

State of Alaska FY2020 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Conservation Results Delivery Unit Budget Summary

Wildlife Conservation Results Delivery Unit

Contribution to Department's Mission

To conserve and enhance Alaska's wildlife and habitats and provide for a wide range of public uses and benefits.

Results

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

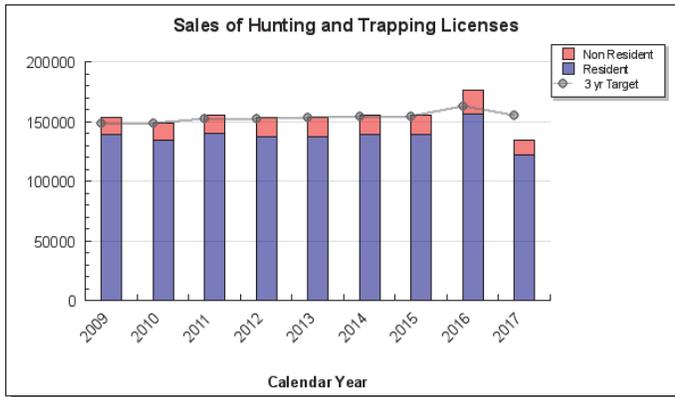
Core Services

- Maintain and enhance opportunities to hunt, trap, and view wildlife.
- Provide opportunities for Alaskans to gain knowledge of and appreciation for Alaska's wildlife, its management, and ways to safely and ethically interact with wildlife.

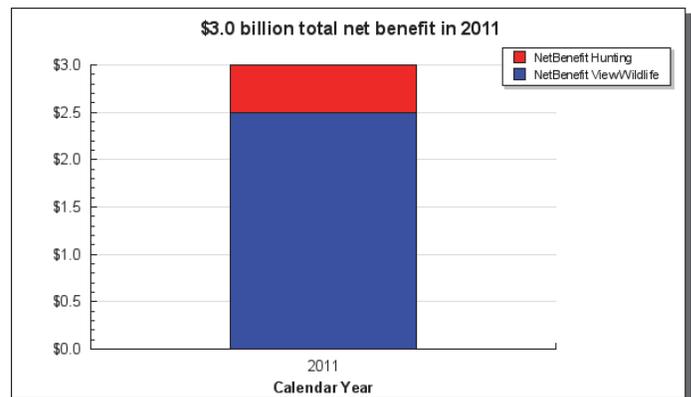
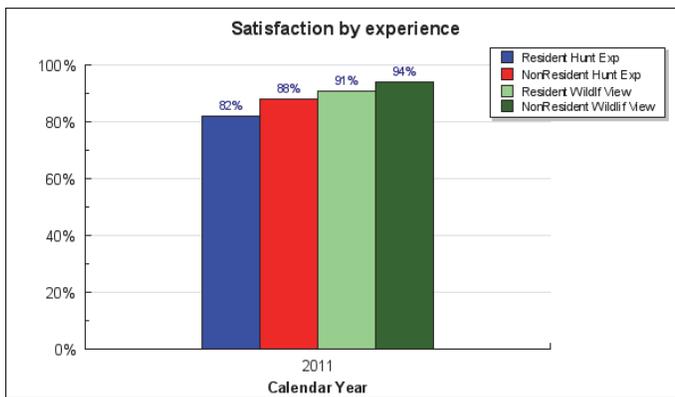
Measures by Core Service

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

1. Maintain and enhance opportunities to hunt, trap, and view wildlife.



2. Provide opportunities for Alaskans to gain knowledge of and appreciation for Alaska's wildlife, its management, and ways to safely and ethically interact with wildlife.



Major RDU Accomplishments in 2018

Defending against federal erosion of state management authority

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and Access Defense programs, and the Threatened, Endangered, and Diversity Program (TED) are cost effective approaches to federal management issues. The ANILCA

Program asserts and defends the authority of the Department for management of fish and wildlife on all lands in Alaska and maintains public access and use of federal public lands. The TED program works to conserve wildlife species before they become threatened or endangered, to recover species already imperiled, and to keep common species common. The program administers the State's response to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by providing resources, expertise, and coordination among agencies (e.g., Department of Law and Department of Natural Resources) with the goal of conserving wildlife and avoiding unwarranted regulations. Last year's major successes by these programs include:

- 1) Worked with Alaska Dept. of Law on briefs for State of *Alaska v. Zinke*, seeking repeal of the 2015 NPS Alaska Wildlife Regulations, while simultaneously developing coordinated comments on a Dept. of Interior Secretarial Order, which mandated a review process to reconsider USFWS and NPS regulations for harvest of fish and wildlife that conflict with or supersede state regulations.
- 2) Coordinated the ADF&G's participation in Departments of Interior and Agriculture land management planning processes to ensure recognition of state management authorities and maintain public access and use of public lands.

