

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

**POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SCIENTIFIC PERMITS**

**GENERAL**

Under AS.16.05.050, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation (ADF&G) is the custodian of the wildlife resources of the state. For purposes of this policy, the terms “wildlife” and “game” are interchangeable and mean all species of birds, terrestrial mammals, and reptiles (excluding domestic animals unless they are feral), except species listed in 5 AAC 92.029(b). The definition of game also excludes animals that are lawfully owned under AS 3.05.075, AS 16, or 5 AAC (i.e. privately-owned elk, bison, musk ox, and reindeer). No institution, government agency, organization, or individual may take, import, export, possess, or hold alive any game animal or its parts, gametes, nests, or eggs for scientific purposes without a scientific permit issued by the commissioner. The definition of “take” includes lethal collection, live capture, and activities that will in any manner disturb game animals (AS 16.05.940(34)).

A permit issued under this policy is a privilege and will be issued only to an institution, agency, organization, or individual that meets department requirements as specified below. For federal agencies, this policy may be modified by Memorandums of Understanding between the agencies and ADF&G. Game taken from the wild under a scientific permit may not be used for commercial purposes, private use, or personal consumption. Permits issued under this policy are nontransferable. Falsification of any information on an application, affidavit, or report required by the permit or this policy is grounds for permit revocation and denial of future permit applications.

To receive a permit, individuals must be involved in legitimate research or scientific collecting as described in a formal scientific study plan. To be considered legitimate research, the project must conform to recognized scientific principles and standards and must benefit the state or the resource. Scientific permits will not be issued for transplanting game, controlling predators, or for other management or mitigation purposes except as pilot projects to assess the feasibility of the proposed transplant, control, management, or mitigation action. Such pilot proposals must include a full study plan that describes in detail how the proposed activities will be monitored and the criteria that will be used to measure success or failure. Museums applying to take specimens for scientific reference collections under the “Alaska Department of Fish & Game Specimen Limits for General Scientific Collecting Permits” are exempt from the study plan requirement. Museums wishing to exceed those limits must submit a collecting plan that outlines the museum’s mission and collection objectives and clearly explains why the higher collection limits are required to achieve those objectives.

**Which Activities Require a Scientific Permit?**

All lethal collection of wildlife for scientific purposes requires a scientific permit; using a hunting or trapping license for scientific take of game is not appropriate. All live capture and

handling of wildlife also requires a scientific permit, except migratory birds may be live captured under a valid federal banding or Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) surveillance permit for banding or disease surveillance purposes only. Captured birds may be weighed, measured, and marked with auxiliary markers (excluding telemetry or other datalogger devices). Blood, feather, and swab samples may be collected from captured birds at the time of initial banding or incidental recapture only.

All other activities involving the capture and handling of migratory birds require a permit. In addition, collecting carcasses or parts of game from animals that are found dead requires a scientific salvage permit, except for migratory birds. A federal migratory bird salvage permit is required to salvage birds and feathers; a separate state permit is not required.

### **Examples of Activities Requiring a Permit**

Lethal collection

Live capture (except for banding migratory birds)

Marking or tagging (except banding migratory birds with auxiliary markers other than datalogger devices)

Blood sampling (except blood samples collected from migratory birds at time of banding)

Attachment of telemetry, GPS, datalogger, or other devices

Implants

Injections

Egg collection/clutch manipulation

Captive studies

Breeding of captive animals

Import or export of live animals or eggs

Salvage of game other than migratory birds

Activities that do not require lethal collection or live capture of animals, but that have the potential to disturb the animals being studied may also require a permit. Examples include low-level aerial surveys, nest surveys, use of remote cameras at nest or den sites, and use of baits or lures to attract animals to camera or hair-snare stations. Whether or not a permit will be required depends on the nature and scope of the proposed activities. Please contact the Permits Section to determine if a proposed activity requires a state permit.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

### **General**

All applications for scientific permits, including new applications and requests to renew existing permits, should be submitted on a current application form to the Division of Wildlife Conservation, Permits Section, at least 30 days prior to the start of activities. Application forms may be obtained from the department website or by contacting the Permits Section (see contact information at the end of this document). Please consult the department website annually to ensure the current version of the application form is used. Electronic submission of application materials via email is preferred. A signed hard copy must also be mailed unless materials are submitted via an official government or university email address.

