

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-10 Wildlife Restoration FY2016

PROJECT NUMBER: 23.0

PROJECT TITLE: Alaska Wildlife Coordination

PROJECT DURATION: 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016

REPORT DUE DATE: 28 September 2016

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Nathan Soboleff

WORK LOCATION: Statewide

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 94 Wildlife Restoration/State Wildlife Grant/ESA projects in the state with a total Federal Aid/State matching budget of \$32,427,324.36, involving research, planning, management, survey and inventory, coordination/support and hunter education.

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3. These projects benefited over 155,410 hunting and trapping license buyers and 19,461 big game tags were sold (Jan 1, 2015 – Dec 31, 2015 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 FY16 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.
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 FY2016, the federal aid program contributed over 40% of the funding for this work. During the reporting period, we reviewed and provided comment on approximately 250 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 and Law 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; and also provided information for numerous Recordable Disclaimer of Interest applications, including the Kobuk, Fortymile, and Noatak 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

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- potential restrictions to public access (trails and water bodies). We researched potential hunter access improvement projects, including the Pinochle and Watermelon Trails in southcentral Alaska and trailhead locations along the Taylor Highway within the interior region. The A-D program also worked with in-lieu fee providers (e.g., The Conservation Fund and Great Land Trust) to conserve valuable wetland habitats through participation in the interagency review teams (IRT) established by the Army Corps. of Engineers compensatory mitigation program.
9. The division published a total of approximately 53 area specific species management reports (“unit” reports) and wildlife research reports within its technical reports categories in FY16. 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. Item records for approximately 32 online articles, brochures, newsletters and other informational and educational materials published in FY16 were entered into the database.
 10. We loaded our FY2016 projects into the WildTRACS system and submitted them to USFWS R7 in May of 2015, and through out the rest of the year.
 11. The Federal Aid Coordinator sits as one of two state’s representatives to the national TRACS working group.

Trainings:

Attended PacWest WSFR Coordinators’ Conference Lake Tahoe, Nevada October 5-9, 2015

Completed Advanced Grants Management Training at NCTC Shepherds Town West Virginia October 19-22, 2015

Prepared by: Nathan Soboleff, Federal Aid Coordinator

Date: September 27, 2016