

## Department of Fish and Game

### Mission

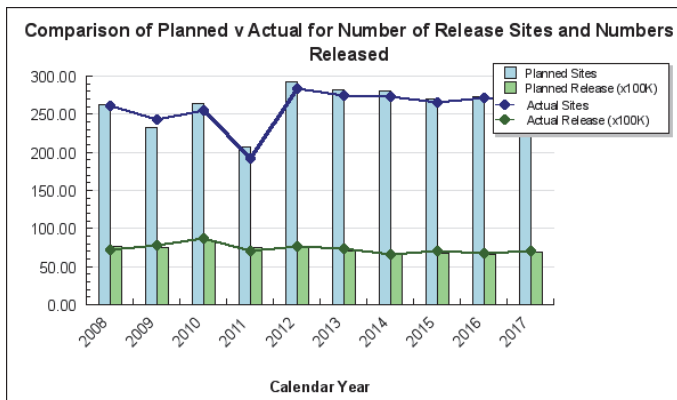
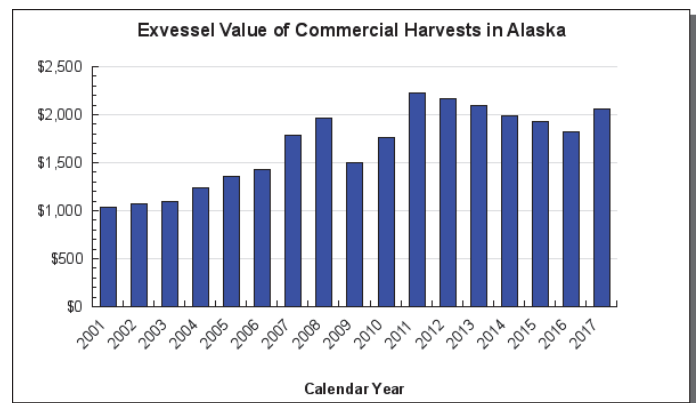
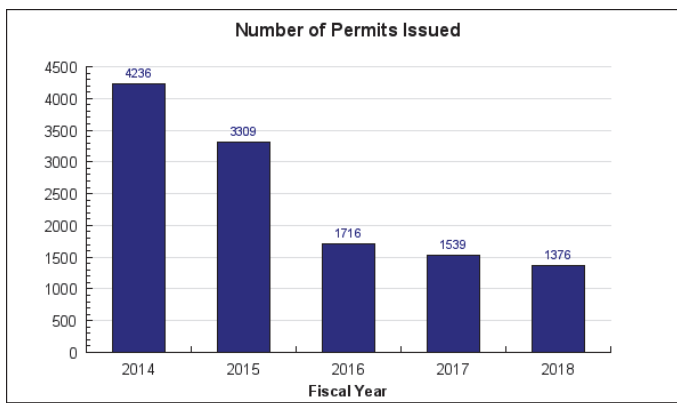
To protect, maintain, and improve the fish, game, and aquatic plant resources of the state, and manage their use and development in the best interest of the economy and the well-being of the people of the state, consistent with the sustained yield principle. Alaska Constitution Article 8, Sec. 4; AS 16.05.020(2)

	<b>Core Services (in priority order)</b>	<b>UGF</b>	<b>DGF</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Fed</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>PFT</b>	<b>PPT</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>% GF</b>
1	Management	23,070.9	4,956.3	32,761.8	33,581.9	94,370.9	417	283	2	41.7%
2	Stock Assessment and Research	21,057.6	9,954.8	19,798.3	20,926.6	71,737.3	257	249	4	46.1%
3	Customer Service and Public Involvement	7,454.8	725.1	14,493.2	13,304.0	35,977.1	156	87	0	12.2%
	<b>FY2019 Management Plan</b>	<b>51,583.3</b>	<b>15,636.2</b>	<b>67,053.3</b>	<b>67,812.5</b>	<b>202,085.3</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>6</b>	

