

# 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-C-2-2019

**PROJECT NUMBER:** 23.0

**PROJECT TITLE:** Alaska Wildlife Coordination

**PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

**REPORT DUE DATE:** Sept 1, 2019

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Brenda Bowers

**COOPERATORS:** Patti Harper, HQ Publications Specialist

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

### **I. PROGRESS ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES DURING PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

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

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

Many new projects and grants were submitted in SFY19 and the Division was able, for the second year in a row, to reach a substantial safety margin of approximately \$4.7 million in the federal fiscal year 2019. The new grants listed below are our normal operating projects and hunter education projects, as well as several new capital projects including hunter access, equipment, and research.

AKW-C-2-2019	Wildlife Restoration Grant FY2019	July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019
AKW-E-1-2019	Hunter Education Sec 4C FY2019	July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019
AKW-E-2-2019	Hunter Education Enhancement Sec 10 FY2019	July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019
AKW-D-2-2019	Hunter Access CIP19	Aug. 1, 2018 - June 30, 2024
AKW-D-4-2019	Curry Ridge to Kesugi Ridge Trail Access GMU13E	Mar 1, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2021

## FPR AKW-C-2-2019 P23.0 HQ Coordination

AKW-Q-1-2019	Regional Equipment CIP17	Aug. 22, 2018 - Jun 30, 2020
AKW-R-2-2019	Alaska Hare Movements	July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2023
AKW-R-3-2019	Emperor Goose Tracking	July 1, 2018- June 30, 2022
AKW-D-1-2019	Lake Louise Recreational Site Upgrade	July 1, 2018 - July 31, 2019
AKW-R-4-2019	Moose Intensive Management CIP15	Oct. 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019
AKW-R-5-2019	Moose Nutritional Indices GMU18	Dec. 1, 2018 - June 30, 2021
AKW-R-6-2019	Close Kin Mark recapture Moose in Interior AK	Jan 1, 2019 - June 30, 2023
AKW-R-7-2019	Reg 2 Wolves Pop Dyn & Sheep Disease Screening	Dec. 1, 2018 - June 30, 2023
AKW-R-9-2019	Brant Dynamics Y-K Delta	Jan. 11, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2021
AKW-R-10-2019	DWC-Subsistence Emperor Goose Harvest	Feb. 15, 2019 - June 30, 2023
AKW-R-11-2019	Density & Demography Brown Bear	April 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020
AKW-R-12-2019	Moose Urban Abundance & Reg 3 UYTPCA Wolf	Feb. 22, 2019 - June 30, 2021
AKW-R-13-2019	DWC-Subsistence WAH Caribou Harvest	Mar 1, 2019 - June 30, 2023

Over the past year, many significant changes have been made in the administrative process of our federal aid program. In preparation for the FY20 grant cycle, we began the process to break apart our one large operating grant of 50+ projects. Originally, the rationale of one large grant was to provide budget flexibility across all projects within the grant to accommodate any necessary adjustments to budgets throughout the year. While this was likely helpful in the past, we felt that we could maintain better project management and budget flexibility with smaller, regional grants. We broke apart the operating grant into regional grants 1-5 and created two others—a statewide grant and a viewing grant. The rationale of making the grants regional is that the regions maintain control over their own grant budgets, enabling the division headquarters' staff—and the regional staff—to have a clearer picture of each region's grant expenditures compared to the grant request (see graphic next page of the breakout into smaller grants).