Increased disease surveillance. The Wildlife Health and Disease Surveillance program elevated disease surveillance from passive to active surveillance. This was due in large part to the first detection of the bacteria *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* in Alaska's wildlife and in wildlife species never previously known to carry the pathogen. The division worked to enhance public awareness and involve hunters in active surveillance for this potential pathogen. This resulted in nearly 700 additional hunter-harvested Dall's sheep, mountain goats, moose and caribou sampled via nasal swabs for screening to add to the 2000+ samples collected by staff since 2015. In addition, collaborative efforts in disease surveillance and wildlife health resulted in significant new findings in the areas of caribou, marine mammal, canine, muskox, and other wildlife health; caribou anesthesia; capture drug meat residues, and new species of parasites detected in moose and caribou.

Wildlife nutrition laboratory. The division established a new laboratory in Palmer. Biologists at the lab will determine forage quality and wildlife diet composition from fecal samples. The lab will support the department's habitat and nutrition research across the state to allow for valid comparisons of ungulate herds and their range forage quality. Understanding the use and quality of forage resources helps inform management decisions such as setting quota levels and assessing whether intensive management activities are likely to be successful. The lab will also serve as the coordination center for wildlife capture, including immobilization drugs and supplies and development of anesthetic protocols.

Hunter access program. The division began establishing a hunting, trapping, and wildlife recreation access program that works cooperatively with other government agencies and private organizations. With public input, we identify and develop substantive future hunter and wildlife access opportunities to directly benefit the people of the State of Alaska and others. The program will improve opportunities for hunting, trapping, and other wildlife recreation by developing or improving public access across the State; maximize efficient use of federal funds through public and private partnerships for meeting program match requirements; and improve outreach with public and private hunting, trapping, and other wildlife recreation organizations. The extent of a continuing program will depend upon future appropriations for this purpose.

Key RDU Challenges

Developing new techniques for conducting moose surveys with decreased snow cover

Moose population monitoring (including measures of abundance, composition, and trend) in Alaska has routinely involved aerial surveys flown in the fall and early winter, prior to antler drop, when sexes can be distinguished. These surveys rely on complete snow cover to optimize the ability to see moose. Over the past decade, delayed onset of snowfall has crippled biologists' ability to monitor moose populations using existing protocols, especially in coastal regions. Division biologists have begun to work on improving current techniques and developing new techniques to estimate moose abundance.

Handling increasing threats to wildlife from diseases and parasites

Changes in climate are bringing diseases and parasites previously known largely in lower latitudes closer to Alaska. The division must increase its surveillance and monitoring capabilities to handle these increasing threats to wildlife.

Limited state funds for increasing expenses

The division continues to struggle to pay for expenses that cannot be funded by federal Pittman-Robertson dollars. In addition to paying for costs on ineligible activities—such as enforcement of game and fish laws and regulations; establishment, publication, and dissemination of regulations; stocking of game animals; wildlife damage management activities; and printing/distribution/issuance of licenses and permits—the division must use Fish and Game funds for activities previously paid for using federal indirect dollars. These indirect expenses (for items such as building rent, telecommunications, computer services, risk management, etc.) must now be paid for by using division license dollars. This indirect change occurred in FY17 under the federal indirect cost allocation plan but it has become increasingly difficult to cover increasing expenses with limited state funds.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2020

No service changes in the FY20 budget.

Contact Information
<p>Contact: Bruce Dale, Director Phone: (907) 861-2101 E-mail: bruce.dale@alaska.gov</p>

**Wildlife Conservation
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2018 Actuals				FY2019 Management Plan				FY2020 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												
Wildlife Conservation	1,239.7	10,494.8	19,843.0	31,577.5	2,962.8	13,663.2	32,232.0	48,858.0	2,033.5	15,636.4	32,695.1	50,365.0
WC Special Projects	704.8	2,897.3	8,783.2	12,385.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hunter Ed Public Shooting Ranges	0.0	912.7	0.0	912.7	0.0	983.3	0.0	983.3	0.0	1,002.6	0.1	1,002.7
Totals	1,944.5	14,304.8	28,626.2	44,875.5	2,962.8	14,646.5	32,232.0	49,841.3	2,033.5	16,639.0	32,695.2	51,367.7

Wildlife Conservation
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2019 Management Plan to FY2020 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>
FY2019 Management Plan	1,962.8	1,000.0	14,646.5	32,232.0	49,841.3
One-time items:					
-Wildlife Conservation	0.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	-1,000.0
Adjustments which continue current level of service:					
-Wildlife Conservation	40.0	0.0	223.2	463.1	726.3
-Hunter Ed Public Shooting Ranges	0.0	0.0	19.3	0.1	19.4
Proposed budget increases:					
-Wildlife Conservation	30.7	0.0	2,450.0	0.0	2,480.7
Proposed budget decreases:					
-Wildlife Conservation	0.0	0.0	-700.0	0.0	-700.0
FY2020 Governor	2,033.5	0.0	16,639.0	32,695.2	51,367.7