

**Wildlife Restoration OPERATING GRANT
FINAL 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-23

PROJECT NUMBER : 21.0

PROJECT TITLE: Public and Hunter Services and Information

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

REPORT DUE DATE: Sept 1, 2018

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Kristen Romanoff – Wildlife Education Outreach
Riley Woodford – Information Officers
Management Coordinators – Frontline Staff

COOPERATORS:

Authorities: [2 CFR 200.328](#)
[2 CFR 200.301](#)
[50 CFR 80.90](#)

I. PROGRESS ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES DURING PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

OBJECTIVE 1: Wildlife Education & Outreach (referred to as regional specialists) provide critical communication, education and outreach about Alaska's wildlife resources to the general public.

Job 1: Connect people to wildlife to:

- a. Generate and strengthen people's connection with the natural environment and promote responsible hunting, trapping, viewing, and appreciation for wildlife.
- b. Promote awareness of the different ways people value and use wildlife and encourage tolerance towards different wildlife values and uses.
- c. Teach people how to stay safe and act responsibly to minimize problems with wildlife.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: All regional specialists gave presentations to the public about wildlife management and research topics such as: small game hunting and habitats, big game hunting, beaver trapping, tracking and trailing game animals, Alaska hares, brown and black bears, wolves, and ungulates.

- RII and RIV specialists coordinated speakers and promote *Wildlife Wednesday Winter Lecture Series* focused on wildlife research/management in Alaska, attended by approx. 200 at each lecture in Anchorage and 40-50 people in Wasilla.
- All regional and statewide education/outreach staff instructed wildlife and conservation related activities at multi-day youth camps including: Anchorage- Outdoor Youth Days, Outdoor Week, Water Discovery Days; Juneau- ADF&G/4-H AK Experience Camp and Boy Scout Camp; Fairbanks- Camp Habitat; Kotzebue -Onion Portage Caribou Collaring; Nome- Bering Strait Bioblitz; Palmer- Trailside Discovery, Knik Arm Culture Camp.
- RI, II and IV specialists gave wildlife safety presentations at community events/venues including: Anchorage- Alaska Zoo, Alaska Native Heritage Center, Sportsman's Show, Alaskan Lifestyle Expo, Regional Hospital, Campbell Creek Science Center, Eagle Valley Nature Center, Fairview Recreation Center, Fort Richardson, King Career Center, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, BP, BIA, REI and AK Mill & Feed; Juneau- STEM Community Night, Fall Festival, CBJ Lunch & Learn; Palmer/Wasilla Search & Rescue, Alaska Bible College, and Women of Science reaching approximately 1,500.
- Region I, II and IV specialists worked with seasonal staff and community volunteers to provide wildlife safety presentations to elementary and middle school students in Anchorage, Palmer/Wasilla and Juneau; reaching approximately 10,000 students.
- Region III specialist provided wildlife safety training to department staff, four sessions.
- RIII specialist and program coordinator serve on the department's Wildlife Safety Working Group.
- Regional II & III specialists provided bear and moose safety information via television and radio interviews.
- RI and RII specialists produced bear safety/awareness messages for radio broadcasts in southeast and southcentral Alaska.
- Regional specialists and Project WILD coordinator maintained & distributed wildlife kits (skulls, furs, birds, tracks, trail cameras) to schools and education centers.
- RI, II, III, RIV, RV attend community events & distributed wildlife related information and provide activities for the general public. Events attended include: Anchorage- Great Alaska Sportsman Show, Autumn Wings Festival, Water Discovery Days, Potter Marsh Discovery Day, Christmas Bird Count, National Public Lands Day, Health Fair and World Migratory Bird Day.; Palmer/Wasilla- AK Healthy Lifestyles Expo, AK Ag. Day, Mat-Su Outdoor Show, Transportation Day, and Fun on the Flats Day at Palmer Hay Flats State Wildlife Refuge.
- Region I, II and III specialists served on department Facebook committee. ADF&G views and posts shared have expanded exponentially reaching tens of thousands of people annually. FB posts are picked up by local newspapers to run articles in the Anchorage Daily News, Juneau Empire and Fairbanks Daily News Miner.

