

State of Alaska
FY2014 Governor's Operating Budget

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

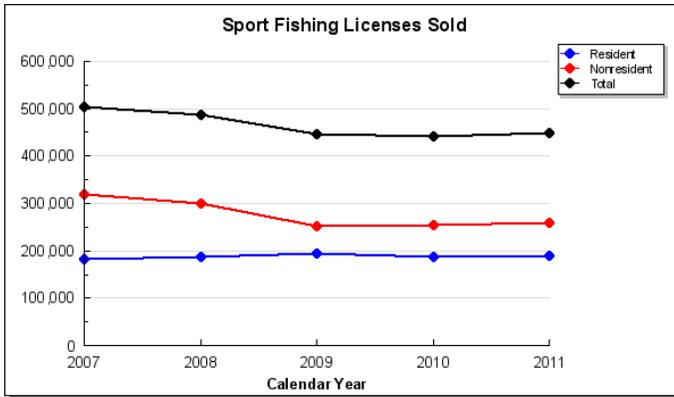
Sport Fisheries Results Delivery Unit

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 <http://omb.alaska.gov/results>.)



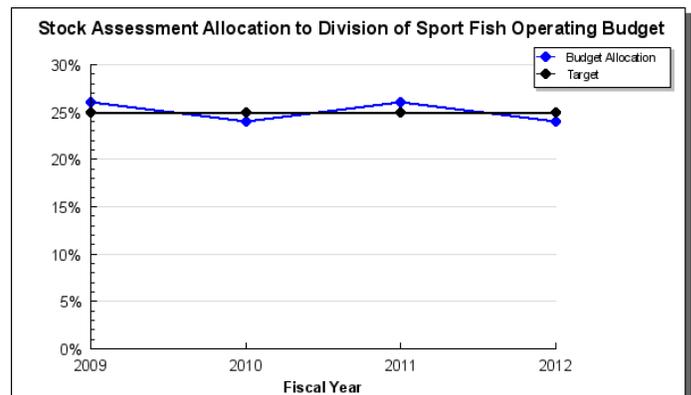
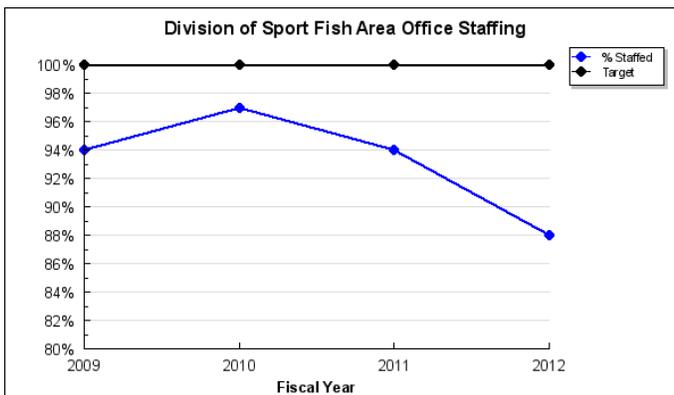
Core Services

- Manage wild fish stocks using scientifically and statistically sound research, to ensure the sustained use of Alaska's recreational fisheries.
- Diversify recreational fishing opportunities via supplemental production of hatchery-reared fish.
- Maintain and improve access for sport-fishing and recreational opportunities.
- Inform the public about recreational fishing opportunities, angling skills, management-related issues, and conservation of Alaska's aquatic species.

