct prioritized projects to protect, enhance, and/or rehabilitate degraded habitat.
- Provide division staff with opportunities for professional development, training and job advancement.
- Provide safety training.
- Ensure that staff have appropriate tools, technology, and equipment.
- Ensure that staff understand and work toward achieving the division's vision and strategic priorities.
- Assert Alaska's sovereignty to manage the state's fishery resources.

Key RDU Challenges

The goal of the Sport Fish Division is to sustain recreational fishing opportunities while optimizing social and economic benefits to Alaska.

Sport Fish Division has lost about $6.5M in revenues between the two major funding sources between FY2008-2012.

The decline in revenues in the Fish and Game Fund has been the greatest challenge for the last several years which is attributed to reduced license sales and king salmon stamp revenue contrasted with the absorption of increased operational and overhead costs, new hatchery operational costs and the cost of annual step increases over the past

several years. Below is the decline in the F&G Fund revenue collection since FY08 which is in line with the trend of the national economy:

- FY08 $15,103.0
- FY09 $13,473.7
- FY10 $12,187.0 = $2.9M decline since FY08

The division's Sport Fish Restoration program (SFR; Dingell-Johnson/Wallop-Breaux) is our primary funding source representing 76% of the division's federal receipt authority. Apportionment of these funds is formula-driven to each State and American Territory. This SFR funding is guaranteed, however the amount fluctuates based on annual federal tax receipts resulting in revenue unpredictability. Our annual budget requests are based on revenue projections with an eight to nine month lag before receipt or notification of actual funds. The national economic status foretells a possible decrease in SFR funds coming to Alaska for the next several years. The decline in DJ funds is due to loss of revenue from excise tax from the sale of electric motors, import duties on tackle, pleasure boats and yachts, fishing equipment, fuel tax and interest earned on the Trust Fund. Below is the decline in the federal apportionment received since 2009:

- 2009 $20,222.5
- 2010 $19,477.6
- 2011 $18,234.7
- 2012 $16,637.7 projection = a decline of $3.6M since 2009.

Challenges impacting Sport Fish Division by Core Service include:

Fisheries Management:

The most significant challenge this RDU faces surrounds adhering to the directives of our wild fish stock policies, providing for diverse recreational angling opportunity and consistently conducting quality research while maintaining long standing data sets for sustainable fisheries management. The Sport Fish Division continues to use traditional funding sources coupled with funds from external entities to accomplish our directives for both resident species and salmon populations.

Management of king salmon throughout Southcentral Alaska is a challenge due to the current low abundance of returning adults. The Board of Fisheries recently designated seven king salmon stocks, one in Kodiak and six in North Cook Inlet, as stocks of concern. This created the need for regulations and management actions that restrict sport fisheries, with some management restrictions implemented before the king salmon fishing season. Management of Kenai River king salmon is especially challenging given uncertainty in assessing abundance of these fish during the current cycle of low king salmon productivity, and the popularity and economic importance of this fishery. Management of late-run Kenai River king salmon was further complicated by the large return of sockeye salmon to Upper Cook Inlet. The public is increasingly concerned about management and sustained yield of coho salmon in Upper Cook Inlet and Resurrection Bay. Management of rockfish and lingcod sport fisheries is impacted by North Pacific Fisheries Management Council actions pertaining to federally-managed halibut fisheries.

Division staff will participate and contribute to an effective Alaska Board of Fisheries process for the 2011/2012 meeting cycle.

Another key challenge is educating the public about invasive species that are present in Alaska, as well as those deemed of high concern to the State. Prevention is our primary objective, toward that goal the division developed and distributed materials, and participated in forums where large numbers of the public and stakeholders could be informed about the ways invasive species are introduced and shared protocols to reduce the risk of inadvertently spreading invasive species. To enhance the division's ability to monitor for invasive species we request the public report sightings of nonnative organisms.

The division will continue to reduce abundance of invasive northern pike, especially at Alexander Creek, Stormy Lake and the Soldotna Creek watershed.

Fisheries Research:

The division will continue to provide customer service instruction to division personnel such that the results of our research and management efforts are better understood by recreational anglers.

