

**2-12-09**

**Overview:**

**Department of  
Fish & Game and  
Division of  
Commercial  
Fisheries**

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Fish and Game and Division of Commercial  
Fisheries</subject><comm>HFSH26</comm></target>

# **Overview of the Division of Commercial Fisheries**



John Hilsinger  
Director

## **Division of Commercial Fisheries Mission**

**Manage, protect, rehabilitate, enhance, and develop the fisheries and aquatic plant resources in the interest of the economy and general well being of the state, consistent with the sustained yield principle and subject to allocations established through public regulatory processes.**

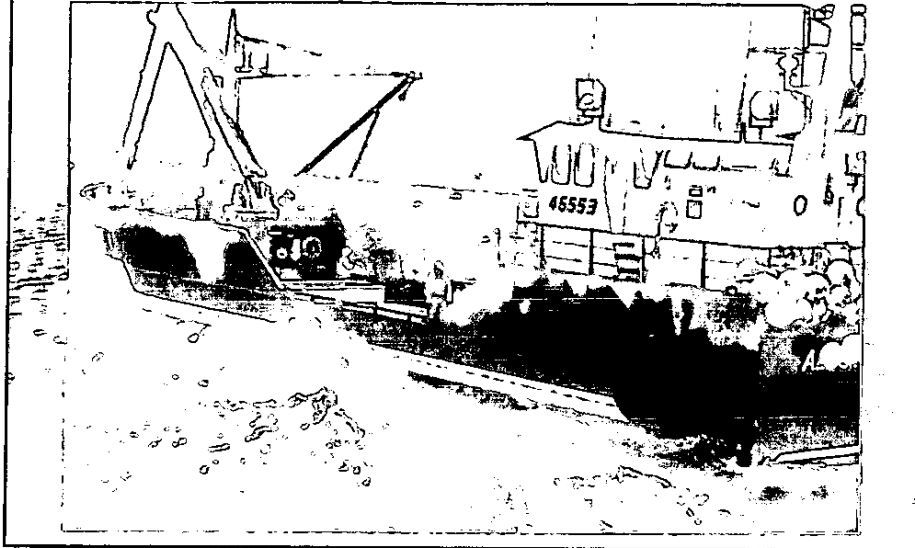
## **Division of Commercial Fisheries Primary Responsibilities**

- Manage commercial, personal use, and subsistence fisheries within state waters
- Manage shellfish species and some groundfish out to 200 miles
- Conduct applied research on Alaska's aquatic resources
- Plan and permit fish hatcheries and mariculture operations
- Negotiate fishing agreements subject to the Pacific Salmon Treaty and Alaska-Yukon Treaty
- Coordinate with federal and international fisheries management agencies

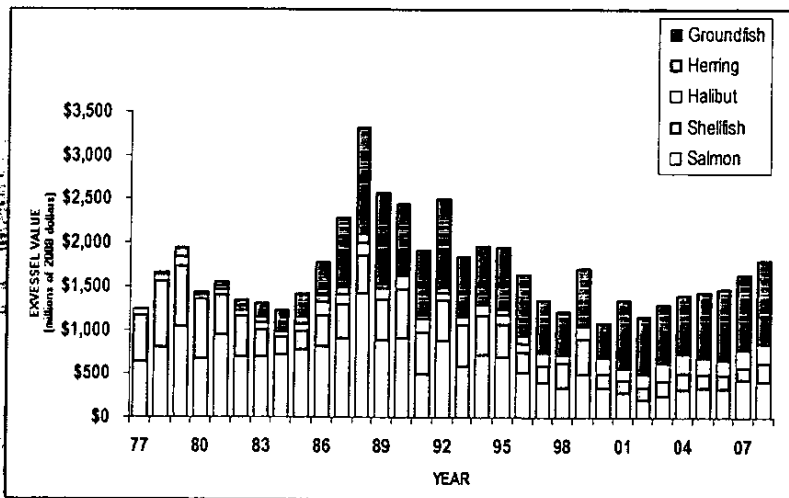
## **Kuskokwim Bay Salmon Fishermen Delivering in Quinahak**