FPR AKW-C-2-2019 P23.0 HQ Coordination

SEVEN OPERATING GRANTS FY20		11/1/2019				
KEY:	S&I projects	Other projects				
Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Statewide	Viewing & Education Refuges Sanctuaries (VERS)
					29.0 Access Defense	31.0 NEW Creamer's Migratory Waterfowl Education / Viewing
1.0 Moose S&I	1.0 Moose S&I	1.0 Moose S&I	1.0 Moose S&I	1.0 Moose S&I	18.74 Wildlife Disease	
1.70 Moose	1.63 Moose				21.0 Public & Hunter Info Srvs	32.0 NEW SW Refuge/Sanctuary Viewing (program income)
	1.72 Moose		1.77 NEW M-V Collision		22.0 Information Mgmt	
		1.73 Moose			24.0 Fire Mgmt Plan	
2.0 Deer S&I	2.0 Deer S&I	NEW P1.77 Moose Dem GMU 20			28.0 Data Process Analytics	
NEW 2.01 Deer Research	3.0 Caribou S&I	3.0 Caribou S&I	3.0 Caribou S&I	3.0 Caribou S&I	23.0 HQ/SW Coordination	
		3.53 Caribou			30.0 Refuge Sp Area (F&G match)	
4.0 Brown Bear S&I	4.0 Brown Bear S&I	4.0 Brown Bear S&I	4.0 Brown Bear S&I	4.0 Brown Bear S&I	NEW Tracking Moose Caribou	
4.42 Brown Bear	4.38 Brown Bear				35.0 Small Game S&I	
4.43 Brown Bear		4.40 NS Grizzly			11.0 Migr Birds S&I	
	6.0 Dall Sheep S&I	6.0 Dall Sheep S&I	6.0 Dall Sheep S&I	6.0 Dall Sheep S&I		
	6.18 Sheep	4.45 Grizzly				
7.0 Furbearer S&I	7.0 Furbearer S&I	7.0 Furbearer S&I	7.0 Furbearer S&I	7.0 Furbearer S&I		
7.02 Fisher		7.01 Marten				
		9.0 Plains Bison S&I	9.0 Plains Bison S&I			
		10.0 Wood Bison S&I				
12.0 Mtn Goat S&I	12.0 Mtn Goat S&I		12.0 Mtn Goat S&I			
12.01 Mtn Goat						
13.0 Elk S&I	13.0 Elk S&I					
14.0 Wolf S&I	14.0 Wolf S&I	14.0 Wolf S&I	14.0 Wolf S&I	14.0 Wolf S&I		
		16.0 Muskox		16.0 Muskox		
14.32 NEW Wolf						
17.0 BlkBear S&I	17.0 BlkBear S&I	17.0 BlkBear S&I	17.0 BlkBear S&I			
23.1 Regional Coordination	23.2 Regional Coordination	23.3 Regional Coordination	23.4 Regional Coordination	23.5 Regional Coordination		
		36.0 IM Evaluation				

Our efforts to streamline the overall grant process has resulted in great improvements in the regions; for example, coordinators now have a greater role in review and submission of project statements and performance reports. Principal investigators (PIs) are working more closely with their administrative staff on project budgets prior to submission, reducing budgeting errors. The regions are confirming that their internal budgets match the grant submission budgets and they ensure all federal aid projects are in compliance with federal requirements outlined in 2 CFR 200. Feedback to the Federal Aid Coordinator (FAC) from the regions clearly indicates more clarity and understanding than in the past.

DWC hired a new Administrative Operations Manager for the Division of Wildlife, Greg Williams, who started in the spring. Greg is bringing a new perspective and approach to HQ budgeting and grant administration which promises to further progress towards accurate budgeting and financial accounting of the federal aid projects.

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

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** This year was quite challenging to get our FY20 operating grants submitted on time for several reasons. The dramatic restructure of our operating grant into 7 smaller grants proved more challenging than originally anticipated. It was not simply a matter of dividing up projects into their respective regions. For instance, “planning” projects ended and planning objectives rolled into the respective regional coordination projects. The statewide biometrics project ended and each biometrician was rolled into their respective regional coordination project. Several research projects in the operating grant ended and new projects were added. We created a new stand-alone grant so that projects generating program income would remain separate from those that don’t.

The FAC needed to take approximately 3 days of leave just prior to the grant submission deadline as a result of fairly substantial health issues. This challenge was resolved when the new supervisor agreed to a telework arrangement to ensure best use of time processing grant submissions and to facilitate the recovery of the FAC.

Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, the grant submissions had to be pulled back in the final days prior to submission because the regions were not informed of the parameters of their budgets ahead of time and submitted budgets that totaled more than the division was authorized to spend. This oversight resulted in last minute reductions to all regional budgets and resubmission of all five regional grants. It worth acknowledging the herculean efforts on the part of the USFWS WSFR program staff to re-process these corrected submission.

Despite these challenges, only two grants were submitted late—one grant was one day past the due date, and the second was two days late. The FAC considers this objective effectively met, especially considering the obstacles that occurred at the time.

Comprehensive, detailed reporting for the FY19 grants has continued to improve. It should be noted that even though most of the reporting efforts occurs after the period of performance—June 30, 2019—the decision was made to include information about FY19 reports within this

FY19 report/grant cycle to avoid confusion. This year, the DWC HQ team conducted a financial analysis of expenditures per project, above and beyond the USFWS “special condition” requirement of a project-level financial accounting on the SF-425. We looked at project expenditures and informed the PIs of what we considered were significant discrepancies between what was requested and what was actually spent. We then asked that they provide a brief explanation of discrepancies in their performance report; for example, when a survey isn’t flown due to inclement weather or a position remained vacant longer than anticipated. As a result of this additional effort, the Division was granted a reporting extension for submitting the FY19 performance reports to Dec. 28, 2019.