The division continues to improve our ability to collect and disseminate guided and unguided recreational angler catch and harvest data in a timely manner. Significant fiscal investments into programs are being targeted at evaluating harvest estimate accuracy and precision, simplifying angler survey instruments, and reducing the time lag to when harvest estimates are available to the public and regulatory entities. The division will continue these efforts with a pilot program to electronically capture information from freshwater logbooks in FY13.

The division continues to prioritize base funds and seek grant funds to implement stock assessment research projects focused on improving scientifically based fisheries management. The division continues research efforts, including transition to state-of-the-art sonar technology and a genetics-based mark-recapture study, to improve assessment of Kenai River king salmon. King salmon escapement in two rivers in West Cook Inlet will be counted through weirs, a new project supported by an Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund grant. Conversely, declining budgets reduced or eliminated division king salmon research projects in Kodiak and Bristol Bay, and postponed initiating a new coho salmon project in Resurrection Bay. CIP funds provided by the legislature will be used to move the Little Susitna River coho salmon weir downstream from its current site to provide timely in-season data for managing the coho salmon sport fishery. The division continued a four year project to estimate abundance and assess spawning distribution of coho and chum salmon in the Susitna River. This project was funded in part by a CIP from the legislature with additional funding obtained by the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund program. Prioritization of saltwater logbook data to meet federal regulatory timelines delayed input and analyses of Cook Inlet personal use permit data. Staff reductions caused by declining budgets slowed down publication of reports describing results of research projects.

Fisheries Enhancement:

A long standing challenge of this RDU has been to provide diverse recreational fishing opportunities while faced with declining production from antiquated hatchery facilities. The passage and signing of SB147 during 2005 coupled with a $70 million dollar General Fund CIP appropriation approved by the Legislature and the Governor in 2008, has resoundingly addressed the problem. We have honored the trust shown by state leadership by designing and currently constructing efficient and productive facilities using energy efficient technology. While there was a delay in production from the new facilities, a return to historic production levels was initiated in June 2011 and full historic production levels will be achieved by October 2012. The challenge to fund operational costs associated with these facilities is ongoing.

Fish production and enhancement efforts will improve markedly with the new Ruth Burnett and William “Jack” Hernandez Sport Fish Hatcheries in operation. Evaluation of stocked lakes in the region will lag due to declining budgets and staff reductions. Obtaining sufficient king salmon brood stock in Kodiak has been problematic due to recent low returns of adult fish.

Angler Access:

Federal land management agencies continue to adjudicate Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) land conveyances and staff work in concert with these agencies to assure traditional hunting and fishing access rights are maintained. As Federal land use plans are updated, scrutiny of documented and allowed use is required, such that maintenance of recreational use is assured. Also, federal oversight of subsistence fishing on public lands and waters continues to pose threats to sport fishing opportunity throughout Alaska which warrants providing data, review of written reports and participation in the federal regulatory process.

Federal efforts to address climate change are increasingly challenging the division. The U.S. Department of Interior has developed a conservation cooperative to address impacts to fish and wildlife associated with a changing climate. A cornerstone of this effort is the development and implementation of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC). In Alaska, five LCCs are envisioned: Arctic, North Pacific, Western Alaska, Northern Interior Forest, and a Southern Interior Forest. The department sees the potential benefits of cooperating on broad scaled landscape conservation efforts including LCCs. In addition, as these entities are established, participation in their organizational and initial planning efforts is required to ensure that department authorities are maintained, the best technical support is applied, and communications are coordinated efficiently. The division has decided to join as a partner in the development and

implementation of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives. However, our involvement is contingent upon us being able to adequately staff our involvement.

The division continues to monitor negotiations impacting public access of road system streams on Kodiak Island. Maintenance of signs and facilities providing angler access may decrease due to budget reductions.

Timely completion of recreational boating and angler access projects, and maintenance of existing and future facilities are facing challenges. The division continues to seek outside sources of non-federal match for federal funds used in these improvements. However, future projects will take longer to complete due to decreases in SFR funds and revenues in the Fish and Game Fund, overall increased costs of construction and maintenance, and difficulties in obtaining the non-federal match requirement from cooperating agencies.

Information and Education Services:

Division coordination and participation in aquatic education programs decreased due to budget reductions.

Fish Habitat:

The division will continue to help address habitat concerns raised by the public relative to personal use fisheries in Cook Inlet. Other factors are related to these habitat concerns in addition to the fisheries. The division worked with other state agencies, local governments and stakeholders to find solutions that successfully address these concerns.