- RV specialist administered a new regional Facebook page to highlight wildlife management and research topics relevant to rural communities in western/northwestern Alaska.
- All regional specialists provided publications, posters, and brochures to area offices and assisted information center staff respond to inquiries relating to the wildlife management, hunting, wildlife sightings and wildlife biology.
- Project WILD Coordinator manages professional development program for educators using Growing Up WILD (early childhood), Project WILD and the Alaska Wildlife Curriculum (AWC- grades K-12). Coordinator recruits/trains volunteers/staff to facilitate workshops, develops thematic-based workshops, manages graduate-level credits through University of Alaska, and provides registration/planning/promotion support to regional specialists who provide in-person workshops and webinars.
- RI, II, RIII, and Project WILD Coordinator presented at professional conferences providing DWC resources and the Alaska Wildlife Curriculum at: the Alaska Association for the Education of Young Children (Anchorage and Juneau), Alaska Afterschool Network Conference (Anchorage), and University of Alaska MAT Program and Cross Content Conference (Fairbanks).

Job 2: Build support for wildlife conservation, management, and research

- a. Improve public understanding of the interrelatedness of ecosystems, habitat and sustainable populations of wildlife.
- b. Improve public understanding of wildlife management principles and promote public support for DWC wildlife management and research efforts.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- All regional specialists gave presentations to the public about wildlife management and research topics such as: small game hunting and habitats, big game hunting, beaver trapping, tracking and trailing game animals, Alaska hares, brown and black bears, wolves, caribou and moose.
- All regional and statewide education/outreach staff instructed wildlife and conservation related activities at multi-day youth camps including: Anchorage- Outdoor Youth Days, Outdoor Week, Water Discovery Days; Juneau- ADF&G/4-H AK Experience Camp and Boy Scout Camp; Fairbanks- Camp Habitat; Kotzebue -Onion Portage Caribou Collaring; Nome- Bering Strait Bioblitz; Palmer- Trailside Discovery, Knik Arm Culture Camp.
- RII and RIV specialists coordinated speakers and promoted *Wildlife Wednesday Winter Lecture Series* focused on wildlife research/management in Alaska, attended by approx. 200 at each lecture in Anchorage and 40-50 people in Wasilla.
- All regional specialists produced publications for regional and/or statewide distribution and statewide coordinator reviews/edits all projects including: RIII- *Porcupine Herd Update, Bison Hunter Orientation Packets & ID Guide*; RII, RIII & RIV- *Dall's Sheep News, Dall's Sheep Hunting Guide*; RV- *Game Management Regulations in Units 22, 23, 26A* posters; **Statewide-** *Wood Bison*

News, Field Dressing Big Game Animals, Alaska's Wild Wonders- a magazine for kids, and a variety of articles for the department's online magazine *Alaska Fish & Wildlife News*.

- All regional specialists and statewide coordinator completed content review of sections (living with wildlife, education, events and selected hunting pages- moose and sheep hunting) on department website and updated/developed content.
- All regional specialists and statewide coordinator contributed to the production of *Is this moose legal*, a new version of a popular twenty-year old video.
- RIV specialist developed a short video about the moose cow circle- illustrating how cows add to the moose population and encourage hunters to take only legal bulls.
- RV specialist is a member of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group and serves as the chair of the education/outreach committee. Coordinated a multi-tiered outreach plan, produced the annual *Caribou Trails* newsletter and managed the working group's website.
- RI, RIII, RIV, RV specialists coordinated *Sharing the Trails* workshop- a partnership w/ the Alaska Trapper's Association to meet w/ pet-owners and demonstrate how to safely remove pets from traps and to learn about Alaska's trapping heritage.
- Project WILD Coordinator and regional specialists facilitated Project WILD and Alaska Wildlife Curriculum workshops including: traditional Growing Up WILD, Project WILD/AWC and thematic workshops (e.g., Predator/Prey Population Dynamics, Conserving Habitats, Engaging Students in the Outdoors, Alaska's Animals, Wood Bison in Alaska). 12 workshops in nine communities reaching approximately 430 teachers.

