

**State of Alaska
FY2016 Governor Amended Operating
Budget**

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

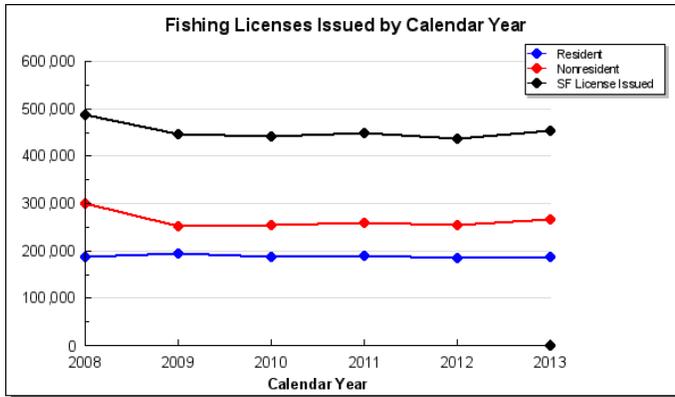
Sport Fisheries Results Delivery Unit

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>.)



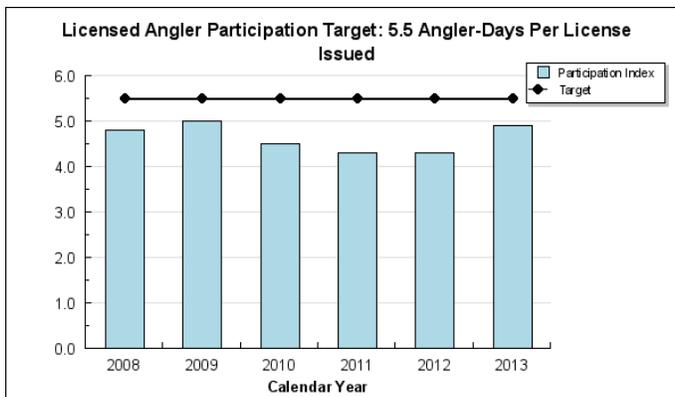
Core Services

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

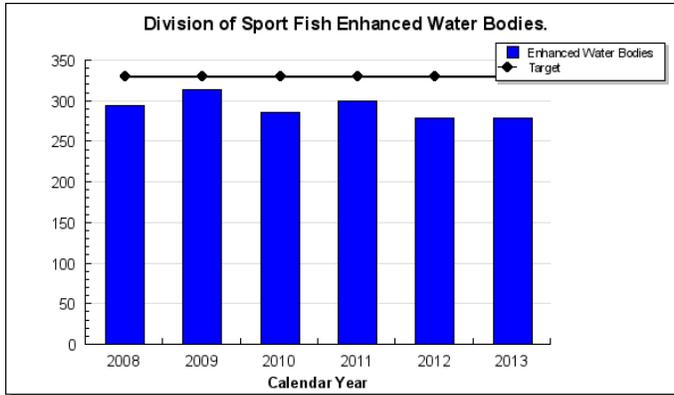
Measures by Core Service

(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 recreational fisheries.



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



Major RDU Accomplishments in 2014

Fisheries Management:

- Implemented four regional and 21 area specific regulatory measures inseason to ensure sustainability and management objectives were met.
- Management staff assumed the supervision and daily operation of the Southeast Alaska Marine Creel Program.
- Participated in over 50 events across Southeast Alaska in which 3,200 participants were provided angling instruction. Produced video for instructing anglers on legal shellfish gear in Southeast Alaska.
- Finalized the format of the 2014 Southeast, Southwest, Kodiak and Northern (formerly AYK) Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary to decrease confusion of anglers attempting to comply with sport fishing regulations.
- Improved salmon forecasts; assisted with inseason management decisions for select stocks; and ensured actions were taken in a timely manner.
- Area managers conducted creel and escapement index surveys to ascertain run strength; tracked subsistence, commercial, and recreational harvests; and produced inseason abundance estimates to ensure sustainable fish populations and sport allocations were achieved in 2014.
- Initiated permit process to investigate in-water treatments to control an invasive marine invertebrate.
- Implemented the "non-pelagic rockfish" Release at Depth Communication Plan required for public presentations; made numerous personal contacts at area offices; and updated the printed and web page content that addressed this issue.
- Completion and release by information and education staff of the "How to Fish for Arctic Grayling" video on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) website.
- Lower than average Chinook salmon runs resulted in sport fisheries restrictions and closures in a number of streams throughout Cook Inlet, Kodiak and Western Alaska. Appropriate management actions were taken. Conversely, some sockeye and Coho salmon sport fisheries were liberalized (e.g., bag limits were increased).
- Continued intensive capture and removal of invasive northern pike throughout Alexander Creek; obtained Alaska Board of Fisheries consent and appropriate permits to eradicate invasive pike from the Soldotna Creek watershed.
- Continued partnership with federal, tribal, state, and local organizations to educate the public about invasive species; and increased interest by stakeholders resulted in better statewide communication and coordination to address invasive species threats.
- Initiate invasive species training for field staff of natural resource agencies and organizations.