Researchers should carefully consider the sample sizes that are needed to achieve their objectives, particularly if a specific sex or age class is being targeted. All captures count toward the limits specified on the permit, even if the individual cannot be included in the study. For studies involving multiple captures of individuals, the maximum number of potential recaptures for each individual must be specified in the application.

### **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Approval**

All studies that require a state permit and involve handling or lethal collection of game also require review and approval by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Foreign researchers should submit the international equivalent. IACUC review of animal use in research is required by federal law; federal and state agencies are not exempt from compliance with the law.

### **New Permits**

An applicant for a new scientific permit must submit the following:

- (1) A completed application on a current application form. For applicants with multiple projects, a separate project summary must be completed for each discrete project included in the application. The project summary must specify:
  - the proposed date(s) and location(s) of collection
  - the total number of animals of each species to be collected or captured
  - a clear summary of samples to be taken and/or procedures to be performed and the sample size(s).
- (2) A written study plan that identifies:
  - a. the purpose and need for the requested activities,
  - b. achievable research objectives,
  - c. methods and procedures, and
  - d. outcomes and benefits that may accrue from the requested activities.

If an application includes multiple projects, a separate study plan will be required for each discrete project included in the application. (**Note:** an IACUC assurance form is not a study plan and may not be used to fulfill this requirement).

- (3) A copy of a current final IACUC approval must be submitted for each project that involves handling or lethal collection of animals. (**Note:** the title listed on the approval must match the project title listed on the application).

An application will not be considered complete until all required documents have been received in the Permits Section. Once a completed application has been received, it will undergo an initial review by the permit biologist and other appropriate department staff. Within 30 days, the department will approve the permit, deny the permit, or inform the applicant in writing (by email or letter) that additional information is needed to make a final determination. The application will be considered “pending” until all the requested information is received.

### **Renewal of Existing Permits**

All scientific permits will expire on December 31 of the year in which they are issued, except activities involving captive wildlife are authorized through January 31 of the following year. To

continue a project past the expiration date, an application to renew must be submitted to the Permits Section at least 30 days prior to the start of proposed activities. Permits will be renewed only after a report of the previous year's activities has been received by the Permits Section and been accepted as complete. Applicants planning to conduct activities in January should contact the Permits Section no later than December 1 to discuss permit renewal requirements and procedures.

Applicants requesting a simple renewal with no changes to permit conditions should complete Part 1 of the renewal form; those requesting changes to their permit conditions should also complete Part 2. Small changes to sample sizes, species, locations, etc. will be considered minor and will not require additional documentation beyond the description and justification in Part 2. Major changes involve substantially expanding the scope of an existing project or adding an entirely new project to the permit. A study plan will be required in addition to the brief description in Part 2. All applicants must submit a copy of a current IACUC approval that covers any proposed changes.

### **Amendments to the Permit**

A permittee may request an amendment to a scientific or educational permit using the same application form and procedures as for renewing a permit. The department may approve or deny an application for amendment. Unless otherwise specified, amendments remain valid for the duration of the permit and must be attached to the original permit.

## **PERMIT CONDITIONS**

### **Retention of Permit for Inspection**

The permittee and subpermittees must have a copy of the permit (including any amendments) in possession while conducting activities. The permit must be made available for inspection upon request by a representative of the department or a law enforcement officer. The permittee must give authorized representatives of the department and law enforcement officers free and unobstructed access to permit sites and activities at all times. The permittee and subpermittees must provide any assistance or information that a representative or law enforcement officer may reasonably require for monitoring and inspection purposes.

### **Reporting**

An annual permit report for the calendar year is required and must be submitted to the Permits Section by January 31 unless another date is specified on the permit. Reports must be submitted electronically on a form provided by the department (submission on an alternate form is acceptable only if it includes all the required information in a comparable format). If you did not conduct any activities under your permit, you may submit an email to that effect in lieu of the report form.

