



Division of Subsistence Overview
Board of Game
January 7, 2015

Mission

To scientifically gather, quantify, evaluate, and report information about customary and traditional uses of Alaska's fish and wildlife resources.

Core Services

- Research, quantify, and disseminate information to the public about customary and traditional uses by Alaskans of fish and wildlife resources.
- Provide scientifically-based information for fisheries and wildlife management programs; and to Board of Fisheries, Board of Game, and Joint Boards of Fisheries and Game for their use to evaluate reasonable opportunities for customary and traditional uses.

Alaska State Law (16.05.094) Directs Division of Subsistence to:

1. Compile existing data and conduct studies to gather existing information, including data from subsistence users, on all aspects of the role of subsistence hunting and fishing in the lives of the residents of the state.
2. Quantify the amount, nutritional value, and extent of dependence on food acquired through subsistence hunting and fishing.
3. Make information gathered available to the public, appropriate agencies, and other organized bodies. Assist the department, the Board of Fisheries and the Board of Game in determining which uses of fish and game, as well as what users and what methods, should be termed subsistence users, uses, and methods.
4. Evaluate the impact of state and federal laws and regulations on subsistence hunting and fishing and, when corrective action is indicated, make recommendations to the department.
5. Make recommendations to the boards of fisheries and game regarding adoption, amendment, and repeal of regulations affecting subsistence fishing and hunting.
6. Participate with other divisions in the preparation of statewide and regional management plans so that those plans recognize and incorporate the needs of subsistence users of fish and game.

Staff

- Subsistence resource specialists with advanced degrees in social sciences (e.g., anthropology, sociology, northern studies); advanced data analysts; division leadership/policymakers.
- Offices in Juneau, Douglas, Anchorage, Dillingham, Fairbanks, Bethel (seasonal), Nome (seasonal).

Methods of Research

- Strong partnerships with local communities, including tribal consultation and local hires.

- All projects follow the ethical principles of the social sciences: fully informed consent, anonymity of participants, and directly informing study communities of research findings.
- Variety of research methods, but keystone is systematic household surveys: door-to-door, and face-to-face; either all households, or representative sample of households in a community.
 - Other components include mapping, local and traditional knowledge interviews with key respondents, and field observation (learning about contemporary subsistence practices by engaging in these activities with subsistence users).
 - Surveys capture harvest amounts, locations, demography (household size, age, gender, ethnicity), cash economy (earned and unearned income), conditions and trends affecting wild resource uses, food security, sharing networks, current harvesting and processing methods.
 - Reported in Community Subsistence Information System (CSIS), primary repository for data: online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/sb/CSIS/
 - Contains data on over 219 communities from over 424 studies: harvest amounts, demography, cash economy, research methods, and sources.
 - Reported in Technical Papers series and Special Publications: more than 400 titles, provides analysis of customary and traditional uses of fish and wildlife, online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications/
 - Samples of surveys available on request; also published as appendices in technical papers.

Regulatory Implementation and Resource Management

- Division data provide the best available information to those charged with implementing state law (such as the subsistence law AS 16.05.258), and with managing state resources (both state and federal):
 - What are appropriate regulations that provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence users?
 - What are “subsistence uses” or “customary and traditional uses” of fish and wildlife?
 - What are the options for finding the amounts reasonably necessary (ANS) for subsistence uses for fisheries stocks and wildlife populations with traditional uses?
 - Where are nonsubsistence areas?

Research Findings: General Themes

- Alaska’s subsistence economy still strong, still interrelated with cash economy:
 - Subsistence hunting and fishing component relies on cash component, and cash component relies on the subsistence component: cash from trapping helps pay for boat motor gas used during subsistence fishing. Cash from commercial fishing helps pay for snowmachine gas for winter hunting.
- Wild foods provide about 295 pounds per person per year for residents of rural areas, and 22 pounds per person per year for residents of urban areas; combined, this is still only about 2% of the total fish and game harvested in Alaska.
- Wild foods contain 28% of caloric requirements for rural Alaskans (assuming 2,250 Kcal/day); and 2% of the requirements for urban Alaskans.

- Assuming replacement expense of \$4.00–\$8.00/pound, one estimate of replacement value of wild food in communities outside nonsubsistence areas is \$147–\$295 million annually (\$201–\$402 million for all Alaska communities).
- For more information, see “Subsistence in Alaska: A Year 2012 Update” online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/home/subsistence/pdfs/subsistence_update_2012.pdf
- See also Technical Paper No. 386 *Report on proposed changes to nonsubsistence areas* (prepared for the Joint Board of Fisheries and Game).