## Crab Boat Setting Pots in the Bering Sea



## Exvessel Value of Alaska's Commercial Fisheries (Adjusted to 2008 Dollars)



## **Economic Impact of Seafood Industry on Alaska's Economy in 2007**

(Source: Northern Economics, Inc. 2009)

- Generated 78,519 jobs employed in seafood harvesting, processing sectors, and support industries
- Approximately 48,467 of these jobs were held by Alaskans
- Generated \$774.7 million in direct payments to labor with \$237 million going to Alaska residents
- Generated total sales of \$3.6 billion within Alaska
- Paid more in taxes to state general fund than any other industry except oil and gas

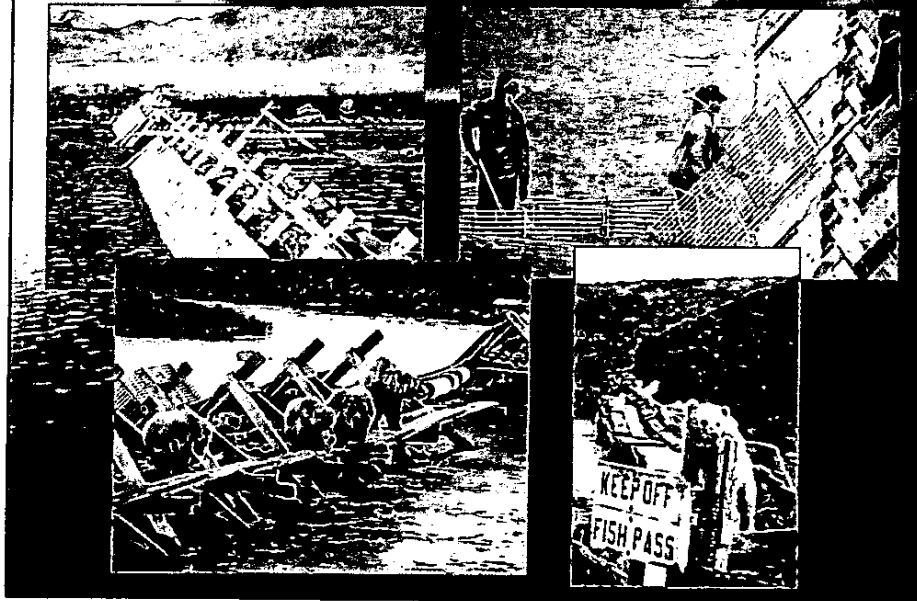
## **Division of Commercial Fisheries Core Services**

- Stock Assessment & Applied Research
- Harvest Management
- Laboratory Services
- Aquaculture Permitting
- Data Processing
- Information Services and Public Participation

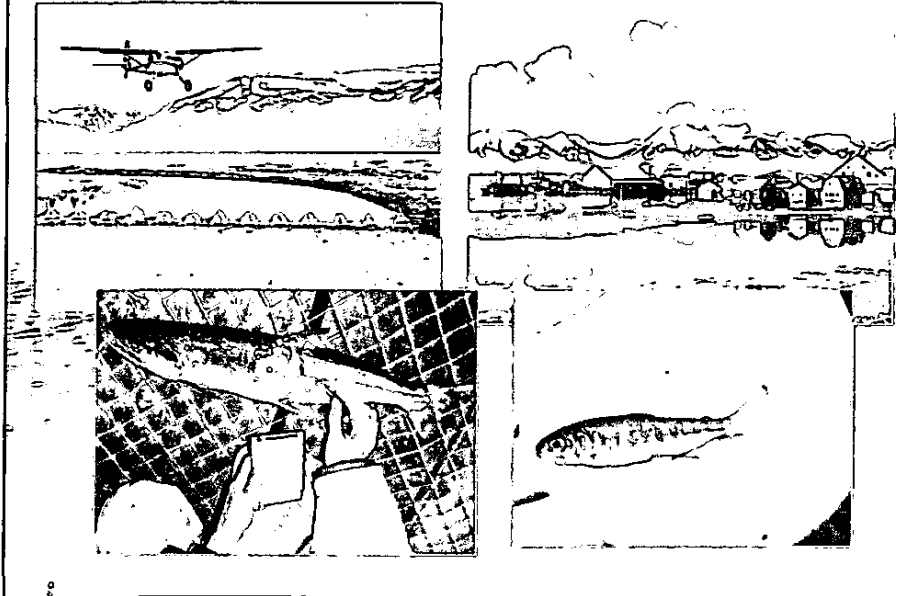
## Stock Assessment and Applied Research