Job 3: Promote awareness of Alaska wildlife law.

- a. Empower people to engage and participate in the decision-making processes regarding wildlife and issues that affect the welfare of wildlife populations.
- b. Improve public understanding of and compliance with wildlife laws, and hunting and trapping regulations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Region IV specialist developed a program to engage high school students in Wasilla and Dillingham to learn about and participate in the Alaska Board of Game regulatory process.
- Region I, II and IV specialists worked with seasonal staff and community volunteers to provide wildlife safety presentations to elementary and middle school students in Anchorage, Palmer/Wasilla and Juneau; reaching approximately 10,000 students.
- All regional specialists and Project WILD Coordinator attend community events & distributed wildlife related information and regulations, while providing activities for the public. Events attended include: Anchorage- Great Alaska Sportsman Show, Autumn Wings Festival, Water Discovery Days, Potter Marsh Discovery Day, Christmas Bird Count, National Public Lands Day, Health Fair

and World Migratory Bird Day; Palmer/Wasilla- AK Healthy Lifestyles Expo, AK Ag. Day, Mat-Su Outdoor Show, Transportation Day, and Fun on the Flats Day at Palmer Hay Flats State Wildlife Refuge.

- Regional II & III specialists provide bear and moose safety information via television and radio interviews.
- RI and RII produce bear safety/awareness messages for radio broadcasts in southeast and southcentral Alaska.
- RIII specialist contributed to an interagency “Hunter Ethics Roundtable” to improve hunter compliance with wildlife laws in rural Alaska.
- All regional specialists produced publications for regional and/or statewide distribution and statewide coordinator edited all projects including: RIII- *Porcupine Herd Update, Bison Hunter Orientation Packets & ID Guide*; RII, RIII & RIV- *Dall’s Sheep News, Dall’s Sheep Hunting Guide*; RV- *Game Management Regulations in Units 22, 23, 26A* posters; **Statewide-** *Wood Bison News, Field Dressing Big Game Animals, Alaska’s Wild Wonders-* a magazine for kids, and a variety of articles for department online magazine, *Alaska Fish & Wildlife News*.
- All regional specialists contributed to the production of *Is this moose legal?* video- a new version of a twenty-year old.
- RV specialist is a member of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group and served as the chair of the education/outreach committee. Coordinated a multi-tiered outreach plan, produces the annual *Caribou Trails* newsletter, and managed the working group’s website. Outreach included regulations background, harvest reporting, meat salvage, etc.
- RV specialist coordinated “meet with your area biologist” using video-conferencing by the OWL Network at libraries throughout rural Alaska.
- RI, RII, RIII, RIV specialists coordinated *Sharing the Trails* workshop- a partnership w/ the Alaska Trapper’s Association to meet w/ pet-owners and demonstrate how to safely remove pets from traps and to learn about Alaska’s trapping heritage and regulations.
- RV specialist coordinated student participation in Onion Portage Caribou Collaring project. Participants involved directly in research project and also learn about herd management & importance of compliance w/ regulations.
- All specialists and Project WILD Coordinator disseminated Alaska Wildlife Curriculum at workshops and on the department’s website. All 5 volumes address engagement in wildlife conservation & management.

OBJECTIVE 2: Frontline Staff serve as an initial contact point and provide a broad array of wildlife-related information and services to diverse members of the public who visit or contact the regional information centers in Douglas, Anchorage, Palmer, and Fairbanks.

