

Division of Wildlife Conservation

House Finance Committee
March 14, 2019



Mission

To conserve and enhance Alaska's wildlife and habitats and provide for a wide range of public uses and benefits.



Core Services

- Wildlife Management
- Wildlife Research
- Maintain and enhance opportunities for Alaskans to gain knowledge of and appreciation for Alaska's wildlife, management, and ways to safely and ethically interact with wildlife



Components & Services

Wildlife Conservation

- 5 Regions
 - Wildlife Management & Research
 - Regulatory Processes
 - Harvest Information
 - Public & Hunter Information (22 offices)
- Access Defense: Assert & Protect State's Rights
- Hunter Information & Training
- Threatened, Endangered, and Diversity: research on species of concern to prevent unnecessary listings
- Marine Mammals: research on species such as ice seals, walrus, Stellar sea lions, bowhead whale to prevent unnecessary listings and provide for subsistence
- Special Areas (e.g., Creamers Field, McNeil River, Pack Creek, Palmer Hay Flats)

Public Shooting Ranges

- Rabbit Creek Shooting Park, Fairbanks Indoor Range, Juneau Indoor Range



Federal Pittman-Robertson Program

Purpose and eligible projects (75% federal/25% state)

- Restoration, conservation, management and enhancement of wild birds and wild mammals and their habitats
- Public use and access to wildlife resources
- Education of hunters and development of shooting ranges

Source of Funds

- Excise taxes on sporting arms and ammunitions including pistols, handguns, revolvers, bows, archery and arrow components



Federal Pittman-Robertson Program

How Distributed Among States

- Apportioned to States based on state size and population (license holders)
 - Alaska receives maximum apportionment of 5% due to geographic size
 - Apportioned federal funds must be obligated within 2 years



State Match: Fish & Game Fund

- Revenues from the sale of general hunting and trapping licenses and tags
- Funds must be allocated to programs intended to directly benefit the license purchasers
- In 2017, after decades of license prices remaining the same, groups representing hunters and anglers recognized the need for increased state match and joined together to lobby for an increase in the price of licenses and tags



Wildlife Conservation in Alaska fueled by Hunters, Trappers, and Target Shooters

Hunters, trappers and target shooters are the largest contributors to conservation, paying for programs that benefit Alaska's wildlife and all who love the outdoors. Here's how it works:



Pittman-Robertson Act: Federal "P-R" Funding

Hunters and target shooters purchase guns and ammunition. Manufacturers pay federal excise taxes on them. The money is distributed to state wildlife agencies. Over the past 20 years in Alaska, \$345 million has been made available from P-R to help pay for the following:

75% P-R with 25% state match

- Manage wildlife populations
- Collect and analyze data
- Conduct research
- Maintain facilities
- Provide public outreach, hunter education, conservation and outdoor education
- Purchase land for wildlife habitat
- Promote wildlife recreation

P-R funds not spent by the state revert back to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service where they are placed in an account often funding organizations that historically have opposed Alaska's management of natural resources.

Fish and Game funds may not be diverted "to a purpose other than the protection, propagation, investigation, and restoration of sport fish and game resources."

"Funds may be allocated to programs intended to directly benefit the license purchasers..."
AK Statute 16.05.130

State Hunting & Trapping License Revenue



Revenues from hunter and trapper licenses, permits and tags go into the State's Fish & Game Fund which is a dedicated fund that can only be used for managing Alaska's wildlife resources for sustained yield use.

Fish and Game Fund also covers key activities that are **ineligible** under P-R including:

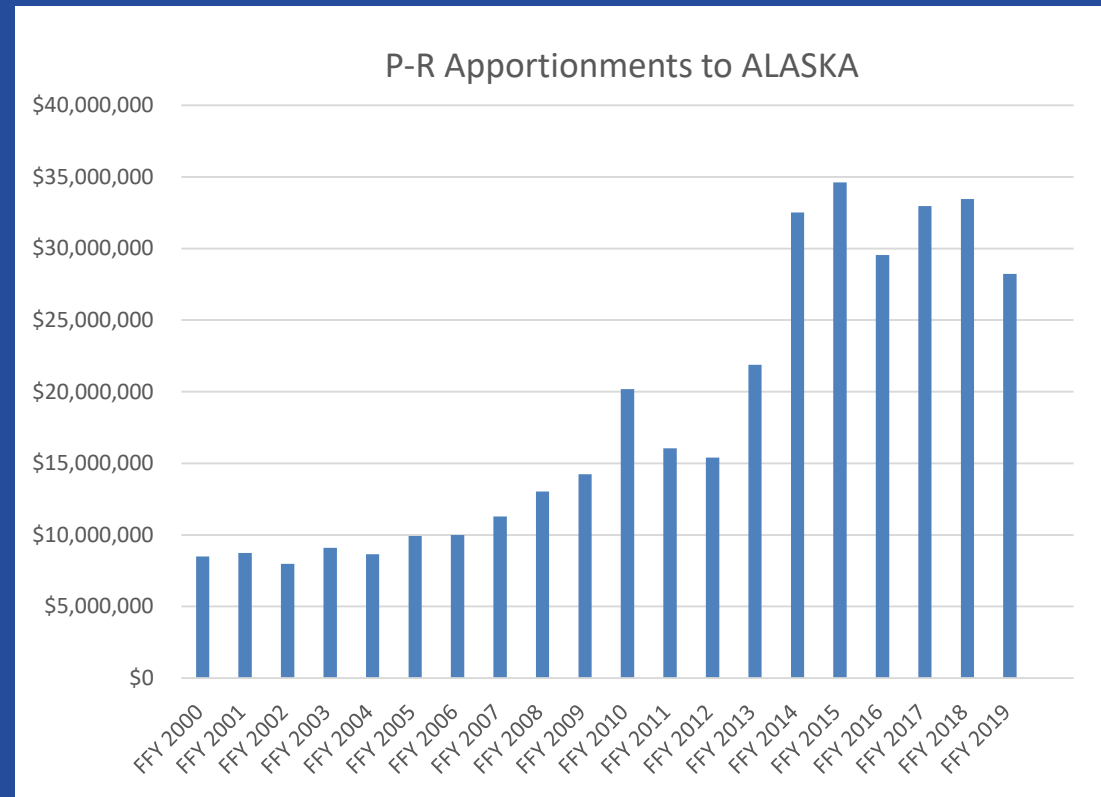
- Establish, publish and disseminate regulations
- Print/distribute licenses & permits
- Enforce fish and game laws
- Wildlife damage management (e.g. nuisance bear, beaver)



Federal Pittman-Robertson Program

Challenges

- Years of unprecedented tax collections due to strong firearm sales
- DWC did not “staff up” for continued high level of federal funding



FFY 2012	FFY 2013	FFY 2014	FFY 2015	FFY 2016	FFY 2017	FFY 2018	FFY 2019
\$15,403,917	\$21,887,730	\$32,511,089	\$34,625,771	\$29,532,768	\$32,969,429	\$33,455,771	\$28,219,617



P-R & F&G Fund Moving Forward

- Safety margin established *last year* (FFY18) should mean no reversion *next year* (FFY20)
- There is a possibility that PR funds could be reverted in SFY20 due to higher than anticipated receipts with a maintained level of state funding



Thank you