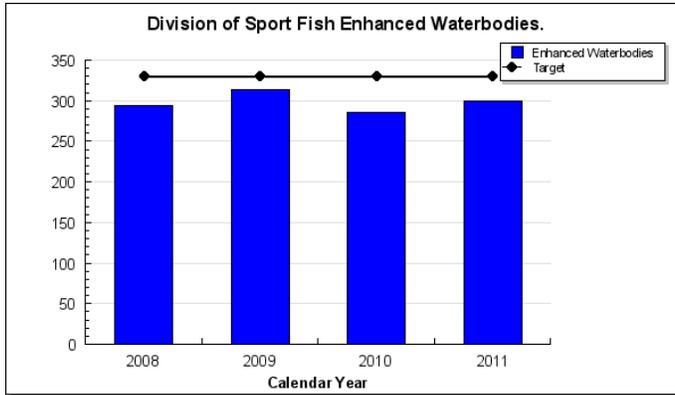
Measures by Core Service

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

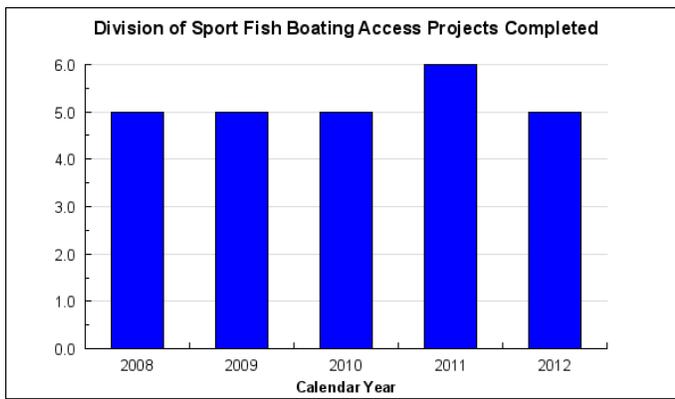
1. Manage wild fish stocks using scientifically and statistically sound research, to ensure the sustained use of Alaska's recreational fisheries.



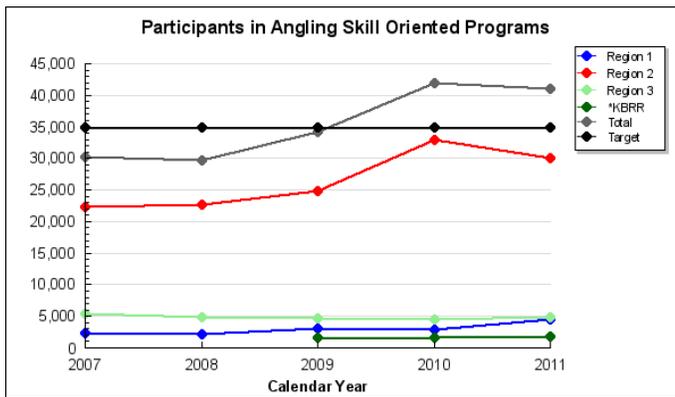
2. Diversify recreational fishing opportunities via supplemental production of hatchery-reared fish.



3. Maintain and improve access for sport-fishing and recreational opportunities.



4. Inform the public about recreational fishing opportunities, angling skills, management-related issues, and conservation of Alaska’s aquatic species.



Major RDU Accomplishments in 2012

Fisheries Management:

- Improved salmon forecasts assisted with inseason management decisions for select stocks and appropriate actions were taken in a timely manner to ensure escapement goals were met.
- Area managers tracked subsistence harvests, commercial harvests, recreational harvests, and inseason abundance estimates to ensure sustainable fish populations and sport allocations were achieved in 2012.
- Area managers reviewed data from stock assessment projects and conducted creel and escapement index surveys to ascertain run strength information for appropriate fishery management actions.
- Management staff participated in several Board of Fisheries meetings that included preparing and presenting

- department data on proposals dealing with commercial, sport, personal use, and subsistence regulations.
- Lower than average Chinook salmon runs resulted in sport fisheries restrictions and closures in a number of streams throughout Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Bristol Bay. Appropriate management actions were taken, some pre-season, despite contentious responses from the public. Conversely, sockeye salmon sport fisheries were liberalized (e.g., bag limits were increased).
- Provided angling public information on techniques to reduce release mortality of rockfish.
- Intensive capture and removal of invasive northern pike continued throughout Alexander Creek. The public provided input on plans to eradicate invasive pike from Stormy Lake and the Soldotna Creek watershed.
- Salmon sport fishery restrictions were enacted for Unalakleet, Kuskokwim, Upper Copper River, Tanana and Northern Norton Sound.
- Personal Use fishery restrictions were enacted in the Upper Copper River drainage.
- Successful survey of invasive tunicate distribution was completed toward the development of an eradication plan.
- Continued partnership with federal, tribal, state and local organizations to educate the public about invasive species and increased buy-in of stakeholders resulted in better communication and coordination statewide to address invasive species threats.
- Implementation of new regulation that prohibits the use of felt soled wading footwear while fishing.

Fisheries Research:

- Research staff successfully conducted full adult/juvenile mark-recapture and coded wire tag projects on four Chinook salmon and two coho salmon stocks in Southeast Alaska. Two of the four systems relative to the Transboundary Rivers provisions of the US/Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty and timely information were used by Area Management staff in both Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries divisions to take appropriate actions to ensure adequate escapement of Chinook salmon to the Taku and Stikine rivers.
- Research staff completed stock assessment surveys in 11 index systems for Chinook salmon necessary for managing fisheries under the guise of the US/Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty.
- Both Research and Area Management staff completed stock assessment surveys in ten index systems for steelhead trout in 2012 to monitor relative run strength.
- Final publication of six Fisheries Data Series reports specific to research conducted in Southeast Alaska, and 11 in queue for final formatting.
- The Southcentral regional staff began examining production-level use of new sonar technology (DIDSON) for in-season assessment of Kenai River Chinook salmon abundance. A companion project used genetics to estimate abundance of Kenai River Chinook salmon independent of sonar, providing information on the accuracy and consistency of the DIDSON sonar to measure total Chinook salmon abundance.
- Susitna River coho and chum salmon were captured and marked to estimate in-river abundance and assess spawning distribution.
- Coordinated with Commercial Fisheries Division to assess in-river Chinook salmon abundance in the Nushagak, Lewis and Theodore rivers.
- 2012 Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim (AYK) Board of Fisheries meeting preparations included Salmon Escapement Monitored on the Chena and Gulkana Rivers and Juvenile Salmon Study on the Unalakleet River.
- Other research accomplishments include: Life History Study of Sheefish in the Yukon and Kobuk Rivers; Population Assessment of Rainbow Trout in the Kisaralik River; Population Assessment of burbot in the Tonsia River, Copper River, and Tanada Lake; and Radiotelemetry Study of Northern Pike and burbot in the Kuskokwim River.
- Mail survey of sport anglers was completed and results disseminated on harvest, catch, and participation in 2011.
- Guide business logbook program continued to provide information on harvest, catch, and participation in freshwater guided and saltwater charter fisheries in 2011.
- Technical peer reviews and publication of 55 reports authored by division staff in the ADF&G Sport/Commercial Fisheries report series in calendar year 2011.

Fisheries Enhancement:

- William Jack Hernandez and Ruth Burnett Hatchery successfully opened and operational.
- Returned to historic stocking levels at several locations in Southcentral and Interior Alaska.
- Renewal of the catchable Chinook and grayling programs.
- Significant improvement in size and condition of Chinook smolt, catchable Chinook salmon and rainbow trout.
- Significant growth improvements of Chinook salmon being raised at Crystal Lake Hatchery with use of heat

exchanger prior to release into Blind Slough. Severely cold temperatures have hampered obtaining optimal growth rates and impacts survival/returns.

- Planning and permitting phase in progress for new Chinook salmon release site near City Creek in Petersburg.

Angler Access:

- The Alaska Native Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Program participated in Arctic Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) planning process and Access-Defense participated in Karluk Conservation Easement renewal and Izembek Land Exchange negotiations. In 2012, Landscape Conservation Cooperatives-National Fish Habitat Action Plan (LCC-NFHAP) Program became fully functional.
- The Recreational Boating and Angler Access program managed 21 active, on-going projects that will benefit access.
- The Boating Access Program completed five boating and angler access capital projects: Whittier Harbor Transient Moorage (Whittier - RII); Anchor River Tractor Launch Parking (Homer - RII); Pillars Boat Launch Mooring Float (Kenai – RII); Clean Vessel Act Pump-out (Skagway – RI); and Kenai Personal Use Fishery – Fishery Support Improvements (Kenai – RII).

Information and Education Services:

- Area office and regional Information Center staff continued delivery of high quality customer service in providing information to the angling public on recreational fishing in Alaska including 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 reached thousands of participants.

Fish Habitat:

- Water reservations for fish habitat were completed and submitted for adjudication on 15 waterbodies in 2012.
- Bank restoration projects were conducted, resulting in 4,072 feet of riverbank and riparian habitat rehabilitated in 2012.
- The anadromous waters atlas and catalog were updated with 389 miles of new waterbodies in 2012.
- Fish communities were successfully surveyed in the anadromous waterbodies of the west and northern Cook Inlet river drainages in 2012.

Workforce Support:

- Administrative staff continued high level of production and efficiency dealing with personnel, accounting and operational procedures/policy issues.

Key RDU Challenges**Overview:**

- Despite continually declining revenues, maintaining the goal of the Division of Sport Fish to sustain recreational fishing opportunities while optimizing social and economic benefits to Alaska.
- Revenue decline from loss of federal excise tax receipts for the Sport Fish Restoration Program also known as Dingell-Johnson (DJ funds).
- Revenue declines from the sale of sport fishing licenses and Chinook salmon stamps.
- Salary increases with unrealizable revenue sources.
- Increased operational costs for new hatcheries.

Fisheries Management:

- Continued low abundance of adult Chinook salmon throughout Southcentral Alaska.
- Recent below average runs of some coho salmon stocks required fisheries restrictions in Upper Cook Inlet, Resurrection Bay, and in Kodiak.
- Rockfish and lingcod sport fisheries impacted by North Pacific Fisheries Management Council actions pertaining to federally-managed halibut fisheries.
- Reduced budgets have left two Area Management Biologist (AMB) positions vacant (Prince of Wales Island; Lower Cook Inlet) and two Assistant AMB positions vacant (Kodiak; Anchorage/North Gulf Coast).
- Limited staff and fiscal resources to prevent, detect, inventory, rapidly respond to, and control or eradicate

invasive species that may occur in habitats over which the department has jurisdiction.