Fisheries Research:

- Publication of the Chinook News, Vol. 1 that provided a statewide perspective of issues facing Chinook salmon management and research in a period of low abundance.
- Research projects were reviewed under the revised Operational Planning Policy, including full biometric review to ensure appropriate study design, methods, and analyses for both fisheries divisions.

- Technical peer reviews and publication of 16 Regional Operational Plans, and publication of 65 reports authored by division staff in the ADF&G Sport/Commercial Fisheries reporting series in calendar year 2012-2013.
- Initiated a new Coho coded-wire-tagging project on Cowee Creek north of Juneau; an important sport fishery on the Juneau roadside with very little information about stock status.
- Production-level use of new sonar technology (ARIS) implemented for inseason 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 ARIS to measure total Chinook salmon abundance.
- Research biologists captured and marked Susitna River Chinook and Coho salmon to estimate inriver abundance and assess spawning distribution.
- Coordinated with the Division of Commercial Fisheries to assess inriver Chinook salmon abundance in the Nushagak River.
- Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim 2014 salmon research included escapement monitoring on the Chena and Gulkana rivers, a juvenile salmon study on the Copper River, and a radio telemetry study of Chinook salmon on the Gulkana River.
- Fish inventory and life history studies conducted in lakes and streams along the proposed Ambler Road Corridor between Bettles and Kobuk.

Fisheries Enhancement:

- Successfully completed the first mid-winter spawning of rainbow trout in the history of the program. This will allow release of large fingerling early in the growing season leading to a more effective stocking program and improved overall lake angling opportunities.
- Conducted several targeted mid-winter fish releases in support of community based fishing events.
- Completed 90% of the identified deferred maintenance projects at Crystal Lake Hatchery near Petersburg.
- Completed clean up, initial repairs, and site preparation for the rebuild of the Crystal Lake Hatchery that was destroyed by fire on March 4, 2014. Acquired initial replacement equipment to ensure timely release of smolts in May, and broodstock collection and incubation in August.
- Completed first saltwater net-pen release of Chinook salmon at City Creek near Petersburg.

Recreational Boating and Angler Access:

- The Recreational Boating and Angler Access program managed 22 active, on-going projects that will benefit angler access.
- The Boating Access Program completed nine boating access capital projects: Klawock Harbor Restroom Facility (Klawock – RI); Cooper Landing Ramp Repair (Cooper Landing – RII); Bings Landing Dock Renovation (Sterling – RII); Steese Highway/Birch Creek Boat Launch (Fairbanks - RIII); False Island Mooring Float (Craig – RI); Hoonah Boat Ramp Rehabilitation (Hoonah - RI); Southeast Fish Cleaning Facilities (Southeast – RI); and two clean vessel act projects, one located in Wrangell Harbor (RI), and one in Haines Harbor (RI).
- Partnered with regional NGO to procure land in Juneau that provides another opportunity for angler access to Gastineau Channel near DIPAC fish hatchery.
- Provided sanitary facilities at the Fish Creek angler access site in Juneau, and at the Neck Lake angler access site in Whale Pass.

Information and Education Services:

- Developed and installed information and outreach materials for the Fisheries Centers at the Ruth Burnett and William Jack Hernandez sport fish hatcheries, and guided public tours at both facilities.
- Area office and regional Information Center staff continued delivery of high quality customer service by providing information to the angling public on recreational fishing in Alaska including fishing tips, information on regulations and inseason management actions, results of research projects, and public access.
- Education programs reached thousands of participants and included the following: Salmon in the Classroom; Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW); Beyond BOW; and Alaska Conservation Camp (ACC).
- Developed and instructed curricula for fisheries technician classes at a Juneau-area high school.

Fish Habitat:

- Staff worked with partner agencies to establish the Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership formally recognized as the 18th Fish Habitat Partnership through the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP).

