

# FEDERAL AID INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
PO Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

## Alaska Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Restoration Grant

**GRANT NUMBER:** AKW-20 Wildlife Restoration FY2017

**PROJECT NUMBER:** 23.0

**PROJECT TITLE:** Alaska Wildlife Coordination

**PROJECT DURATION:** 1 July 2016 – 30 June 2017

**REPORT DUE DATE:** 28 September 2017

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Brenda Bowers

**WORK LOCATION:** Statewide

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### **I. PROGRESS ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES DURING LAST SEGMENT**

OBJECTIVE 1: Supervise and administer the Division of Wildlife Conservation's Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration program.

OBJECTIVE 2: Submit annual and multi-year contract documents with supporting documentation when they are due.

OBJECTIVE 3: Assure publication of project reports in conformance with federal aid guidelines.

OBJECTIVE 4: Division operations are maintained for its 22 locations statewide.

Objective 5: Assures hunter access and defends state users' rights to huntable lands.

### **II. SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON JOBS IDENTIFIED IN ANNUAL PLAN THIS PERIOD**

#### **Summary of Accomplishments:**

1. We supervised 230 (175 full-time and 55 seasonal) staff members supported all or in part by Wildlife Restoration funding.
2. We managed 73 Wildlife Restoration/State Wildlife Grant/ESA projects in the state with a total Federal Aid/State matching budget of \$33,339,290.83, involving research, planning, management, survey and inventory, coordination/support and hunter education.

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3. These projects benefited over 161,903 hunting and trapping license buyers and 23,821 big game tags were sold (Jul 1, 2016 – Jun 30, 2017 data).
4. We improved and updated project tracking and summary spreadsheets, summarized wildlife captures and collections for USFWS compliance review, and updated project budgets in ADF&G's internal budgeting database.
5. We reviewed goals, objectives and procedures for the following FY17 projects and programs: 25 Management projects (15 S&I and 10 Coordination & Support) 28 Research projects, 3 Hunter Education Enhancement and Hunter Information and Training
6. Alaska's HIT program is expected to result in safer, better informed, and more prepared resource users. Hunting- and firearm-related accidents and incidents are expected to be reduced, along with game violations. Ethical and responsible hunting behaviors are expected to increase. The hunting community will benefit from these ethical and responsible behaviors because of the improved perception of hunters, and the continuation of hunting as a legitimate activity. The general public will benefit from hunter adherence to game laws because of the perseverance of healthy and well-distributed wildlife populations to view, harvest, and otherwise enjoy. Most notably, Alaska's wildlife will benefit through their conservation and the conservation of their habitats.
7. We worked with USFWS Federal Aid staff closely to improve Wildlife Restoration grant submissions, annual work plans, project statements, and performance reporting, and grant compliance with 2 CFR 200.
8. The Access Defense (A-D) program within the Division of Wildlife Conservation, advocates for the conservation of wildlife habitats and populations, and for public access for hunters, through reviews of federal, state and borough land use and disposal authorizations. During FY2017, the federal aid program contributed over 41% of the funding for this work. During the reporting period, we reviewed and provided comment on approximately 248 land use permits, leases, land sales, plats, easement vacations, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act conveyances (with 17(b) easements), native allotments, and municipal entitlements. Staff provided information on wildlife habitats and populations, and public use, and management recommendations for three State management plans (North Slope, Copper River Basin and Kachemak Bay State Park). In addition, A-D staff provided support to the Alaska Departments of Natural Resources (DNR) and Law (DOL) in asserting ownership of the beds of navigable waters. We continued working in support of quiet title cases with the federal government, including Mosquito Fork and Stikine River (cases completed during the fiscal year) and the Knik River. We also provided information for numerous Recordable Disclaimer of Interest applications, including

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the George, Eek, Arolik, Kisaralik, and Goodnews Rivers. In addition, staff worked with DNR to develop field protocols for measuring hydrologic features to support navigability assertions (e.g., work on West Fork/Dennison Fork rivers). In addition, A-D staff continued to support the State's cases defending its claim to RS 2477 Rights-of-way (ROW) that have direct implications for hunter access and potential effects to ADF&G management of wildlife. Ongoing cases include the Klutina Lake Road RS2477 ROW and two cases in the Fortymile region.

A-D staff fielded numerous public inquiries addressing potential restrictions to public access (trails and water bodies). We researched potential hunter access improvement projects, including the Maud Road Extension and the Watermelon Trail in southcentral Alaska, and we developed initial components for a potential hunter access program, should funding become available.

The A-D program also worked with land conservation organizations (e.g., The Conservation Fund and Great Land Trust) to conserve valuable wetland habitats through participation in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Coastal Wetlands Conservation program and the U.S. Army Corps. of Engineers Compensatory Wetlands Mitigation program.

9. The division published a total of approximately 60 area specific species management reports ("unit" reports), wildlife research reports and other types of reports within its technical reports categories in FY17. Additionally, division staff authored or coauthored approximately 12 technical/scientific or professional articles that related to management or research activities funded by Federal Aid. The division also produces a wide variety of informational and educational materials related to management and research efforts funded by Federal Aid. Approximately 34 online articles, brochures, newsletters and other informational and educational materials published in FY17 were entered into the division's Wildlife Publications Database (WPD). A total of about 1,200 new item records for all types of publications, including newly published and historical, were entered into the WPD in FY17 as part of the division's effort to create a bibliography of division works that is available to the public via a search interface to the database on the department website. The bibliography effort also includes a process of discovery to locate citations of works produced by division staff that are not already listed in the database, occasional scanning of print copies and processing of PDFs to create an electronic version of an historical report, refinement of the database fields and tagging, and other activities.
10. The previous federal aid coordinator drafted and saved the FY2017 projects into the Division's shared drive, but they were not loaded into the WildTRACS system. They were submitted to USFWS R7 in May of 2017, as will subsequent projects throughout the year.
11. The Federal Aid Coordinator will sit as one of two state's representatives to the national TRACS working group beginning Fall 2017.

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**Trainings:**

As a new employee of DWC, there were no trainings completed as of the FY17 reporting deadline.

**Prepared by: Brenda Bowers, Federal Aid Coordinator**

**Date:** November 28, 2017