- Salmon Escapement Enumeration
  - Weirs, Towers, Sonar, Foot/Aerial Surveys
- Juvenile Salmon Estimation
- Groundfish and Shellfish Surveys
- Herring Spawn Deposition and Hydroacoustic Surveys
- Aerial Herring Surveys
- Dive Surveys
- Biological, Genetic, Coded-Wire Tag Sampling

## Salmon Enumeration and Sampling



## Salmon Enumeration and Sampling

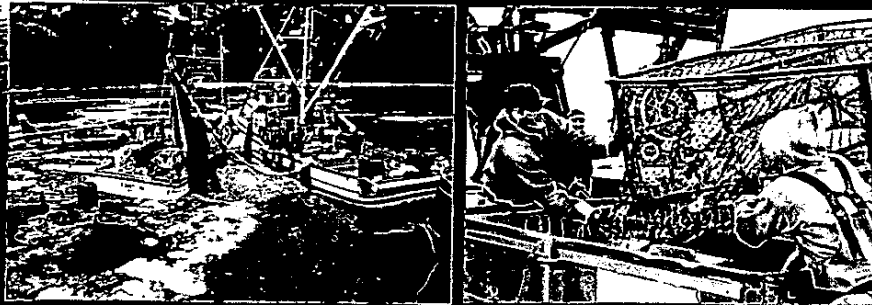


## Other categories and examples of stock assessment



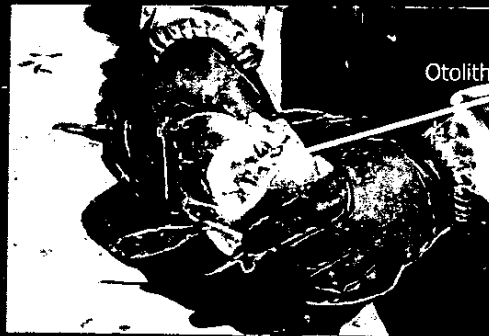
## Harvest Management

- Assisting the Board of Fisheries in establishing regulations and management plans
- Opening and closing fishing areas and setting fishing time
- Collecting harvest and biological data
- Writing annual management reports



## Laboratory Services

- Pathology Laboratory
- Coded-Wire Tag and Otolith Aging Laboratory
- Genetic Stock Identification Laboratory



Otoliths or Ear Bones

## Aquaculture Permitting



- Private Non-Profit Salmon Hatcheries
- Aquatic Shellfish Hatchery
- Aquatic Shellfish Farms

## Data Processing

- Fish tickets systems
- eLanding electronic catch reporting system
- Internet-accessible inseason catch and escapement databases
- Geographical Information System databases
- Internet-accessible news release database
- Seafood processor/buyer intent to operate system
- Commercial Operator Annual Reports (COAR)
- Databases for biological data

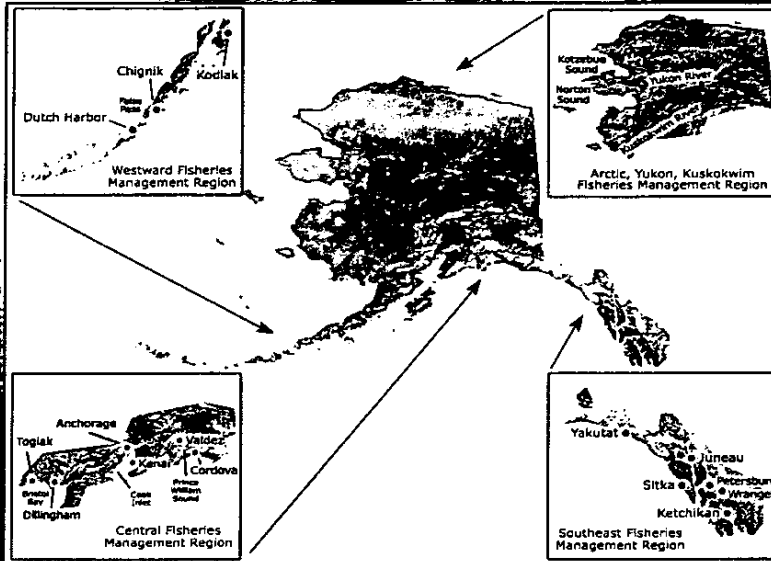
## **Information Services and Public Information**

