

**State of Alaska**  
**FY2019 Governor's Operating Budget**

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

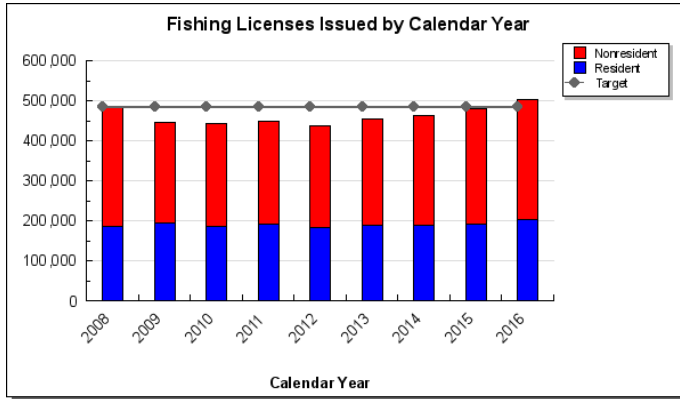
**Sport Fisheries Results Delivery Unit**

**Contribution to Department's Mission**

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

**Results**

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



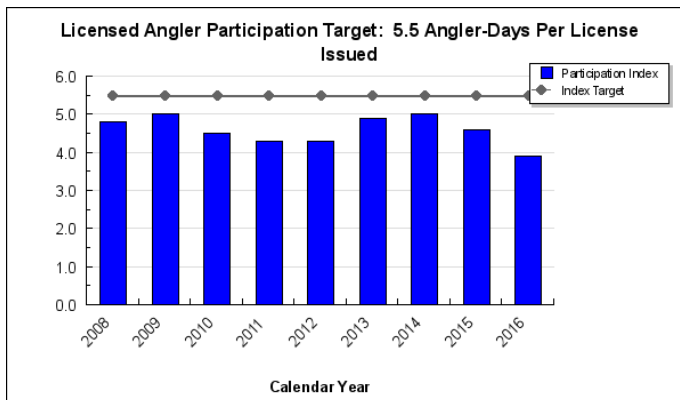
**Core Services**

- Manage wild fish stocks using scientifically and statistically sound research to ensure sustained use by Alaska's sport fisheries.
- Diversify and enhance sport fishing opportunities via supplemental stocking of hatchery-reared fish.

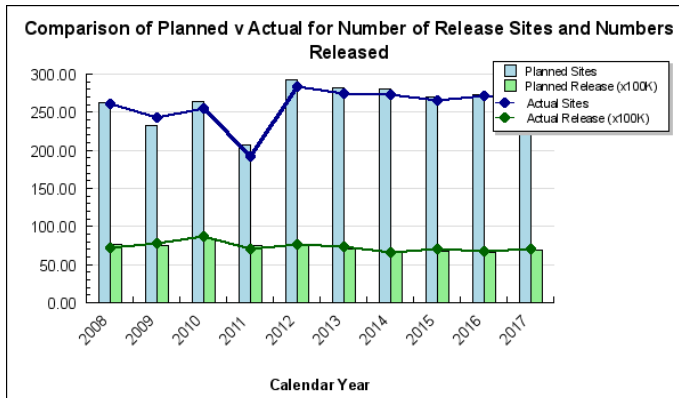
**Measures by Core Service**

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

**1. Manage wild fish stocks using scientifically and statistically sound research to ensure sustained use by Alaska's sport fisheries.**



## 2. Diversify and enhance sport fishing opportunities via supplemental stocking of hatchery-reared fish.



### Major RDU Accomplishments in 2017

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##### Sustaining Fishing Opportunities

