



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Fish and Game

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May 9, 2025

The Honorable Robyn Niayuq Burke
Co-Chair, House Resources Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 108
Juneau, AK 99801

The Honorable Maxine Dibert
Co-Chair, House Resources Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 126
Juneau, AK 99801

Submitted electronically via email

Dear Co-Chairs Burke and Dibert:

This letter is in response to questions received during the initial hearing on HB191 in the House Resources Committee on May 5, 2025. Please find the responses below. All of the dollar figures presented in this document are in thousands.

1. How did ADF&G determine the amount requested in its HB191 fiscal note?

This legislation creates an Invasive Species Council (advisory council) within the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and a new account, the Invasive Species Response Fund, within the general fund. This new council is created as an advisory body tasked with helping facilitate efforts by ADF&G and the Departments of Natural Resources (DNR), Environmental Conservation (DEC), and Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) as well as other government entities operating in the State to manage invasive species. The council would also be required to develop and submit to the Legislature bi-annually a five-year strategic plan to address aspects of invasive species management and an annual report on active invasive species, the effects of these species, and measures taken to manage them.

The ADF&G fiscal note requests one part-time Fisheries Biologist 1 position for the department's Invasive Species Program to support the new advisory council, including arranging and facilitating quarterly meetings, providing data and information on invasive species work under ADF&G jurisdiction, and assisting in drafting the bi-annual strategic plan and annual report to the Legislature. The personal services costs for the position would be \$79.6 for nine months in the first year to help set up the new advisory council and \$53.1 for six months in the outyears. Services costs include \$5.0 for meeting support, including venue fees, technology and equipment setup, and notices and outreach for public involvement. The cost estimates are based on department support for other advisory bodies such as the Bycatch Advisory Council as well as typical meeting costs such as venues and public notices for board meetings.

It's important to highlight the costs reflected in the fiscal note are specific to supporting the work of the proposed Invasive Species Council. While the new position needs a biology background to understand and provide data and information on invasive species management to the advisory council, the position will primarily be administrative and coordination support.

Additionally, the fiscal note does not include potential additional funds that the Legislature could appropriate into the new Invasive Species Response Fund for invasive species management. This is because the bill does not mandate appropriation of funds. The funding for this account would be subject to future legislative appropriation and is not a consideration for the costs reflected in the fiscal note.

2. Provide a summary of the work ADF&G is currently doing on invasive species and how it coordinates with other departments, federal agencies, and stakeholders.

ADF&G has broad authority over the management and protection of native fisheries, wildlife, and habitats, including from impacts imposed by invasive species. This includes invasive species of fish, animals, and marine aquatic plants. Under ADF&G and Boards of Fisheries and Game statutes and regulations, Alaska has stringent possession, importation, transportation, and release laws that reduce the potential for the introduction of invasive species. For example, it is illegal to stock any type of fish (includes amphibians and invertebrates) into waters or lands of the State without a permit, release unwanted pets into the wild, and use certain gear-types when fishing or hunting in Alaska. ADF&G's invasive species program is housed in the Division of Sport Fish, which includes one statewide program coordinator and some regional staff that are primarily involved in northern pike eradication.

Coordination with other agencies differs based on the roles and authorities of the other agencies. ADF&G's statewide invasive species coordinator works across regions and with various agencies to address invasive issues. For example, interstate commerce and transport, such as addressing contaminated boats and trailers crossing borders into Alaska that may have zebra mussels, requires coordination with U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the sale of decorative aquatic plants for aquariums that may contain zebra mussel or crayfish larvae requires coordination with DNR. ADF&G's and DNR's coordinator positions often work together on invasive species issues that cross departments, and the positions manage Alaska's invasive species hotline (1-877-INVASIV) and online reporter ([Invasive Species Reporter](#)) to respond to reports from the public.

ADF&G's statewide program coordinator has cooperated with a variety of stakeholders to respond to invasive tunicates in Whiting Harbor near Sitka, signal crayfish on Kodiak Island, rats in Unalaska, foxes on St. Paul Island and others which all require significant effort. Most recently, ADF&G's coordinator has partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and Metlakatla Indian Community to update the Early Detection and Rapid Response Plan for European Green Crab (EGC) in Alaska, following detection of EGC in Annette Island waters in 2022. ADF&G expanded detection efforts in State waters of southern Southeast Alaska in 2023 and 2024. As mentioned earlier, regional ADF&G staff are involved in northern pike eradication in Southcentral Alaska, including removal of

northern pike in systems on the Kenai Peninsula and continued efforts in the Susitna River drainage.

