

Department of Commerce, Community  
and Economic Development

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Division of Corporations, Business  
and Professional Licensing

**Big Game Commercial Services Board**  
**Annual Report**  
Fiscal Year 2022



Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing  
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**Big Game Commercial Services Board  
FY 2022 Annual Report**

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**Identification of the Board**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Duty Station</b>	<b>Date Appointed</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>
<b>Pete Buist</b> Public Member	Fairbanks	Mar 1, 2021	Mar 1, 2025
<b>Martin Boniek</b> Licensed Transporter	Glennallen	Mar 1, 2021	Mar 1, 2025
<b>Micheal Flores</b> Licensed Transporter	Soldotna	May 11, 2020	Mar 1, 2023
<b>Clay Nordlum</b> Private Landowner	Kotzebue	Mar 1, 2022	Mar 1, 2026
<b>Jerry Burnett</b> Designated Board of Game	Juneau	Jan 1, 2021	Mar 1, 2024
<b>Aaron Bloomquist</b> Licensed Registered Guide-Outfitter	Copper Center	Mar 1, 2021	Mar 1, 2023
<b>Jason Bunch, Chair</b> Licensed Registered Guide-Outfitter	Kodiak	Mar 1, 2019	Mar 1, 2023

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**Identification of Staff**

**Thomas Bay – Licensing Examiner**

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**Renee Hoffard - Executive Administrator**

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**Lee Strout - Investigator**

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**Jun Maiquis - Regulations Specialist II**

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**Big Game Commercial Services Board  
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**Narrative Statement**

The Big Game Commercial Services Board (Board) was created by the Legislature “For the purpose of licensing and regulating the activities of providers of commercial services to big game hunters in the interest of the state’s wildlife resources...” (AS 08.54.591(a)). The Board consists of nine members, including two active guides, two transporters, two private landowners, two members of the public, and one Board of Game member. Currently there is one vacant public seat and one vacant private landowner member seat on the Board.

The Board’s duties include developing and administering guide examinations, overseeing guide applications and authorizations, assuring guides and transporters have appropriate permission from landowners, establishing codes of ethics, imposing appropriate disciplinary sanctions, and adopting procedural and substantive regulations (AS 08.54.600). The Board typically meets three times per year - twice a year in person, one telephonic meeting in July, as well as periodic teleconferences primarily for executive session disciplinary considerations. The board held hybrid meetings (in person and Zoom) during the fiscal year. All meetings are advertised and open to the public, except for the executive sessions. Funding for Board activities, including legal costs and associated support by staff from the Division of Corporations, Businesses and Professional Licensing, is provided by license fees collected from guides and transporters. There is one investigator assigned to the Board, one occupational licensing examiner and one Executive Administrator who is also responsible for one other professional Board.

Regulatory changes included 12 AAC 75.460 (a) removing caribou from minimum harvest criteria, 12 AAC 75.450 (b)(13) addressing unlawful provisions and removing game processing equipment.

Current sub-committee, staff and other Board related projects include Transporter regulation review, 12 AAC 75.750 Supervision regulation review, New “Survivorship/Successorship” regulation which entails possible statute change and addressing details of lawful “partnerships” business model.

Financial status of the Board is in good standing. The Board is diligently managing funds and consistently works with executive administrator, Ms. Hoffard, to ensure finances are handled appropriately. The third quarter report reflects a surplus of \$928,008. The board requested a non-renewal year fee analysis to consider requesting the division reduce fees and ultimately decided to delay this action based on several upcoming projects.

Investigative Efforts include 123 opened cases, and 76 cases that were closed. The apparent cause for investigation of nearly half of these cases was administrative error and license application issues. Communication to licensees has increased dramatically through electronic and postal mail. Additionally, “seminar” style education has been incorporated into board meetings to address current undesirable trends and simply to provide refresher training. This, combined with the hybrid meetings, has produced a return to public attendance that diminished during the COVID pandemic.

The Board continues to support State and Federal landowner permitting processes including Alaska Dept. of Natural Resource, USDA - Forest Service and National Wildlife Refuge Managers.

The big game guiding industry creates about \$80 million in economic activity within the state annually. While no similar hard data or figures are available for transporters, a good estimate would be in the \$40-50 million range. About 1,600 jobs with \$13 million in wages and \$12 million spent in rural areas for goods and services can be attributed specifically to the guiding industry in Alaska. In addition to guide fees, visiting clients indirectly spend approximately \$29.5 million within Alaska.