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

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** The division published approximately 52 area specific species management reports (“unit” reports), wildlife research reports, and other types of reports within its technical reports categories in FY19. Additionally, division staff authored or coauthored approximately 27 technical/scientific or professional articles or external publications 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 35 online articles, brochures, newsletters, curricula and other informational and educational materials published in FY19 were entered into the division’s Wildlife Publications Database (WPD). A total of close to 3000 new item records for all types of publications, including newly published and historical, were entered into the WPD in FY19 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.

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

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** This project supervises approximately 230 permanent staff, 175 full-time and 55 seasonal. This project’s supervisory staff (5 percent) supervise many regional staff, of which 48 percent are biologists, 15 percent are wildlife technicians, about 10 percent are involved in biometrics and planning, and 2 percent are involved in education, outreach, and publications. Personnel are located at the headquarters office in Juneau, in five regional offices in Douglas, Fairbanks, Anchorage, Palmer and Nome, and twenty-two area offices around the state. The Division has a total budget of \$59,631,597, of which \$40,087,796 are Pittman-Robertson funds.

## **II. SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON PROJECT TO DATE.**

As this is not a multi-year research project, this report stands alone to provide a yearly update on DWC’s federal aid process. Our trend towards closer monitoring of projects and more accurate

financial accounting of projects has been successfully demonstrated in our agency's budgets, and we have made great strides towards a stronger partnership with our federal counterparts.

### III. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT REPORTS AND/OR AMENDMENTS.

The following grants were closed:

- AKW-L-1-2018 *Potter Marsh Property Acquisition*
- AKW-R-4-2019 *Intensive Management for Moose CIP15*

We submitted the following amendments to our AKW-C-2-2019 operating grant:

- Amendment #1 P21.0 enhance objectives and increase budget \$45,275.49 to AKW-C-2-2019 P21.0 for two non-permanent positions and transferred staff time to the AKW-E-1-2019 *Basic Hunter Education Services Section 4C* grant.
- Amendment #2 add new project to the operating grant AKW-C-2-2019 P2.01 *Integrated spatial capture-recapture approach to estimate abundance of Sitka Black-tailed Deer, Region 1*. No additional funds were requested.
- Amendment #3 change objectives in P11.0 *Status, Trends, and Public Use of Migratory Game Birds in Alaska* and in P35.0, *Status, Public Use, and Management of Small Game Populations in Alaska*. No additional funds were requested.

Other amendments include:

- AKW-19 P1.0 *Hunter Information and Digital Delivery* removed two objectives.
- AKW-5 *Moose Habitat* no-cost extension.
- AKW-14 collect program income to use as cost share for projects 4.0 *Chena River State Recreation Area Trailheads* and 5.0 *Lower Chatanika River State Recreation Facility Improvements*.
- AKW-22 P1.0 *Steller Sea Lion Recovery Studies* no-cost extension.
- AKW-27 P2.0 *Maud Road Extension* funding increase of \$160,000
- AKW-29 *Statewide Research & Development Projects*
  - Project 2.0: *Demography and Sources of Mortality in Unit 17 Moose* - extend project duration and increase funding
  - Project 6.0 *SE Alaska Deer Planning* – End completed project
  - Project 7.0: *Unit 17 Wolf Abundance and Demography* – extend project duration and increase funding
  - Project 10.0: *Mulchatna Caribou Calf Survival and Mortality* – extend the project duration and increase the funding
  - Project 8.0 *Steese and Denali Hwy Comparative Rock Ptarmigan Study* – add the contributions of UAF to project's scope, utilize contribution as non-federal match, and increase the obligation of federal funds to account for the larger total project size
- AKW-D-1-2019 *Lake Louise Recreational Site Upgrades* – no-cost extension

#### **IV. PUBLICATIONS**

Items in the publications database may be found by using the online search interface at [www.Wildlifepublications.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.Wildlifepublications.adfg.alaska.gov).

#### **V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT**

This project will continue indefinitely. The FAC is considering revising Objective 4. The accomplishments provided in that objective include information that is culled from the website that is very outdated (with the exception of the overall division budget). The FAC will work with the division and USFWS to provide a more meaningful objective appropriate to administering the Wildlife Restoration federal aid program.

**Prepared by:** Brenda Bowers

**Date:** September 1, 2019