Workforce Support:

A recently enacted internal hiring freeze coupled with recent resignations and retirements have significantly impacted core services. The continued lag in recruitment of vacant positions will continue to increase work load on remaining staff and potentially create problems with staff retention. Recruitment of many vacant positions will not occur due to declining budgets. This places additional work load on remaining staff and impacts successfully achieving objectives of division core services. Budget declines have reduced staff training and professional development opportunities.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2013

The division finalized our Strategic Plan originally published in 2001, and now extending through 2014. The Strategic Plan will serve as a guiding document to:

- Identify and address key/priority issues;
- Refine and develop programs;
- Serve as an annual assessment tool for program monitoring;
- Provide for better fiscal planning and accountability; and
- Ensure fiscal responsibility.

The division eliminated redundancies, inefficiencies, and costs that cannot be directly linked to the division's mission and strategic plan. The result of these program reductions is that many of the "proposed new activities" identified within the "*Division of Sport Fish Strategic Plan*" will not be accomplished and our ability to protect and improve the state's recreational fisheries resources is compromised. The division continues to use a prudent and conservative approach for division operations and projecting revenues.

Fisheries Management:

A recent resignation of an area management biologist in Southeast Alaska on Prince of Wales Island will inevitably impact customer service during the busy summer fishing season. This position will not be filled in FY13 due to declining revenues.

Management of king salmon throughout Southcentral Alaska, especially the seven king salmon stocks of concern, will remain difficult during the current cycle of low king salmon production. Management of Kenai River king salmon will again be challenging given uncertainty in assessing abundance of these fish and overlap in management of Upper Cook Inlet sockeye salmon.

Monitoring for invasive species in areas where they are likely to be introduced, in habitats suitable to sustain them, is a fiscally responsible means of detecting new introductions. Citizen-scientists assisted the division in monitoring coastal areas for non-native marine organisms in specific locations to determine if they have spread, while also searching for new introductions. Without the continued support of volunteers, monitoring for invasive species will be diminished. Efforts to reduce abundance of invasive northern pike and address habitat concerns involving personal use fisheries in Cook Inlet will continue contingent upon funding.

Fisheries Research:

The division plans to increase research efforts to improve assessment of Kenai River king salmon. FY13 is the final year of data collection to estimate abundance and assess spawning distribution of coho and chum salmon in the Susitna River. Maintaining current and developing new research projects will be difficult with current declines in budget revenues.

Nearly half of the fisheries research salmon stock assessment program positions remain vacant in Southeast Region these vacancies will hinder delivery of key information necessary for effective management of important fisheries.

Fisheries Enhancement:

Fish production, both quality and quantity, and enhancement efforts will continue to improve with the new Ruth Burnett and William “Jack” Hernandez Sport Fish Hatcheries in operation. Obtaining sufficient king salmon and coho salmon brood stock may be problematic due to recent low returns of adult fish.

Sport Fish stocking numbers are expected to reach historic high levels by FY13 should sufficient funding be secured. In addition to increased stocking capacity the division expects to reinitiate stocking of rainbow trout, Arctic char, Arctic grayling and king salmon in several high use lakes now that all hatchery production will be reared indoors in disease free well water.

Angler Access:

Maintenance of angler access facilities may decrease and construction of new access projects may be delayed due to budget reductions.

Beginning in FY11, the division will reprogram State Wildlife Grant funds to coordinate and manage department involvement in Alaska Landscape Conservation Cooperative efforts. This new program will be fully implemented in FY12 and include a staff composed of an LCC Coordinator, an ecologist, and a graphical information specialist. The program will provide direct participation on Alaska LCC Steering Committees and coordinate communication and information exchange between LCCs and department staff.

Information and Education Services:

Division coordination and participation in aquatic education programs may decrease further due to budget and staff reductions.

Fish Habitat:

Annual updates to the Anadromous Waters Catalog will continue.

Workforce Support:

Resignations and retirements will significantly impact core services. The continued lag in recruitment of vacant positions will continue to increase work load on remaining staff and potentially create problems with staff retention.

Improvements to existing administrative software will improve efficiencies in entering, tracking, and reporting on personnel, accounting, and other administrative functions.