- Staff actively participated and contributed to project reviews related to timber harvest planning and habitat restoration efforts.
- Coordinated planning and work conducted by various regional habitat partnerships around the state that were created under the NFHAP.
- Reservation of water applications for fish habitat were completed and submitted for adjudication on 20 waterbodies in FY2014.
- Bank restoration projects were conducted, resulting in 2,407 feet of riverbank and riparian habitat rehabilitated in FY2014.
- The anadromous waters catalog and atlas were updated with 192 miles of new waterbodies in FY2014.
- Four restoration projects improved fish passage to 11.9 miles of priority-catalogued fish habitat in FY2014.

Workforce Support:

- Implemented high school summer internship program for two students that will transition into college internship opportunities and part of a larger intern program in Southeast Alaska.

Key RDU Challenges**Overview:**

- Despite fluctuating revenues, maintain the goal of the Division of Sport Fish to sustain recreational fishing opportunities while optimizing social and economic benefits to Alaska
- Provide and improve customer service and efficiency by implementation of licensing modernization (myADFG) and electronic harvest reporting projects.
- Absorb salary increases despite unrealizable revenue sources in the Sport Fish Restoration, Dingell-Johnson (DJ) and Fish and Game funds.

Fisheries Management:

- Revise regulations for sport fishing guide and guide business registration due to statute requiring licensing of guides and guide businesses sunsets on January 1, 2015.
- Low abundance of adult Chinook salmon persists throughout Southcentral, Southwestern, and Interior Alaska, requiring managers to apply restrictions and closures to provide for spawning escapement.
- Demersal Shelf and Yelloweye rockfish sport fisheries affected by North Pacific Fisheries Management Council actions.
- Reduced budgets have left one Area Management Biologist (AMB) position vacant in Lower Cook Inlet and prompted restructuring of area management staff.
- Limited staff and fiscal resources have resulted in less department presence in management areas of the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region.

Fisheries Research:

- Design and develop electronic, internet-based approaches for sport fishing guide/guide business registration and logbooks; and distribution and reporting harvest data for large personal use fisheries.
- Continue improvements to data collection, analysis, and reporting of charter logbook information and other angler catch and harvest information.
- Implement electronic data capture in the Southeast Alaska marine harvest studies program to improve efficiencies and minimize errors.
- Obtain updated economic and user interest/effort information related to pursuit of recreational fisheries in Alaska.
- Revise current and create new assessment projects to better understand statewide productivity and abundance trends of Chinook salmon.
- Additional reliance on grant funds comes with additional accounting and reporting requirements, which increases the workload on research and administrative staff.
- Revenue declines have reduced, eliminated, or prohibited population assessment projects for groundfish, and freshwater-resident species.

Fisheries Enhancement:

- Maintain consistent angling opportunities from both anadromous and lake stocking projects.
- Continue to build angler effort and participation focused on enhanced fisheries throughout the state.
- Maintain base fish production under revenue decline.

- Establish active public and private support to develop displays and operate Fisheries Centers at the Ruth Burnett and William Jack Hernandez sport fish hatcheries.
- Develop and initiate coded-wire tagging of Chinook salmon smolts to be stocked in Deception and Crooked Creeks, and the Ninilchik River; to improve assessment of these stocking programs and determine trends in Chinook salmon marine survival.
- Complete the rebuild of the Crystal Lake Hatchery structures destroyed by fire in 2014. Maintain base fish production for this hatchery program using temporary structures.

Recreational Boating and Angler Access:

- Timely completion of boating and angler access projects may be hindered due to decreased DJ funds, increased construction and maintenance costs, and difficulties in obtaining the 25% non-federal match requirement from cooperating agencies.

Information and Education Services:

- Inform the public about Alaska's recreational fishing opportunities, angler access, regulations, and fisheries management in a timely manner.
- Develop public outreach projects at the Fisheries Centers located at the two new hatcheries through partnerships and submission of grant proposals.
- Declining budgets have reduced or eliminated educational fishery programs in the schools.

Fish Habitat:

- Effective coordination and communication with other state agencies, federal and local government, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and stakeholders to address aquatic habitat concerns and issues in fish and non-fish bearing waters.
- 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.
- Maintain riparian habitat restoration cost share programs.

Workforce Support:

- Maintain an effective workforce through necessary progressive training opportunities given chronic fiscal constraints.
- Knowledge transfer and mentoring while planning for pending retirements.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2016**Overview:**

- The "Division of Sport Fish Strategic Plan" is in the process of being revised in FY15, the current copy can be found at: (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/fishing/PDFs/sport/StrategicPlan2010Final.pdf>). This guides division efforts to identify priority issues; annually develop, assess, and monitor programs to address those issues; and improve fiscal planning and accountability to ensure fiscal responsibility for the next 5 years. The division will prioritize activities based on the strategic plan and eliminate projects that are of lower priority or less essential to achieving mission and core services during this period of fluctuating revenues.
- Increase research efforts to improve assessment of Chinook salmon returns to the Kenai, Susitna, Nushagak, and Karluk rivers.
- Improve Coho salmon assessment on the Susitna River and other Matanuska-Susitna Borough streams.
- Complete transition to upstream Chinook salmon escapement enumeration site on the Kenai River.