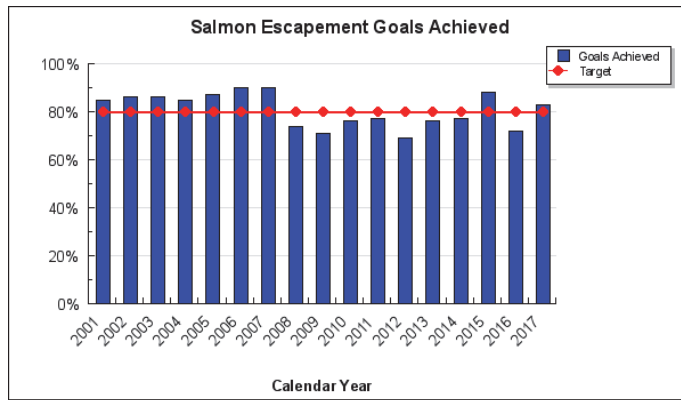
### Measures by Core Service

(Additional performance information is available on the web at <https://omb.alaska.gov/results>.)

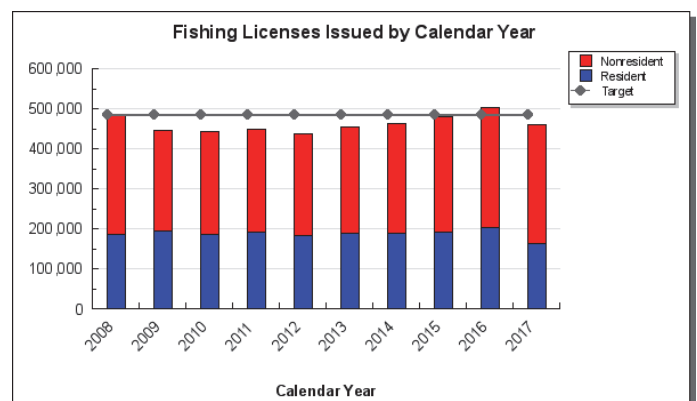
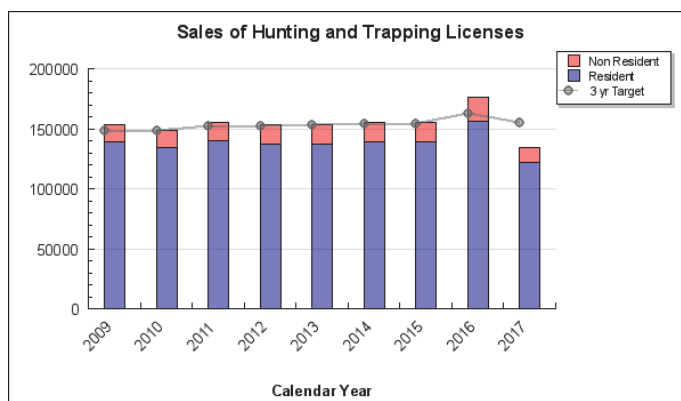
#### 1. Management



## 2. Stock Assessment and Research



## 3. Customer Service and Public Involvement



## Major Department Accomplishments in 2018

### Salmon Harvest and Value

The 2018 commercial salmon fishery all-species harvest was approximately 114.5 million fish with an estimated preliminary ex-vessel value of \$595.2 million, a 13% decrease from 2017's value of \$685.0 million. Of this total, sockeye salmon accounted for approximately 59% of the total value at \$349.2 million and 44% of the harvest at 49.9 million fish. Chum salmon accounted for 21% of the value at \$125.0 million and 18% of the harvest at 20.1 million fish. Pink salmon accounted for approximately 12% of the value at \$69.2 million, and 36% of the harvest at 40.7 million fish. Coho salmon accounted for approximately 6% of the value at \$35.5 million and 3% of the harvest at 3.6 million fish. The Chinook salmon harvest was estimated at 234,614 fish with an estimated preliminary value of \$16.3 million. The estimates of value are based on preliminary ex-vessel prices and do not include any post season bonuses paid to fishermen. The 2018 Bristol Bay sockeye salmon season contributed the most to the statewide total with 41.3 million sockeye salmon harvested and a total value of \$275.5 million.