Major RDU Accomplishments in 2011

Fisheries Management:

Staff participated in six Board of Fisheries meetings that included preparing and presenting department data on over 300 proposals dealing with commercial, sport, personal use, and subsistence regulations. The Board adopted regulations dealing with salmon, trout, herring, and groundfish to ensure sustainable fisheries. The Board also designated seven king salmon stocks, one in Kodiak and six in North Cook Inlet, as stocks of concern. Lower than average king salmon runs resulted in sport fisheries restrictions and closures in a number of streams throughout Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Bristol Bay. Conversely, sockeye salmon sport fisheries were liberalized (e.g., were increased bag limits).

The Interior sport fish restrictions for king salmon were enacted for the Unalakleet, Kuskokwim, Upper Copper, Tanana and Yukon drainages for coho salmon in the Northern Norton Sound drainages and personal use restrictions for king salmon in the Upper Copper drainage.

The division's Invasive Species Program rapidly responded when an invasive tunicate was detected in Southeast waters. Division of Commercial Fisheries herring and shellfish dive fisheries divers were engaged to assess distribution of the nonnative organism. Outreach to the media and stakeholder groups consisted of meetings, materials and presentations to inform them about the infestation, identification of the organism, and pathways of transfer. Planning and coordination to remove infested aquatic farm infrastructure from the water to effectively reduce the spread of the organism within and outside of the populated embayment was initiated. Continued collaboration with state, federal, local and tribal governments, as well as local organizations, has benefited the division in their efforts to respond to the invasive tunicate by sharing expertise, financial and personnel resources, and resulting in project buy-in.

In Southcentral Region funds were appropriated by the legislature to capture and remove invasive northern pike throughout Alexander Creek. The public provided input on plans to eradicate invasive pike from Stormy Lake through a series of meetings funded by a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Intensive monitoring for invasive European green crab and harmful algal blooms was conducted within the Kachemak Bay CHA using Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR) staff and numerous volunteer community monitors.

The department has maintained its aggressive approach in challenging the unnecessary expansion of the federal subsistence program in Alaska. The ADF&G continues to encourage the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) to: 1) develop written policies and procedures; 2) follow federal regulations and court direction; and 3) make decisions based upon applicable scientific data.

Fisheries Research:

Salmon research staff in Southeast evaluated the health of Chinook salmon in six watersheds and monitored escapements in 11 river systems; escapements met the established goals in nine of the 11 watershed systems across the region; however, one was forecast to be low while the other barely missed. Two new Chinook salmon escapement goals (Blossom and Keta rivers) were established and accepted by the bilateral Chinook Technical Committee of the Pacific Salmon Commission as well as the US/Canada Commissioners.

The Southcentral regional staff began examining production-level use of new sonar technology (DIDSON) for inseason assessment of Kenai River king salmon abundance. A companion project used genetics to estimate abundance of Kenai River king salmon independent of sonar, providing information on the accuracy and consistency of the DIDSON sonar to measure total king salmon abundance. The division tagged Susitna River coho and chum salmon to estimate inriver abundance and assess spawning distribution. Cook Inlet personal use permits were printed in a scannable format that improved accuracy of entering permit data for timely analyses. The division completed a catch-and-release survival study on rockfish with study results being published in peer reviewed scientific fisheries journals.

Interior research staff completed salmon escapement monitoring projects on the Chena River and Gulkana River and conducted a study of juvenile Chinook and coho salmon on the Unalakleet River to improve understanding of how

juvenile salmon production is influenced by escapements of adult salmon. Data collected from these projects will be used to review and revise salmon escapement goals for the 2011 Copper River/PWS and the 2012 AYK Board of Fish Meetings. Salmon harvest sampling was conducted in the Chitina subdistrict to evaluate the return and harvest contribution of Gulkana hatchery reared fish. Other Interior fish research projects directed at resident species populations included life history studies of sheefish in the Yukon, Tanana, Kuskokwim, and Kobuk rivers, population assessments of rainbow trout in the Kisiralik River, and burbot in Tolsona, Copper, and Tanada Lakes and lake trout in Fielding Lake, and radiotelemetry studies of northern pike and burbot in the Kuskokwim River. Assessments of numerous stocked lakes throughout the Interior were conducted to evaluate fishery performance and improve stocking strategies. Much of these research efforts were funded through grants from external entities.