A list with information on the work of ADF&G's Invasive Species Program over the last two years can be found below.

Statewide Program

- Maintain the Alaska Invasive Species Hotline and the Alaska Invasive Species Reporter and work with staff across divisions, departments, and regional partners to investigate reports of species under ADF&G jurisdiction, submit reports of terrestrial weeds and insects to DNR, University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Cooperative Extension, and regional partners
- Develop outreach materials (posters, fliers, signs, etc.) on European green crab, dreissenid (zebra and quagga) mussels, northern pike, signal crayfish, marine invasive species, rats (pets and pests), and Elodea
 - Distribute information to pet stores on zebra and quagga mussels infested moss balls, best practices for handling unwanted pets, and legal vs. illegal pet rats
 - Collaborate with DNR State Parks and Invasive Species program and the Alaska Invasive Species Partnership to develop and post signage at Big Lake on aquatic invasive species, Elodea, and how to help prevent spread
- Develop and provide training on early detection protocols for European green crab and zebra and quagga mussels
- Disseminate early detection supplies and equipment for community-based monitoring to increase early detection capacity
- Develop electronic data sharing and mapping tools for the European green crab monitoring network
- Survey locations for European green crab in Southern Southeast, with assistance from Ketchikan-based ADF&G staff
- Rapid Assessment of European green crab in Bostwick Inlet in Ketchikan to understand distribution and abundance, with assistance from Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and local entities
- Partner with University of Alaska Southeast-Ketchikan, Ketchikan Indian Community, and Metlakatla Indian Community to respond to and investigate new reports of European green crab in the Ketchikan area
- Early detection monitoring for zebra and quagga mussels in Big Lake, Finger Lake, and Lake Lucille in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley
- Partner with University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) to develop a mapping tool to determine water body vulnerability and habitat suitability to prioritize surveying and monitoring in lakes most vulnerable to invasion of zebra and quagga mussels
- Partner with UAF researchers on risk assessment model for zebra and quagga mussels
- Partner with USFWS to develop inspection protocols and a communication chain for reports of rodents on cruise vessels in Northern and Southwestern Alaska
 - Collaborate with the Department of Public Safety Alaska Wildlife Troopers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and USFWS to disseminate guidance, directing responses to reports of rodents on cruise vessels in this region
- Collaborate with western states and Canadian provinces, USFWS, and Customs and Border Protection to prevent introduction of zebra and quagga mussels into Alaska

- Participate as a board member on the Alaska Invasive Species Partnership and serve on the Marine, Dreissenid mussels, and European green crab committees
- Collaborate with Alaska Invasive Species Partnership to advance outreach, prevention, and management of aquatic invasives species
- Coordinate with the Division of Wildlife Conservation and regional partners to assist with rodent issues
- Collaborate with DNR, DOT&PF, and DEC to respond to invasive species under State of Alaska jurisdiction

Region II Northern Pike Program

- Pesticide application in True North Pond, Fairbanks to eradicate illegally released goldfish
- Pesticide application in Miller Creek, Kenai Peninsula to eradicate northern pike
- Weir project in Miller Creek to prevent northern pike from entering Miller Creek Drainage
- Pesticide application in Ciri Pond, Kenai Peninsula to eradicate northern pike
- Collaborate with University of Alaska and partners to investigate use of Cook Inlet waters by northern pike to expand distribution in Southcentral waters
- Threemile Drainage mark-recapture experiment and suppression of northern pike in partnership with Tyonek Tribal Conservation District
- Chuitbuna Lake mark-recapture experiment and suppression of northern pike in partnership with Tyonek Tribal Conservation District
- Suppression of northern pike in Alexander Creek
- Partner with Kenai Wildlife Refuge on rapid response to northern pike in Dolly Varden Lake
- Response to northern pike detection in Finger Lake, Matanuska-Susitna Valley
- Video weir projects for early detection and to investigate frequency of movement of northern pike in Campbell Creek, Chester Creek, and Threemile Creek, and to inform future prevention projects
- Monitor known northern pike infested lakes in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley
- Analyze loss of anadromous function of northern pike invaded systems in Matanuska-Susitna Valley
- Investigate all reports of northern pike in Southcentral region
- On-going native fish restoration in Soldotna Creek Drainage, post-northern pike eradication
- Alaska Invasive Species Partnership Northern Pike committee and research subcommittee: update and maintain northern pike management plan

Please contact my office if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

cc: Jordan Shilling, Director, Governor's Legislative Office
Lacey Sanders, Director, Office of Management and Budget