- Design and maintain division website
- Publish brochures and other informational materials on divisional programs
- Produce upon request custom reports from fish ticket and COAR databases
- Administer divisional confidentiality policies
- Develop and administer divisional publication policies and procedures

## **Organization of the Division**

- Southeast Fisheries Management Region - Douglas
- Central Fisheries Management Region - Anchorage
- A-Y-K Fisheries Management Region - Anchorage
- Westward Fisheries Management Region - Kodiak
- Divisional Headquarters - Juneau

# Fisheries Management Regions



# Permanent and Seasonal Staff



Bethel Office June 2006

## In fiscal year 2009

- 310 permanent staff
- 472 seasonal staff
- 20 permanent offices
- 84 seasonal offices/field camps
- 6 large research vessels

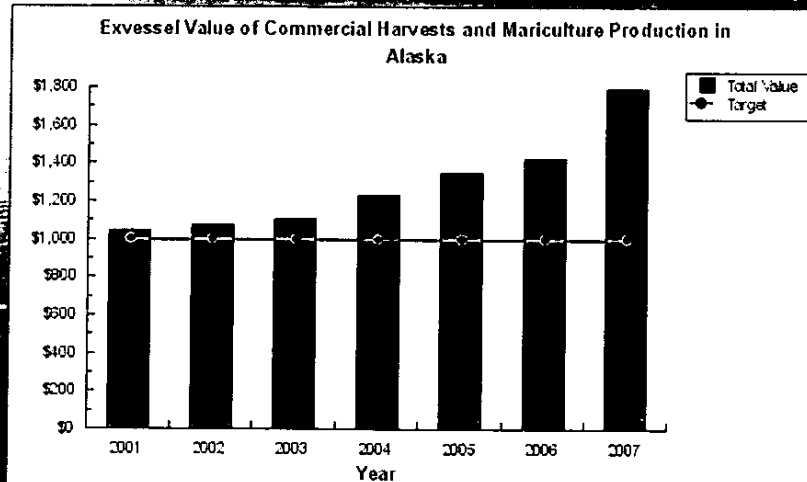
## Missions and Measures

### Targets

1. Exvessel value of commercial harvests and mariculture production above \$1 billion
2. Reproductive goals achieved for more than 80% of monitored stocks
3. Develop genetic baselines for Alaskan Chinook, chum, and sockeye stocks that will include 100 stocks in each baseline
4. All aquatic farms operating with current permits