The division conducted a comprehensive mail survey and produced estimates of sport fishing effort, harvest, and catch in all areas of the state during 2010 for use by division staff, regulatory bodies and the public in fishery management decision-making. The continued veracity of the mail survey was highlighted in a technical report detailing the similarity of estimates of harvest from the survey with estimates of harvest from onsite creel surveys over an 11-year period (1996-2006).

The division's business guide logbook program continued to mature in 2011, with full implementation of a newly designed scannable logbook page for saltwater charter operators to increase the accuracy, timeliness, and availability of logbook data for use by managers and stakeholders. Important components of this effort were the completion and publication of a report detailing participation, effort, and harvest by guided anglers during 2010 and the continued refinement of a scannable logbook page for saltwater charter operators.

Research and Technical Services (RTS) coordinated technical peer-reviews and published 69 reports authored by division staff in the Sport Fish/Commercial Fisheries report series. RTS staff also coordinated and helped teach a three-day mechanics of salmon escapement goal development short course to 19 department staff.

Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR) research staff, in partnership with several universities conducted salmonid habitat use studies within the Fox River Flats/Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Areas. Research was also conducted within the Anchor River (RII – southern Kenai Peninsula) watershed looking at habitat use by overwintering juvenile coho salmon.

Fisheries Enhancement:

The division began operation of a new state-of-the-art resident and anadromous fish hatchery named the William "Jack" Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery (WJHSFH) located in Anchorage in June 2011. This facility and the fish it is producing are the culmination of seven years of focused and dedicated effort by ADF&G staff, sport anglers, legislators and the executive branch. The resident species, king and coho salmon produced will be providing dependable recreational fishing opportunities and economic benefit for Alaskan's well into the future. Until water quality has been improved at the Ruth Burnett Sport Fish Hatchery (RBSFH) in Fairbanks all RBSFH production is being conducted in the WJHSFH. The operational funds for these facilities are critical in supporting sport fisheries that generate approximately $30,000,000 in economic benefit to businesses and communities around the state.

Angler Access:

The Recreational Boating and Angler Access program assisted with managing the NEPA process for a proposed project at Statter Harbor in Auke Bay (Juneau - RI), and monitored and managed twenty-four other on-going capital projects to benefit access. The Access program and Southcentral Region hired a concessionaire to provide operation and maintenance of the ADF&G-owned Susitna Landing Boat launch. Additionally, the program completed six Recreational Boating capital projects including Knudson Cove Ramp Rehabilitation (Ketchikan - RI), Starrigavin Boat Ramp Rehabilitation – Phase II (Sitka - RI), Little Susitna River Public Use Facility Vault Latrines (Matanuska/Susitna Valley - RII), Nenana River Boat Launch Parking (Nenana - RIII), Yakutat Fish Cleaning (Yakutat - RI), and Stormy Lake Boat Launch Renovation (Ninilchik – RII).

The Access and Defense unit reviewed land management plans and land use actions to ensure that public access to fish and wildlife was maintained and protected. In 2010, 1,292 ANCSA conveyances, native allotment conveyances, municipal conveyances, subdivision plats, and section line easements were reviewed. The unit provided coordinated department input to DNR to revise the Tanana Basin and Susitna Matanuska Area Plans, and the Hatchery Pass,

Nancy Lakes State Recreation Area, and Chugach State Park Management Plans. Staff researched land status and historical uses of navigable waters for preparation of BLM Recordable Disclaimer of Interest applications, provided research support for the DOL, and investigated public access complaints. Twenty-two Federal land management planning efforts were reviewed to ensure that the access and use of federal public lands was retained for the public and that the management authority of the state for fish and wildlife resources was recognized and upheld.

The division's ANILCA Program is involved in management and planning processes with the four federal land management agencies represented in Alaska: the National Park Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The ANILCA Program's emphasis in each action is to protect the department's management authority for fish and wildlife and the public's ability to access and use fish and wildlife on federally administered public lands.

Information and Education Services:

Anglers received information about results of the rockfish catch-and-release survival study through brochures, department webpage and variety of media stories. This effort should significantly improve survival of rockfish caught and released in sport fisheries. Area office and regional Information Center staff continued delivery of high quality customer service in providing information to the angling public on fishing tips, regulations, inseason management actions, results of research projects, and public access. Education programs including Salmon in the Classroom, Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW), Beyond BOW, and the Mobile Aquatic Classroom exceeded 30 thousand participants.

The Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR) information and education program hosted nearly 6,600 participants in our popular angling-skills oriented programs which included such programs as Becoming an Outdoor Woman, kids fishing days, family ice fishing day, angling skills clinics and the mobile aquatic classroom. Demand for these programs is increasing, but there will likely be a decrease in offerings due to budget reductions. Division staff spent a significant amount of time on the department's website redesign project which will result in a website that is based on subject matter rather than organizational structure and will feature more intuitive navigation. Division staff provided exceptional customer service in their efforts to inform and educate the public about recreational fishing in Alaska.

Fish Habitat:

The Southeast habitat research staff nominated 75 streams for protection under Title 16 as anadromous waterbodies based on information collected during field surveys. Enhancement staff in collaboration with Management staff in Juneau stocked 3 new landlocked lakes in the Mendenhall Glacier area with Chinook salmon as part of a pilot study to increase fishing opportunities.

In 2011, the Aquatic Resources Coordination and Habitat Research and Restoration units planned and implemented the division's habitat related research and restoration programs to ensure they were carried out in a scientifically sound manner. Instream flow and fisheries data were analyzed to reserve water for fish and wildlife habitat on 12 high priority waterbodies. Fish passage and culvert inventory efforts continued along borough-maintained roads in the Mat-Su Borough and in Southeast Alaska along state-maintained roads. An annual update to the Anadromous Waters Catalog was completed and resulted in the addition of 367 stream miles to the catalog. Fish communities in terms of fish species present and their associated habitats were inventoried and documented in the Koyukuk and Chandalar River drainages in 2010.

Workforce Support:

Budget reductions implemented in FY2011 resulted in no staff layoffs; however, the division no longer supports the Southcentral King Salmon area office.

Biometricians provided technical support for over 80 stock assessment and research projects for the division. Division staff processed approximately 3,000 guide/business license applications, and logged the effort and harvest from all anglers who utilized the services of a guide to do their sport fishing in 2010. Fisheries scientists, biometricians, and fisheries biologists served on committees reviewing the department's escapement goals and represented the state on national and international technical committees. The State of Alaska continued to be exempted from the requirement for anglers to register with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to recreationally fish in saltwater

due to the division's statewide harvest survey, saltwater logbook, and port-based biological sampling programs in Southeast and Southcentral Alaska.

Contact Information

Contact: Charles O. Swanton, Director
Phone: (907) 465-6184
Fax: (907) 465-2772
E-mail: charles.swanton@alaska.gov

Sport Fisheries
RDU Financial Summary by Component

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2011 Actuals				FY2012 Management Plan				FY2013 Governor			
	UGF+DGF Funds	**Other Funds**	**Federal Funds**	**Total Funds**	**UGF+DGF Funds**	**Other Funds**	**Federal Funds**	**Total Funds**	**UGF+DGF Funds**	**Other Funds**	**Federal Funds**	**Total Funds**
Formula Expenditures												
None.												
Non-Formula Expenditures												
Sport Fisheries	4,745.2	16,086.0	19,266.8	40,098.0	5,881.2	19,094.4	19,268.5	44,244.1	6,534.2	19,360.5	19,613.9	45,508.6
Sport Fish Hatcheries	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	125.0	251.2	3,806.3	4,182.5	128.2	254.3	3,847.4	4,229.9
Totals	**4,745.2**	**16,086.0**	**19,266.8**	**40,098.0**	**6,006.2**	**19,345.6**	**23,074.8**	**48,426.6**	**6,662.4**	**19,614.8**	**23,461.3**	**49,738.5**

Sport Fisheries
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2012 Management Plan to FY2013 Governor

All dollars shown in thousands

	Unrestricted Gen (UGF)	Designated Gen (DGF)	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
FY2012 Management Plan	**6,006.2**	**0.0**	**19,345.6**	**23,074.8**	**48,426.6**
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:					
-Sport Fisheries	153.0	0.0	284.6	345.4	783.0
-Sport Fish Hatcheries	3.2	0.0	3.1	41.1	47.4
Proposed budget decreases:					
-Sport Fisheries	0.0	0.0	-18.5	0.0	-18.5
Proposed budget increases:					
-Sport Fisheries	500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	500.0
FY2013 Governor	**6,662.4**	**0.0**	**19,614.8**	**23,461.3**	**49,738.5**