Area Managers issued a total of 154 Emergency Orders and News Releases during 2017 that either restricted, liberalized, or informed the public of fishing opportunities during the season. Opportunities for sockeye salmon fishing were liberalized in the Situk River, Redoubt Bay/Lake, Resurrection Bay, Saltery Cove, Karluk and Buskin, Alagnak, Wood, Nushagak-Mulchatna, and the Russian rivers. Mat-Su area rivers, while initially restricted for coho salmon, were liberalized for much of the 2017 coho salmon run. Various stock assessment projects (weirs, counting towers, and aerial surveys) were conducted statewide to provide inseason data for managers to make decisions that allowed additional fishery opportunities and management for sustained yield. In our ongoing efforts to reduce complex regulations, the division submitted 14 staff proposals to the Alaska Board of Fisheries to simplify confusing regulations, and all were adopted. Division staff in Interior and Southcentral regions operated a booth at the Great Alaska Sportsman's Show and Fairbanks Outdoor Show to answer questions on regulations, fisheries management, and fishing opportunities. Southeast Alaska staff held meetings with various sport fishing groups to discuss conservative management actions to achieve SEAK Chinook salmon escapement goals in 2017.

##### Communication and Public Service

The division continued to strive toward improving electronic services for the public, including online license availability and an electronic purchasing option at ADF&G offices and license vendors. To date, the division has established terminals at its 3 regional and 14 local area offices statewide, with 8 of those now offering full service eVendor capability to more efficiently and effectively issue licenses and permits to anglers. In an effort to significantly improve public information delivery services, the division fully launched its GovDelivery email subscription service for news releases, emergency orders, and fishing reports and currently has over 38,500 subscribers.

##### Hatchery Visitor Centers

Significant exhibit design, fabrication, and installation of interactive displays and informational signage consistent with facility development plans were completed at both the Ship Creek Fisheries Center (SCFC) at the William Jack Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery in Anchorage, and the Tanana Valley Fisheries Center (TVFC) at the Ruth Burnett Sport Fish Hatchery in Fairbanks during 2017. Each location was staffed for public tours during times of high visitor use (May-August) which are proving to be popular with the public. Visitation and hatchery tours increased notably in 2017 compared to the prior year with over 2,300 visitors hosted at the SCFC, and over 1,300 visitors at the TVFC.

##### Hatchery Production

Sport Fish Division's enhancement program supports some of Alaska's most popular and reliable fisheries in the state by increasing opportunities for anglers while reducing fishing pressure on wild stocks. The "Statewide Stocking Plan for Sport Fisheries, 2017" outlined objectives that include the number and locations of the division's enhancement efforts for the next five years, and received considerable public input. In 2017, the division's hatcheries with support

from cooperating Private Non-Profit (PNP) facilities produced and released 6.94 million Chinook and coho salmon, rainbow trout and Arctic char at 266 different locations.

### **Habitat Research and Restoration**

The division plays a supporting role in the data collection and compilation of information used to protect and conserve water for fish. In 2017, nearly 500 miles of fish habitat on rivers and streams throughout the state were provided protection under state law, and 14 water right certificates were issued. Further, nearly 0.5 mi of streambank was restored in heavily used/modified sections of high-valued rivers in Southcentral Alaska. These efforts also removed 300 feet of material detrimental to fish during the process.

## **Key RDU Challenges**

### **Key RDU Challenges**

#### **Sustaining Fishing Opportunities**

Statewide Chinook salmon production has been low since 2007, and runs continued at relatively low levels in 2017. In many cases, Chinook salmon escapement goals were achieved; however, a number were not, including goals for several Chinook salmon stocks designated by the Board of Fisheries as “stocks of concern” in Cook Inlet, and all but one goal in Southeast Alaska. Numerous fishing restrictions resulted in reduced harvest and fishing opportunities; some systems were closed to fishing altogether. Chinook salmon runs in 2018 are likely to remain low and will continue to challenge managers tasked with providing anglers with fishing opportunity while attaining escapement goals. Pre-season and in-season restrictions to sport fishing opportunity will again likely be needed to ensure that Chinook stocks are conserved.

There are few assessment projects focused on coho salmon and resident species sought by anglers, and no fishery-independent assessments of state managed groundfish including lingcod and rockfish. Lack of information generally leads to conservative management, which can constrain fishing opportunity.