In terms of pounds of fish, the all species salmon harvest of 605.1 million pounds ranks 34th in the 1975-2017 time series. In terms of pounds of fish, this year's chum salmon harvest ranks 8th, this year's sockeye salmon harvest ranks 13th, this year's coho salmon harvest ranks 31st, and this year's pink salmon harvest ranks 39th in the 1975-2017 time series. The 2018 values for Chinook salmon were the lowest since limited entry began in 1975.

### Crab Total Allowable Catch

The department established 2018-2019 season total allowable catches for the state-federal co-managed crab fisheries in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands to meet the conservation and economic benefit objectives and requirements of state and federal regulations: 4.3 million pounds for the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery, 2.4 million pounds for the Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery, 27.9 million pounds for the Bering Sea snow crab fishery, 0.3 million pounds for the Norton Sound red king crab fishery, 3.9 million pounds for the Eastern Aleutian Islands golden king

crab fishery, and 2.5 million pounds for the Western Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery. Three Bering Sea crab fisheries (Pribilof District red king crab, blue king crab, and Saint Matthew blue king crab) were closed to commercial fishing in the 2018-2019 season for stock conservation. The department worked within the federal process to ensure that expertise within the department is directly utilized in setting the annual catch limits that federal regulations require to be established for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands king and Tanner crab fisheries to minimize risk of overfishing.

### **Defending against federal erosion of state management authority**

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and Access Defense programs, and the Threatened, Endangered, and Diversity Program (TED) are cost effective approaches to federal management issues. The ANILCA Program asserts and defends the authority of the Department for management of fish and wildlife on all lands in Alaska and maintains public access and use of federal public lands. The TED program works to conserve wildlife species before they become threatened or endangered, to recover species already imperiled, and to keep common species common. The program administers the State's response to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by providing resources, expertise, and coordination among agencies (e.g., Department of Law and Department of Natural Resources) with the goal of conserving wildlife and avoiding unwarranted regulations. Last year's major successes by these programs include:

- 1) Worked with Alaska Dept. of Law on briefs for State of Alaska v. Zinke, seeking repeal of the 2015 NPS Alaska Wildlife Regulations, while simultaneously developing coordinated comments on a Dept. of Interior Secretarial Order, which mandated a review process to reconsider USFWS and NPS regulations for harvest of fish and wildlife that conflict with or supersede state regulations.
- 2) Coordinated the ADF&G's participation in Departments of Interior and Agriculture land management planning processes to ensure recognition of state management authorities and maintain public access and use of public lands.

Increased disease surveillance. The Wildlife Health and Disease Surveillance program elevated disease surveillance from passive to active surveillance. This was due in large part to the first detection of the bacteria *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* in Alaska's wildlife and in wildlife species never previously known to carry the pathogen. The division worked to enhance public awareness and involve hunters in active surveillance for this potential pathogen. This resulted in nearly 700 additional hunter-harvested Dall's sheep, mountain goats, moose and caribou sampled via nasal swabs for screening to add to the 2000+ samples collected by staff since 2015. In addition, collaborative efforts in disease surveillance and wildlife health resulted in significant new findings in the areas of caribou, marine mammal, canine, muskox, and other wildlife health; caribou anesthesia; capture drug meat residues, and new species of parasites detected in moose and caribou.