Job/Activity a: Maintain, staff, and operate division information centers in regional offices, in some area offices, and cooperatively in interagency information centers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Job/Activity a): Maintain, staff, and operate division information centers in regional offices, in some area offices, and cooperatively in interagency information centers.

Region I maintained, staffed, and operated public service counters at the Region I Information Center/Douglas Area Office and the Craig, Ketchikan, Petersburg, and Sitka offices throughout the entire reporting period. Assistance to the public was also provided seasonally at three offices: Haines (8 months), Wrangell (11 months), and Yakutat (7.5 months). Frontline staff across the region include three full-time year-round Wildlife Conservation Program Technicians (in Douglas, Ketchikan and Sitka). In the remaining five locations, Program Technicians were shared with other Fish and Game divisions: two full-time year-round (in Craig and Petersburg), and three seasonal (in Haines, Wrangell, and Yakutat). There are no interagency information centers in Region I.

Region II maintained, staffed and operated public service counters in the Cordova, Homer, Kodiak and Soldotna, with one Division Public Information Center in Anchorage. Offices are open Monday-Friday (except State holidays) 12 months a year. Staffing consists of a Wildlife Biologist II, a FWT IV, 2 FWT III's, a college intern, and 4 program technicians. Visitors can purchase hunting and fishing license, apply for permits, report on hunts, and get expert advice on hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing. Staff also explain ongoing research and management projects to the public and collect biological samples while sealing bears, furbearers, sheep, goats, and moose.

Region III maintained, staffed and operated public service counters in the Fairbanks, Delta Junction, and Tok ADF&G offices Monday-Friday (except State holidays) during 12 months. We provided occasional assistance to the public in McGrath. The Galena office was staffed Monday-Friday (except State holidays) during August-November (4 months). This provided facilities for people to buy obtain expert information and advice regarding licenses, tags, permit application processes. Staff accepted reports for registration and Tier II hunts, provided hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing information, regulations booklets and explained regulations, and collecting biological data in conjunction with sealing bears, furbearers, and sheep.

Region IV maintained, staffed, and operated four area offices with one division information center located at the regional office in Palmer. Across the region there is a Program Tech in Dillingham and one in King Salmon, a Program Tech and a FWT IV in Glennallen, and a Project Assistant and two FWT IIIs in Palmer at the Regional office. There are no interagency visitor centers in Region IV.

Job/Activity b): Provide information and services needed to facilitate hunting and trapping including; providing regulations, issuing permits and harvest tickets and recording harvest information, collecting data when sealing bears, furbearers, and sheep, and assisting with license and big game harvest tag sales.

Region I staff facilitated hunting and trapping by educating the public regarding available opportunities; by distributing regulation books and explaining regulations; by issuing harvest tickets and registration permits, and by collecting harvest information such as hunt reports, bear and furbearer sealing data, goat horn data, and moose teeth (for aging) and antler data.

Additionally, staff in the Douglas office sold licenses and big-game locking tags to hunters. Region II provided significant information and services to facilitate hunting and trapping during this reporting period. Staff issued licenses, permits and harvest tickets while conveying and clarifying regulations and the regulatory process. Staff collected harvest information through hunter reports and the sealing of bears, furbearers, goats, moose, and sheep to be used in recommending management strategies. In addition, staff provided services through outreach and presentations at the Great

Alaskan Sportsman Show, bear and wildlife safety classes, Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) events, trapper clinics, and various public presentations. Licenses and big game locking tags are sold at the Anchorage, Soldotna, and Homer offices. Public kiosks for license sales are available in Cordova.

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Region IV provided a significant amount of information and services to facilitate hunting and trapping during this reporting period. Staff issued licenses, permits and harvest tickets while conveying and clarifying regulations and the regulatory process. Staff collected harvest information through hunter reports and the sealing of bears, furbearers, goats, and sheep to inform management strategies. In addition, staff provided services through the Mat-Su Outdoorsman Show, Rotary Club, Alaska Frontier Trappers Association, Great Alaska Sportsman Show, Beaver Round-up, Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW), Fish Expo, trapper clinics, and various public presentations.