#### **Communications and Public Service**

Approximately 500,000 anglers participate annually in Alaska’s sport fisheries. Many are new to the activity in any given year, and many participate in some but not all years. Interests vary among anglers; some fish to put food on the table; others practice catch-and-release as a form of conservation. Furthermore, some anglers fish to spend time outdoors and others for the challenge. As a result, Alaska residents and visitors alike face an inherent challenge in gaining and maintaining awareness of ever-changing fishing opportunities, and in understanding and complying with fishing regulations.

Sport fishing regulations have increased in complexity, and recent restrictions to Chinook salmon fishing opportunity as well as guided halibut fishing opportunity have hampered the ability to stay informed. In pursuit of implementing new technologies to improve delivery of and access to fishing regulations, staff are working with contractors to identify the best solutions in which to accomplish this task. Given that few other states have attempted a similar initiative, there is little to work from and thus the division will be paving new ground and overcoming challenges encountered along the way. The division, however, is committed to improving access to and understanding of Alaska’s sport fishing regulations.

## **Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2019**

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#### **Communication and Public Service**

The division has embarked on a strategic approach to improve how we deliver sport fishing regulations to the public and thereby improve understanding and compliance. Following recommendations of a business needs analysis completed in 2017, the division is building a content management system (CMS) prototype to house sport fishing regulations. The CMS will allow the division to provide regulations and other important informational content to the public using more dynamic delivery tools, potentially including geo-referenced maps and mobile applications. The division will conduct a survey in 2019 to ensure that modern solutions for the delivery of sport fishing regulations meet the needs of current and future anglers.

**Improvements to the Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS)**

In an effort to improve information collected for the Statewide Harvest Survey, new data collection protocols are being implemented to improve angler recall should their household be selected for survey information. Doing so will improve the accuracy and precision of the estimates moving forward and improve public support for the program.

**Rockfish Research Initiative**

In FY2018, the Division initiated internal discussions regarding management issues and stock assessment needs for groundfish species—primarily yellow and black rockfish. Given growing concerns over stock status, the Division is committed to further engaging state and federal agency staff with rockfish management expertise, and reviewing and, if appropriate, modifying management strategies, and collaboratively exploring stock assessment needs. Further workshops are being discussed.

Contact Information
<p><b>Contact:</b> Thomas E. Brookover, Director <b>Phone:</b> (907) 267-2150 <b>Fax:</b> (907) 267-2464 <b>E-mail:</b> tom.brookover@alaska.gov</p>

**Sport Fisheries  
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	FY2017 Actuals				FY2018 Management Plan				FY2019 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
<b>Formula Expenditures</b> None.												
<b>Non-Formula Expenditures</b>												
Sport Fisheries	4,121.6	18,835.6	14,065.3	37,022.5	2,017.4	22,981.1	16,371.5	41,370.0	1,970.1	23,073.1	16,405.4	41,448.6
Sport Fish Hatcheries	0.0	179.8	4,961.8	5,141.6	0.0	314.0	5,448.3	5,762.3	0.0	314.3	5,453.2	5,767.5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,121.6</b>	<b>19,015.4</b>	<b>19,027.1</b>	<b>42,164.1</b>	<b>2,017.4</b>	<b>23,295.1</b>	<b>21,819.8</b>	<b>47,132.3</b>	<b>1,970.1</b>	<b>23,387.4</b>	<b>21,858.6</b>	<b>47,216.1</b>

**Sport Fisheries**  
**Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component**  
**From FY2018 Management Plan to FY2019 Governor**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	<u>Unrestricted Gen (UGF)</u>	<u>Designated Gen (DGF)</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
<b>FY2018 Management Plan</b>	2,017.4	0.0	23,295.1	21,819.8	47,132.3
<b>One-time items:</b>					
-Sport Fisheries	0.0	0.0	-500.0	0.0	-500.0
<b>Adjustments which continue current level of service:</b>					
-Sport Fisheries	-47.3	0.0	592.0	33.9	578.6
-Sport Fish Hatcheries	0.0	0.0	0.3	4.9	5.2
<b>FY2019 Governor</b>	<b>1,970.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>23,387.4</b>	<b>21,858.6</b>	<b>47,216.1</b>