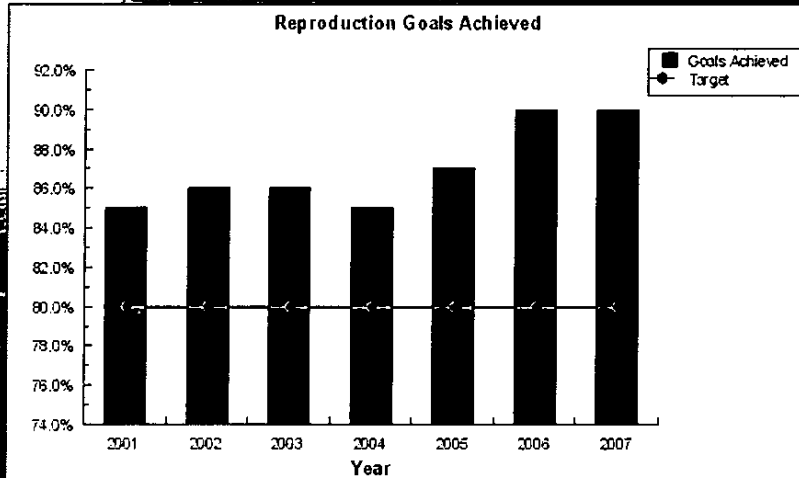
## Missions and Measures

1. Exvessel value of commercial harvests and mariculture production above \$1 billion annually



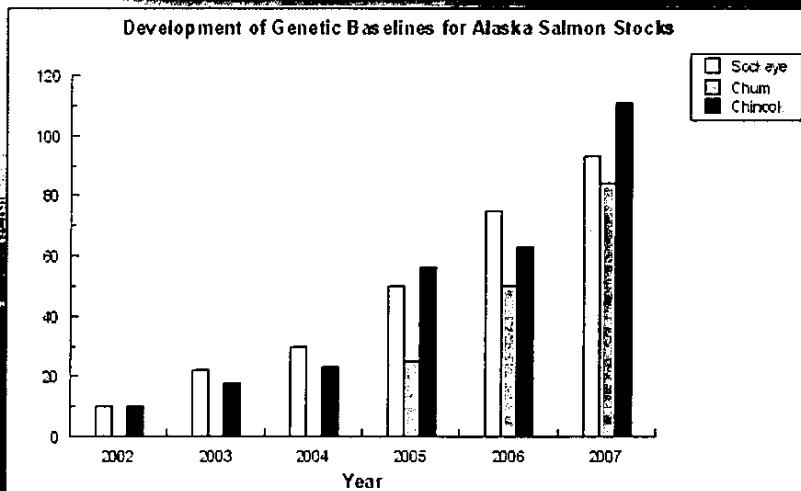
# Missions and Measures

2. Reproductive goals achieved for more than 80% of monitored stocks



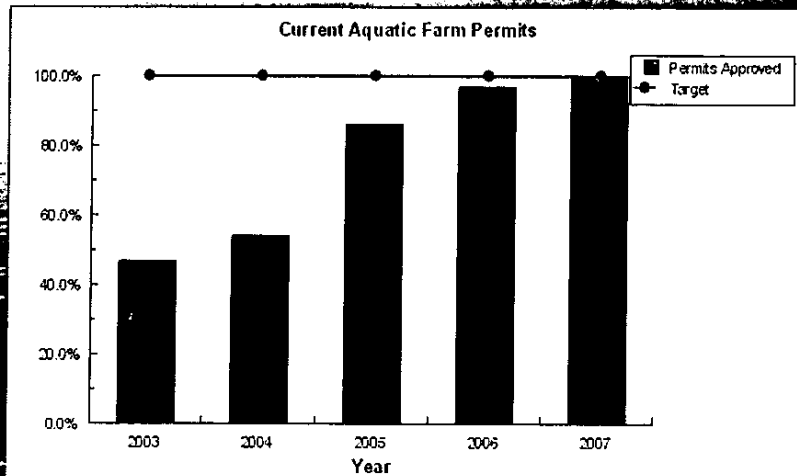
# Missions and Measures

3. Develop genetic baselines for Alaskan Chinook, chum, and sockeye stocks that will include 100 stocks in each baseline



## Missions and Measures

### 4. All aquatic farms operating with current permits



## FY 2010 Budget Request

- Total request = \$60,488.8
- FY 2009 request = \$60,269.9
- GF = \$36.0 (59%)
- Federal = \$8.7 (15%)
- Variety of sources = \$15.8 (26%)

# FY 2010 Budget Request

## Two Increments

### Yukon River Subsistence = \$80.0

- > Nenana test wheel video monitoring
- > Fall chum salmon drift test fishery

### BS/AI Crab Research = \$793.7

- > King crab pot surveys
- > Snow/Tanner crab biology
- > Observer data entry

- In an attempt to monitor King pulses.

- Fed \$ replacement. State does better job than Fed's surveying these fisheries.