A report form must be submitted for each discrete project on the permit. The report shall include a brief (one paragraph) progress report summarizing the accomplishments during the calendar year, along with the following information for each individual capture (or recapture): the date and specific location; species, age, and sex of the animal; samples taken and/or procedures

performed; and final disposition. Museums with general collecting permits must also specify the name of the collector. For lethal collection, geographic coordinates (lat/lon), along with the horizontal datum and method (map or GPS), must be provided for each specimen. Nontarget captures and unauthorized mortalities must also be included on the report. Please attach a written explanation of the circumstances, including a description of the steps to be taken to avoid similar incidents in the future.

Copies of all progress and final reports and publications resulting from activities conducted under authority of this permit shall also be submitted to ADF&G. Additional report information may be specified in the permit.

The commissioner will not issue or renew a permit to the permittee or agency until the above reporting requirements are met.

### **Delegation of Authority and Subpermittees**

Permits are issued only to individuals and that person (the primary permittee) assumes full responsibility for ensuring that all permit conditions are met. Generally, permits should be issued to the person with primary responsibility for the project; agency permits will be issued at the highest practical administrative level. Authorities or activities granted under the terms of a scientific permit may be delegated by the primary permittee to one or more subpermittees; only activities that are explicitly authorized by the permit may be delegated. The primary permittee is responsible for the actions of all subpermittees and will incur penalties for any violations committed by subpermittees under his or her authority. All subpermittees must have a copy of the permit in possession while conducting authorized activities. Researchers may conduct their own, independent research as subpermittees on someone else's permit only if their research objectives can be achieved under the terms of the existing permit; collection of additional samples by subpermittees for their own projects is not authorized.

### **Other Permit Conditions**

Scientific permits authorize the taking of game for research purposes only. Collected specimens may not be sold, bartered, or used as food, and may be used only for the purposes specified in the permit.

Research involving migratory birds also requires a federal permit and a state permit is not valid without a corresponding valid federal permit. If permit conditions differ between state and federal permits, the more restrictive conditions apply.

Researchers conducting their activities in a designated state refuge, critical habitat area, or sanctuary may also require a Special Area Permit. More information about these areas, including access and permit requirements can be found online at [www.wildlife.alaska.gov](http://www.wildlife.alaska.gov).

Authorizations granted by the permit may not be exercised contrary to applicable state, federal, municipal, or tribal government laws or regulations. A permit does not authorize activities on state or federal lands or private property without additional written authorization, permission, or permits from the applicable state or federal land manager, landowner, or custodian.

**PERMIT DENIAL OR REVOCATION**

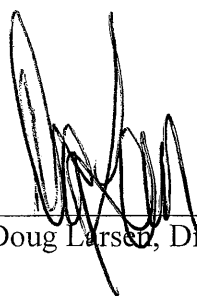
A permit application will be denied if the commissioner determines that the proposed activities: (1) may adversely affect the health, distribution, perpetuation, or human use of wild, native, or propagated stocks or populations of game or the suitability and quantity of wildlife habitat; (2) do not adhere to recognized scientific principles and standards; or (3) will not benefit the state or the resource. If an applicant fails to provide all the documents and information required by this policy, or if the applicant’s justification or study plan is inadequate, the department will notify the applicant of the deficiencies in writing. Failure to remedy the identified deficiencies may also result in denial of an application. Written notice of denial will be given to the applicant, including the reasons for denial.

The department may alter, amend, or revoke a permit if additional information or changed circumstances affect the adequacy of its terms and conditions. A permit may be revoked if (1) the department finds, on the basis of new information or changed circumstances, that the permitted activity will adversely affect a department research or management program, the continued health or perpetuation of native, wild, or propagated stocks or populations of game or their habitat, or existing human use of a game population, or (2) the permittee fails to comply fully with the terms, conditions, or stipulations of the permit, the provisions of this policy, or a regulation promulgated under authority of AS 16.

An applicant has 30 days from the date a permit is revoked or an application is denied to submit a written appeal to the Deputy Director. The appeal must address in detail each reason given for revoking the permit or denying the application. At the Commissioner’s discretion, the Deputy Director’s decision may be reconsidered if the applicant provides new or additional written information that might alter the original decision.

**PERMIT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Email Address: [dfg.dwc.permits@alaska.gov](mailto:dfg.dwc.permits@alaska.gov)  
Mailing Address: Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation, Permits Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
Phone Number: (907) 465-4148  
Webpage: <http://www.wildlife.alaska.gov>

  
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Doug Larsen, Director

11/21/08  
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Date