Fisheries Management:

- Management actions of Southeast Alaska fishery resources to ensure opportunities for upcoming generations.
- Utilize upriver sonar information for management of Kenai River Chinook salmon.
- Begin northern pike eradication program for a tributary of the Kenai River.
- Review and evaluate management areas and stock assessment projects to develop strategies and plans to ensure availability of fisheries resources into the future given current fiscal climate.
- Change the format of the 2015 Southcentral Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary to decrease confusion for anglers wanting to comply with sport fishing regulations.

Fisheries Research:

- Publication of Chinook News, Vol. 2 focusing on Chinook salmon research efforts funded by the Chinook Salmon Research Initiative.
- Augment research efforts on Chinook salmon stocks in Southeast Alaska through comprehensive indicator stock assessment programs.
- Increase research efforts on Juneau's important roadside fisheries to improve management and fishing opportunities for anglers in a highly populated area.
- Implement electronic logbook pilot program for freshwater guide logbooks on the Kenai River, data capture in marine harvest studies and for permit issuance and harvest reporting of personal use fisheries.
- Continue focused research efforts to improve assessment of Chinook salmon indicator stocks statewide as part of the Chinook Salmon Research Initiative.
- Assess how research projects address management needs on a statewide basis.

Fisheries Enhancement:

- Evaluate angler participation trends related to enhanced fisheries and adjust stocking program to optimize participation.
- Development of a genetics management program to ensure long-term viability of both captive and wild Sport Fish enhancement program broodstock.
- Finalize construction and upgrades of the Crystal Lake Hatchery and ensure permanent backup power generation.
- Establish active community support to furnish and operate the Tanana Valley (Fairbanks) and Ship Creek (Anchorage) Fisheries Centers at the Ruth Burnett and William Jack Hernandez sport fish hatcheries.

Recreational Boating and Angler Access:

- Work with local government agencies to assess current needs and develop plans for future projects.

Information and Education:

- Produce products to educate and inform sport anglers on best practices for catch and release.
- Identify areas that anglers would benefit from a video on how to effectively and legally participate in specific fisheries.

Fish Habitat:

- Continued engagement with the USFWS and partner affiliations related to current habitat restoration and effectiveness monitoring taking place in several locations throughout Southeast Alaska on the Tongass National Forest.

Workforce Support:

- Full implementation of a transitional internship program in Southeast Alaska that leads to advanced degree opportunities at the UAF/UAS.
- Develop strategy to reprogram existing staff to fill in gaps resulting from retirements and resignations.

Contact Information
<p>Contact: Thomas E. Brookover, Acting Director Phone: (907) 465-6184 Fax: (907) 465-2772 E-mail: tom.brookover@alaska.gov</p>

**Sport Fisheries
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2014 Actuals				FY2015 Management Plan				FY2016 Governor Amended			
	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	6,942.0	16,945.4	13,314.6	37,202.0	6,687.5	19,012.6	17,127.8	42,827.9	5,987.1	19,775.7	16,764.5	42,527.3
Sport Fish	1,774.0	188.4	3,432.4	5,394.8	330.9	256.0	5,387.2	5,974.1	320.4	256.9	5,417.4	5,994.7
Hatcheries												
Unallocated	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reduction												
Totals	8,716.0	17,133.8	16,747.0	42,596.8	7,018.4	19,268.6	22,515.0	48,802.0	6,307.5	20,032.6	22,181.9	48,522.0

Sport Fisheries
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2015 Management Plan to FY2016 Governor Amended

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>
FY2015 Management Plan	7,018.4	0.0	19,268.6	22,515.0	48,802.0
One-time items:					
-Sport Fisheries	-538.5	0.0	-500.0	0.0	-1,038.5
Adjustments which continue current level of service:					
-Sport Fisheries	361.9	0.0	1,263.1	-363.3	1,261.7
-Sport Fish Hatcheries	4.2	0.0	0.9	30.2	35.3
Proposed budget decreases:					
-Sport Fisheries	-523.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	-523.8
-Sport Fish Hatcheries	-14.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	-14.7
FY2016 Governor Amended	6,307.5	0.0	20,032.6	22,181.9	48,522.0