## Major Issues

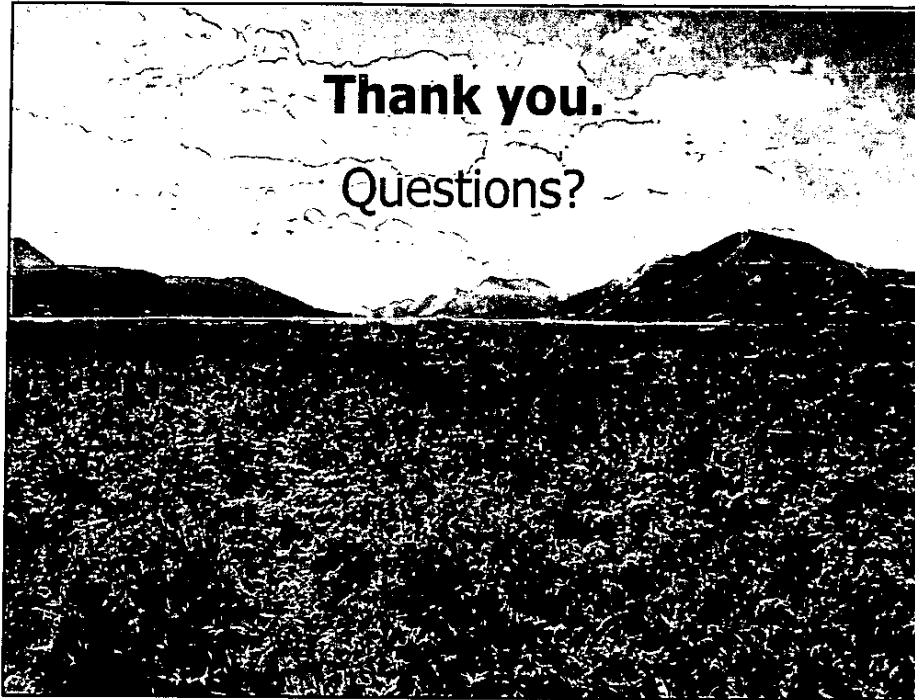
- Recruitment and Retention of Staff
- Declining Federal Funds
- Funding Instability
- Renegotiation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty
- Federal Subsistence Management
- Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Rationalization
- Federal Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Marine Stewardship Council Re-certification
- Cook Inlet Salmon Management
- Geoduck Aquatic Farm Industry Recommendations
- Water/Boating, Diving, Firearms and Bear Safety

Need more research into shellfish aquaculture -- to learn more & help develop fisheries.

(Pot surveys also important for accurate crab mortality estimates, in order to optimize shell catch quotas.)

Carbon an issue here.

For field workers.



**Overview of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
February 12, 2009**

**Background**

Alaska Constitutional mandates: Article VIII (Natural Resources) reads in part:

The legislature shall provide for the utilization, development, and conservation of all natural resources belonging to the State, including land and waters, for the maximum benefit of its people.

Fish, forests, wildlife, grasslands, and all other replenishable resources belonging to the State shall be utilized, developed, and maintained on the sustained yield principle, subject to preferences among beneficial uses. *NOT ALWAYS "MAXIMUM" SUSTAINABLE YIELD.*

Mission of the department:

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.

Goals of the department:

- Optimize economic benefits from fish and wildlife resources
- Optimize public participation in fish and wildlife pursuits
- Increase public knowledge and confidence that wild populations of fish and wildlife are responsibly managed

**Core Services of the Department**

1. Harvest Management: provide opportunity to utilize fish and wildlife resources
2. Stock Assessment: ensure sustainability and harvestable surplus of fish and wildlife resources
3. Customer Service: provide information to all customers
4. Public Involvement: involve the public in management of fish and wildlife resources
5. State Sovereignty: protect the state's sovereignty to manage fish and wildlife resources

In support of these core services, the department conducts the following activities:

6. Habitat Conservation: protect, maintain, and improve Alaska's fish and wildlife habitat
7. Workforce Development: support a professional staff to deliver other core services

Ambitions within core services:

1. Harvest management: provide opportunities to utilize fish and wildlife resources
    - Expand existing and develop new programs to increase harvest opportunities (e.g., abundance-based management initiatives)
    - Protect and improve access to fishing and hunting opportunities and resources
    - Optimize participation in hunting and fishing activities
    - Improve harvest monitoring and assessment
  