Fisheries Research:

- Revising current and creating new assessment projects to better understand statewide productivity and abundance trends of Chinook salmon.
- Increasing reliance on grant funds needed to implement research projects, which in turn increases workload due to contractual obligations of grants, and decreases long-term certainty of our research programs.
- Transitioning to state-of-the-art sonar technology and a genetics-based mark-recapture study to improve assessment of Kenai River Chinook salmon.
- Assessing Chinook salmon escapement through weirs in two rivers in West Cook Inlet, funded by Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund grant.
- Assessing Chinook salmon and improved assessment of coho salmon escapement through a weir at the Little Susitna River, supported by an increment in FY2013.
- Declining budgets have reduced or eliminated new research projects on coho salmon, groundfish, and freshwater resident species; delayed input and analysis of Cook Inlet personal use permit data; and delayed publication of reports describing results of research projects.
- Begin implementation of revised operational planning policy for all division's assessment projects.
- Continuing improvements to data collection, analysis, and reporting of saltwater charter logbook information.
- Collecting and updating economic information relevant to recreational fisheries in Alaska.

Fisheries Enhancement:

- Maintain consistent influent water quality at the Ruth Burnett Sport Fish Hatchery.
- Collect adequate Chinook and coho salmon broodstock due to weak adult returns.
- Secure additional operational funding as utility and personal services costs increase and division revenues decline.

Angler Access:

- Represent and coordinate the department's participation in federal land management process, while maintaining the sovereignty of the State to manage for sustainable fish and wildlife populations.
- Continue to monitor negotiations impacting public access of road system streams on Kodiak Island, and land easement agreement negotiations for the Karluk River.
- Timely completion of boating and angler access projects may be hindered due to: decline in Sport Fish Restoration and Fish and Game Funds; increases to construction and maintenance costs; and difficulties in obtaining the non-federal match requirement from cooperating agencies.

Information and Education Services:

- Continuing to inform the public about Alaska's recreational fishing opportunities, angler access, regulations and fisheries management in a timely manner.
- Division coordination of and ability to offer popular, school-based aquatic education programs may decrease due to budget reductions.
- Reduced number of innovative, hands-on angling skill-based programs offered to the public.
- Limited capacity to develop modern and innovative methods for delivery of timely information to the public.
- Incomplete visitor centers at the two new hatcheries.

Fish Habitat:

- Continue coordination with other state agencies, local governments and stakeholders to help address habitat concerns relative to personal-use fisheries in Cook Inlet.
- Address critical information needs for culvert design for improvement of fish passage.
- Continue to provide biological and hydrologic advice to support reviews of hydroelectric projects through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission process.

Workforce Support:

- Achieve objectives of division core services with staff shortages and revenue declines.
- Maintain a trained enthusiastic workforce as funding for training, education and travel is limited.
- Knowledge transfer with upcoming retirements.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2014

- The “*Division of Sport Fish Strategic Plan*” originally published in 2001, now extends through 2014. (Located at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/fishing/PDFs/sport/StrategicPlan2010Final.pdf>). This is the division’s guide to: identify and address key/priority issues; refine and develop programs; annually assess and monitor programs; provide for better fiscal planning and accountability; and ensure fiscal responsibility.
- The division will prioritize projects based on the strategic plan and eliminate those projects that are identified as lower priorities or less essential than others.
- Initiate new Susitna River Chinook and coho salmon research project funded by Alaska Energy Authority (AEA).
- Increase research efforts to improve assessment of Kenai River Chinook salmon.

Contact Information
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**Sport Fisheries
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2012 Actuals				FY2013 Management Plan				FY2014 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	11,402.3	11,109.2	14,960.1	37,471.6	6,624.2	19,361.8	17,952.3	43,938.3	7,194.7	19,222.8	17,694.6	44,112.1
Sport Fish Hatcheries	125.0	301.8	4,636.1	5,062.9	328.2	254.6	5,522.6	6,105.4	328.2	254.8	5,358.5	5,941.5
Totals	11,527.3	11,411.0	19,596.2	42,534.5	6,952.4	19,616.4	23,474.9	50,043.7	7,522.9	19,477.6	23,053.1	50,053.6

Sport Fisheries
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2013 Management Plan to FY2014 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>
FY2013 Management Plan	6,952.4	0.0	19,616.4	23,474.9	50,043.7
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:					
-Sport Fisheries	570.5	0.0	-139.0	-257.7	173.8
-Sport Fish Hatcheries	0.0	0.0	0.2	-164.1	-163.9
FY2014 Governor	7,522.9	0.0	19,477.6	23,053.1	50,053.6