### **Sustaining Fishing Opportunities**

The division continued to conduct many quantitative stock assessment projects (weirs, counting towers, and aerial surveys) statewide to provide objective in-season data. This data is key to informing managers in decisions to provide fishery opportunity and manage stocks for sustained yield. Area Managers issued a total of 136 Emergency Orders and News Releases during 2018 that either restricted, liberalized, or informed the public of fishing opportunities during the season. Given the expected poor outlook for Chinook salmon, managers focused on where additional opportunity might be available for other species. As a result, opportunities for sockeye salmon fishing were liberalized in Redoubt Bay/Lake, Resurrection Bay, Larson Creek, Coghill, SALTERY Cove, Wood, Nushagak-Mulchatna, Naknek, Kasilof, and the Russian Rivers. Similarly, opportunities for available coho salmon were made available via emergency orders in the Mat-Su Valley, Kodiak, Anchorage, and Juneau (hatchery) areas, and Unalakleet River.

In our ongoing efforts to reduce complex regulations, the division submitted six staff proposals to the Alaska Board of Fisheries to simplify confusing regulations, and all were adopted. Division staff in Interior and Southcentral regions operated a booth at the Great Alaska Sportsman's Show and Fairbanks Outdoor Show to answer questions on regulations, fisheries management, and fishing opportunities. Staff held meetings with various sport fishing groups in Southeast Alaska to discuss conservative management actions needed to achieve Chinook salmon escapement goals in 2017. The division also hosted meetings and public events to discuss rockfish conservation and deepwater release techniques with members of the public, purchased and distributed deepwater release mechanisms directly to anglers and guides, and disseminated information broadly as part of an outreach effort designed to encourage deepwater release of rockfish and thereby improve their survival.

The Division spearheaded two workshops that included biologists from both the divisions of Commercial Fisheries and Sport Fish where they initiated discussions regarding management issues and stock assessment needs for black and yelloweye rockfish.

### **Licensing**

Licensing has made improvements to the process of issuing resident senior and disabled veteran complimentary fishing and hunting licenses in FY18. The application and fulfillment processes for these licenses is now fully electronic. The electronic application process has been simplified for the customer. If the application is automatically approved, the licensee is presented with a printable temporary copy of their license, which can be used immediately. The application review and fulfillment process has also become automated, increasing efficiencies and reducing the administrative cost.

In FY18 license and tag revenues increased by \$3.0 million from FY17. More high-volume license vendors began using the eVendor system to sell licenses, tags, and permits electronically. In FY18, electronic sales were the source of 50% of license and tag revenues (online store and eVendor combined). Electronic licenses, tags, and permits result in immediate and viable data for ADF&G management and wildlife enforcement purposes.

FY18 included the development and integration of personal use fishing and shellfish permits into the online store. This process eliminates the demand for paper fishing permits and reduces administrative costs. Labor costs are reduced exponentially as the process for obtaining these permits has become more streamlined for customers as they no longer need employee assistance and can print these permits from home at their convenience.

## **Key Department Challenges**

### **Maintain Important Public Services with Reduced Funding**

All state agencies are facing reduced funding given the state's revenue shortfall. The department has sustained a 24% unrestricted general fund reduction since FY15. The impact of these reductions has been partially mitigated by additional revenue from federal funds, fish and game funds, test fish receipts and other sources. Reduced funding impacts the department's ability to gather necessary data on fish and wildlife resources to manage for sustained yield while maximizing the harvestable surplus of species important to Alaskans. Less precise information forces the department to err on the side of conservation and leads to more conservative species management, thereby reducing harvest opportunity. The department is focusing on efficiencies across all divisions to minimize direct impacts on programs, but at these reduction levels, program impacts are unavoidable. Every effort will be made to prioritize the most critical programs and activities with available funding.

### **Federal Funding**

The department derives over a third of its budget from federal funds. Primary sources include the Sport Fish Restoration Program – Dingell/Johnson (DJ) funds in the Division of Sport Fish, the Wildlife Restoration Program – Pittman/Robertson (PR) funds in the Division of Wildlife Conservation, and fisheries and marine mammal funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service in the Divisions of Commercial Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation. Wildlife Restoration funding has been dramatically increasing, creating challenges to meet the required match, while other federal sources have been flat or declining.

## **Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2020**

None.

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