



Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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Division of Wildlife Conservation

Division Overview

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Many Alaskans experience wildlife every day. Alaskans eat wild game, watch birds, hunt and fish, and may encounter porcupines, moose, and even bears on the way to work or school. Wildlife is one reason why people live in Alaska, and a big reason why visitors come to Alaska. The people at the Division of Wildlife Conservation are charged with managing Alaska's wildlife.

The Division of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) is one of seven divisions in the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). DWC has management responsibility for all wildlife except marine mammals.

DWC employs about 230 permanent staff, 175 full-time and 55 seasonal. A rough breakdown of staffing includes about 5 percent in leadership or managerial positions, 20 percent in administrative positions, 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 state is divided into 26 Game Management Units (GMUs) (many containing three to five sub-units) for the purpose of management and regulations. Twenty-three area biologists oversee the GMUs.

Programs

Staff in regional and area offices are responsible for most of the wildlife research and management activities in their regions. There are nine additional statewide programs:

- [Education](#)
- [Wildlife Viewing](#)
- [Waterfowl Research And Management](#)
- [Threatened, Endangered And Diversity Program](#)
- [Marine Mammal Research](#)
- Information Management
- [Hunter Information and Training](#)
- [Small Game](#)
- [Special Areas](#)

Small game and nongame species are also valued for their roles in the environment, and as animals important to hunters, wildlife viewers, and photographers. Small game includes ptarmigan, grouse, and hares. Animals such as porcupines, bats, voles, and marmots are not generally hunted, but along with songbirds, birds of prey, and seabirds are subjects of some study and much appreciation by biologists and the general public. There are multiple nongame biologist positions within DWC. ADF&G recently formed an Endangered Species Act (ESA) team, including a wildlife biologist within DWC, to increase communication within Fish and Game and with other agencies and organizations addressing issues related to threatened and endangered species.

ADF&G manages 32 state wildlife refuges, critical habitat areas and wildlife sanctuaries known as special areas. These include popular and well-used places such as the Mendenhall Wetlands in Juneau, Potter Marsh in Anchorage, Creamer's Field in Fairbanks, the McNeil River and Pack Creek bear viewing areas and more remote areas such as Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary.

DWC also engages in hunter education and training, and operates three shooting ranges. A variety of other education and outreach efforts include education programs to minimize human-wildlife conflicts, teaming with teachers and schools for science education, and providing information to Alaska's thousands of visitors, many of whom come to hunt and many others who come to view wildlife. The department also partners with other groups such as the Alaska Outdoor Heritage Foundation to offer outdoors skills clinics such as Becoming an Outdoors Woman.