Job/Activity c): Answer and direct telephone, internet, and in-person inquiries on wildlife issues from the general public, media, educational institutions, civic and other organizations.

Region I staff answered numerous inquiries – in person and via phone, mail and email – from the general public, media, educational institutions and other organizations regarding wildlife, including: wildlife biology, wildlife safety (particularly with bears and wolves) and preventing or resolving issues with wildlife (particularly with bears and wolves in residential or urban areas). Region II responds to more than 70,000 individuals, institutions, organizations, and media inquiries on wildlife-related issues through direct and indirect contact. The Anchorage wildlife office also responds to more than 1500 emails each year received through the website related to hunting, trapping, and other wildlife issues. Additionally, statewide nuisance and orphan animal reports are processed by Region II staff.

Region III maintained, staffed and operated public service counters in the Fairbanks, Delta Junction, and Tok ADF&G offices Monday–Friday (except State holidays) during 12 months. We provided occasional assistance to the public in McGrath. The Galena office was staffed Monday–Friday (except State holidays) during August–November (4 months). This provided facilities for people to buy obtain expert information and advice regarding licenses, tags, permit application processes. Staff accepted reports for registration and Tier II hunts, provided hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing information, regulations booklets and explained regulations, and collecting biological data in conjunction with sealing bears, furbearers, and sheep.

Region IV maintained, staffed, and operated four area offices with one division information center located at the regional office in Palmer. Across the region there is a Program Tech in Dillingham and

one in King Salmon, a Program Tech and an FWT IV in Glennallen, and a Project Assistant and two FWT IIIs in Palmer at the Regional office. There are no interagency visitor centers in Region IV.

Job/Activity b: Provide information and services needed to facilitate hunting and trapping including; providing regulations, issuing permits and harvest tickets and recording harvest information, collecting data when sealing bears, furbearers, and sheep, and assisting with license and big game harvest tag sales.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS Region III s staff issued licenses, permits and harvest tickets while conveying and clarifying regulations and the regulatory process. Staff collected harvest information through hunter reports and the sealing of bears, furbearers, goats, moose, and sheep to be used in recommending management strategies. needed to facilitate hunting and trapping including providing regulations, issuing permits and harvest tickets and recording harvest information, sealing bears, furbearers, and sheep, and assisting with license and big game harvest tag sales. Staff and services were available in Fairbanks, Delta Junction, and Tok ADF&G offices Monday–Friday (except State holidays) during 12 months. We provided occasional assistance to the public in McGrath. The Galena office was staffed Monday–Friday (except State holidays) during August–November. In addition, staff provided services through outreach and presentations at the Fairbanks Outdoor Show, Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) events, Alaskans Afield, trapper clinics, and various public presentations.

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Job/Activity c: Answer and direct telephone, internet, and in-person inquiries on wildlife issues from the general public, media, educational institutions, civic and other organizations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Region III answered and directed telephone, internet, and in-person inquiries regarding wildlife issues from the general public, media, educational institutions, civic and other organizations Monday–Friday (except State holidays) during 12 months in Fairbanks, Delta Junction, and Tok ADF&G offices. We provided occasional assistance to the public in McGrath. The Galena office was staffed Monday–Friday (except State holidays) during August–November.

Region IV does not have a mechanism to develop accurate counts of public served region-wide, but we estimate that we respond to at least 50,000 individuals, institutions, organizations, and media inquiries on wildlife-related issues through email, postal mail, phone calls, and in-person visits to Area Offices. Thirty thousand of these interactions likely occur in the Regional Info Center in Palmer.