Agency Update for the 2015 Board of Game Cycle

Region I, Southeast (GMUs 1–5)

- Completed comprehensive subsistence surveys in Haines, Hoonah, Angoon, Whale Pass, and Hydaburg (2012 study year).
- Completed comprehensive subsistence survey in Sitka (2013 study year).

Region II, Southcentral (GMUs 6–8, 14C, 15)

- Upcoming comprehensive surveys: Seldovia, Nikiski, Port Graham, Nanwalek, Cordova, Tatitlek, and Chenega Bay (2014 study year).
- Upcoming survey in Tyonek (2013 study year).

Region III, Interior (GMUs 12, 19–21, 24, 25, 26B, 26C)

- Division staff participating in management meetings:
 - Wood Bison Reintroduction Working Group meetings.
 - Fortymile Caribou Harvest Management Coalition meetings.
 - Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission meeting.
 - Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meetings.
- Household surveys in Alatna and Allakaket for harvests of moose and other big game hunting effort, success, and sharing patterns; subsistence harvest and use quantities, local concerns, traditional subsistence knowledge.
 - Part of a larger effort to control wolf predation on moose in upper Koyukuk River area: measure the success of predator control in helping local hunters meet harvesting needs over a 5-year period.

Region IV, Central/Southwest (GMUs 9–11, 13, 14A, 14B, 16, 17)

- Participation in Copper Basin Subsistence Hunt Work Group, including reports, presentations, proposals, and staff comments.
- All Copper River Basin Communities have been surveyed; data now in CSIS and technical papers: Chistochina (2009 study year): Technical Paper No. 370.
 - Copper Center, Slana/Nabesna Road, Mentasta Lake, and Mentasta Pass, Alaska (2010 study year): Technical Paper No. 380.
 - Cantwell, Chase, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, Skwentna, Susitna/Alexander Creek (2012 study year): Technical Paper No. 385.
 - Chitina, Gakona, Kenny Lake/Willow Creek, and McCarthy (2012 study year): Technical Paper No. 394.

- Glennallen, Gulkana, Lake Louise, Paxson, Tazlina, Tonsina, Mendeltna, Nelchina, Tolsona (2013 study year).
- Upcoming surveys: Egegik, Pilot Point, and Ugashik.

Region V, Arctic/Western (GMUs 18, 22, 23, 26A)

- Completed big game surveys in Kotzebue (2013 and 2014 study years) to provide information vital to management of Western Arctic caribou herd and Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd.
 - Elim, Golovin, Kivalina, Koyuk, Noatak, and Wales (2010–2011 study year): Special Publication No. 2012-04.
 - Brevig Mission, Deering, Noatak, and Teller (2011–2012 study year): Special Publication No. 2014-02.
 - Kotzebue (2012–2013 study year; includes other large land mammals): Special Publication No. 2014-03.
- Completed land mammal surveys in Nunapitchuk (2012 study year).
- Completed comprehensive subsistence research in Noorvik, Ambler, Shungnak, Kobuk, Eek, Tuntutuliak, Scammon Bay, Pilot Station, Stebbins, Golovin, Little Diomedede Island, Deering, and Point Lay.
- Other recently published research:
 - Technical Paper No. 379: *Subsistence Harvests in 6 Communities in the Lower and Central Kuskokwim River Drainage, 2010* (420 pages); updates subsistence data from Akiak, Kwethluk, Oscarville, Tuluksak, Georgetown, and Napaimute.
 - Technical Paper No. 384: *Saint Lawrence Island Subsistence Harvest of Birds and Eggs, 2011–2012, Addressing Yellow-billed Loon Conservation Concerns*.
 - Technical Paper No. 389: *Subsistence Harvests in Northwest Alaska: Selawik, 2010-2011*.
 - Technical Paper No. 396: *Subsistence Harvests in 8 Communities in the Kuskokwim River Drainage and Lower Yukon River, 2011* (620 pages); updates subsistence data from Napakiak, Napaskiak, Russian Mission, Nikolai, Takotna, Anvik, Grayling, and McGrath.
 - Special Publication No. 2014-01: *Subsistence Harvests of Land Mammals in Bethel, Alaska, 2011*.
- Upcoming comprehensive surveys: Kotzebue, Barrow, Nuiqsut, Point Hope (pending community approval), Anaktuvuk Pass (pending community approval), and Shaktoolik (pending community approval).

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