  2. Stock assessment: ensure sustainability and harvestable surplus of fish and wildlife resources
    - Improve existing fish and wildlife stock assessment capabilities
    - Expand stock assessments
    - Invest in new technologies\*
    - Anticipate changing conditions (e.g., climate change, invasive species)
- \*Idea of investing in new technologies applies to several of the core services.
3. Customer service: provide accurate and meaningful information to all customers
    - Enhance public communications materials and delivery (e.g., web capacity, multimedia, technical and lay reports)
    - Increase publication in peer-reviewed scientific literature
    - Improve management and scientific reporting
    - Improve licensing and permitting services (including unique identifier for each user)
    - Better coordinate and improve education and viewing programs throughout department and better integrate CF and Subsistence into education programs.
  
  4. Public involvement: involve the public in management of fish and wildlife resources
    - Improve BOF/BOG and other regulatory processes (e.g., Federal Subsistence Board, North Pacific Fishery Management Council)
    - Effectively involve (optimize) public in specific decision making processes (legislative, EVOS, task forces and advisory groups)
    - Evaluate further and enhanced opportunities for public involvement
  
  5. State sovereignty: protect the state's sovereignty to manage fish and wildlife resources
    - Reassess strategies for state/federal agreements and initiatives
    - Evaluate and improve effectiveness in interacting with other government agencies and forums (e.g., ESA, Magnuson-Stevens Act, NPFMC, Pacific Salmon Treaty, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, ANILCA, FSB)
    - Strengthen state's role in dual management for subsistence
    - Strengthen state's interests in partnerships with other governmental agencies
  
  6. Habitat conservation: protect, maintain, and improve Alaska's fish and wildlife habitat
    - Strengthen department involvement in resource development and land use project reviews
    - Improve technical capabilities (e.g., geographical information systems, GIS) to inform environmental reviews of development projects
    - Maintain, restore and improve habitats in the face of other resource development and land use

7. Workforce development: support professional staff to deliver other core services
- Re-establish ADF&G as premier employer among nation's fish and wildlife agencies (e.g., compensation, benefits, training, workload management, motivation, initiative, recognition)
  - Improve and increase employee training opportunities
  - Enhance and improve administrative support
  - Stabilize and increase funding for divisional programs and employee development

### **Structure and Budget**

The Department of Fish and Game comprises six divisions (Commercial Fisheries, Sport Fish, Wildlife Conservation, Subsistence, Habitat, and Administrative Services) plus the Alaska Boards of Fisheries and Game, the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, and the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council. Two deputy commissioners, an assistant commissioner, and special assistants support the Commissioner in managing the state's fish and wildlife resources.

The department's FY 09 operating budget is \$180.0 million, from sixteen funding sources, including \$55.0 million in federal funds, \$58.1 million in state general funds, and \$26.2 million in fish and game funds. In FY09, the department has 917 permanent full-time, 764 permanent part-time, and 62 non-permanent positions for a total of 1,743 positions.

The department's FY10 operating budget request is \$180.0 million from sixteen funding sources, including \$54.6 million in federal funds, \$58.7 million in state general funds, and \$26.1 million in fish and game funds. In FY10, the department has requested 910 permanent full-time, 767 permanent part-time, and 62 non-permanent positions, for a total of 1,739 positions.

### **Other Designated Responsibilities for the Commissioner**

North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
Pacific Fishery Management Council—non-voting seat  
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission  
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission  
University of Alaska-Fairbanks School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (SFOS) Advisory Council  
Alaska Sea Grant Advisory Council  
Alaska Board of Fisheries—as ex officio secretary, not a voting member  
Alaska Board of Game—as ex officio secretary, not a voting member  
Bering Sea Fishery Advisory Board  
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council  
Federal Subsistence Board—non-voting seat  
Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA)—incoming president  
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)  
Alaska Migratory Bird Comanagement Council  
The Pacific Flyway Council  
The North Slope Science Initiative Board of Directors