OBJECTIVE 3: Information Officers (IOs) provide public and media an essential point of contact at Fish and Game and are equipped to address a wide range of public needs for information. Information officers also empower ADF&G staff to better serve the public.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: The Division of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) Web Team transfers information from DWC staff to a public audience by posting content on the Alaska Fish and Game website and by building and administering web applications. The information made public in this way includes profiles of wildlife species and their behavior, wildlife viewing locations and strategies, wildlife encounter and conflict avoidance strategies, hunting and trapping outreach, hunting and trapping regulations, wildlife research and management reports, educational publications for children, adults, and public schools, and the results of past and ongoing wildlife research.

Information officers work directly with the public and empower staff to better serve the public in a variety of ways. These include: the development, maintenance and administration of an image library (with 9,000+ images) available to staff for all outreach needs such as presentations, publications, and webpages. Information officers manage the online video channels that enable ADF&G to embed videos on the website and make videos public via Vimeo and You Tube, reaching hundreds of thousands of viewers. Information officers also help staff produce and promote educational videos and other outreach materials, including flyers, newsletters, reports and other print media. Staff in general do not have access to social media for work purposes, information officers do and have the skills to make regulatory information and hunting and angling opportunities accessible and clear to the public via social media platforms. Information officers work with department staff to develop communications plans and public outreach strategies for regional and statewide issues and events; draft and distribute news releases to media and public; serve as division and department spokespersons concerning issues and events pertinent to the department and its constituents; and provide media training to staff, enabling them to better communicate with reporters and ultimately the public. Information officers also help staff navigate multiple requests (about 25/year) from documentary and television producers wanting access to biologists, facilities and wildlife resources.

An information officer serves as editor and publisher of the ADF&G online magazine, *Alaska Fish and Wildlife News*, and articles typically reach 45,000 to 50,000 people each month. An information officer produces the Alaska science and nature radio program, *SoundsWild!* which is broadcast weekly (and in some cases daily) on more than 30 radio stations statewide.

Information officers work directly with the public as well and are contacted dozens of times daily regarding questions, to provide resources, and connecting the media and others with appropriate subject matter experts. Information officers also deliver public presentations, teach classes, and go into schools to teach bear safety, living with wildlife, and hunter education. An information officer manages the inventory of publications – hunting and viewing guides, hunting brochures, bear safety brochures, etc., and distributes these to bookstores, visitor centers and other outlets. Information officers also use a variety of tools to measure the reach and effectiveness of the department's outreach efforts.

III. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT REPORTS AND/OR AMENDMENTS.

IV. PUBLICATIONS

Video: *Is this moose legal?*

All regional specialists provided publications, posters, and brochures to area offices and assisted information center staff respond to inquiries relating to the wildlife management, hunting, wildlife sightings and wildlife biology.

All regional specialists produced publications for regional and/or statewide distribution and statewide coordinator reviews/edits all projects including: RIII-*Porcupine Herd Update, Bison Hunter Orientation Packets & ID Guide*; RII, RIII & RIV- *Dall's Sheep News, Dall's Sheep Hunting Guide*; RV- *Game Management Regulations in Units 22, 23, 26A* posters; **Statewide-Wood Bison News, Field Dressing Big Game Animals, Alaska's Wild Wonders-** a magazine for kids, and a variety of articles for the department's online magazine *Alaska Fish & Wildlife News*.

RIV specialist developed a short video about the moose cow circle- illustrating how cows add to the moose population and encourage hunters to take only legal bulls.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT We recommend continued funding for this project in order to effectively information and services to the public in the state of Alaska. In the FY19 grant, an amendment removed R3 related activities from this project, effectively ensuring hunter ed eligible activities are now housed in the Hunter Ed grant. We are considering a further revision to remove **OBJECTIVE 2: Frontline Staff** and put it into the regional coordination project as an additional objective or activity.

Additional contributions by : Doreen Parker-McNeil, Todd Rinaldi, Riley Woodford, Karl Wood