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**Budget Recommendations for FY 2023**

Budget Recommendations section anticipates the board's fiscal priorities for the upcoming year. Please complete all parts of this section with details about anticipated meetings, conferences, memberships, supplies, equipment, to other board requests. Meeting expenses that are being funded through third-party reimbursement or direct booking must be identified separately from expenses paid through license fees (receipt-supported services or RSS). Be sure to explain any items listed as "other" so they may be tracked appropriately.

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
July, 2022	Videoconference		
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare <input type="checkbox"/> Hotel <input type="checkbox"/> Ground <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:			\$300.00
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>			\$300.00

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
Dec 5-7, 2022	Coast Inn, Anchorage	8	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:			\$2,500.00 \$3,100.00 \$500.00 \$10,000.00
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>			\$16,100.00

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
March, 2023	Pike's, Fairbanks	8	3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:			\$2,500.00 \$7,500.00 \$1,000.00 \$10,000.00
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>			\$21,000.00

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**Budget Recommendations for FY 2023 (continued)**

**Travel Required to Perform Examinations**

Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
Dec 8, 2022	Anchorage	2	2

**Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:**

Written and practical examinations provided in conjunction with scheduled board meeting.

- Airfare:
  - Hotel:
  - Ground:
  - Conference:
  - Other: Additional costs added to travel for board meeting for additional stay for exams \$3,000.00
- Total Estimated Cost:** \$3,000.00

**Travel Required to Perform Examinations**

Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
March, 2023	Fairbanks	2	3

**Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:**

Written and practical examinations provided in conjunction with scheduled board meeting.

- Airfare:
  - Hotel:
  - Ground:
  - Conference:
  - Other: Additional costs added to travel for board meeting for additional stay for exams \$4,000.00
- Total Estimated Cost:** \$4,000.00

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**Budget Recommendations for FY 2023 (continued)**

**Out-of-State Meetings and Additional In-State Travel** (Rank in order of importance)

#1 Rank in Importance or  Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
TBD	TBD		1 (INV)

**Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:**

Board approved 2 in-the-field travel trips for the program investigator to work with Alaska Wildlife Troopers and other state/federal agencies. Not to exceed \$6000 per fiscal year.

Expenditure	License Fees (RSS)	Third-Party Reimbursement	Third-Party Direct Booked	Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:	\$6,000.00			\$6,000.00
Describe "Other" (break out all sections):				
<b>Net Total:</b>	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00

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**Budget Recommendations for FY 2023 (continued)**

**Non-Travel Budget Requests**

- Not Applicable       Resources       Examinations  
 Membership       Training       Other

Product or Service	Provider	Cost Per Event
n/a	n/a	n/a

**Description of item and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:**

**Other Items with a Fiscal Impact**

- Not Applicable

**Cost Per Event:**

**Number of Events:**

Product or Service	Provider	Cost Per Event

**Description of item and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:**

**Summary of FY 2023 Fiscal Requests**

Board Meetings and Teleconferences:	\$37,400.00
Travel for Exams:	\$7,000.00
Out-of-State and Additional In-State Travel:	\$6,000.00
Dues, Memberships, Resources, Training:	\$0.00
Total Potential Third-Party Offsets:	\$ 0.00
Other:	\$0.00
<b>Total Requested:</b>	<b>\$50,400.00</b>

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**Legislative Recommendations - Proposed Legislation for FY 2023**

**No Recommendations**

The Board has no recommendations for proposed legislation at this time.

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**Recommendations**

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed legislation:

The board has formed a sub-committee to research limited guide-use areas, also known as a concession program. The program the Big Game Commercial Services Board is exploring is a variation of a concession program, as the board does not own the land the intent is to limit the number of guides that can provide service in any one area. The board has received an increase of complaints regarding conflicts in the field between licensees and licensees with resident hunters; the board has not received complaints for areas that are currently part of Federal concession programs. The board has also heard of issues with the quality of guide services being significantly reduced due to congestion/overcrowding in areas.

License holders have expressed interest in the board seek this change to ensure that competent, qualified guides are providing services in a manner that is representative of the professionalism expected of licensed guides in our state.

State land use permits are issued by the Department of Natural Resources and are open to any state resident; the Big Game Commercial Services Board requires licensed Registered/Master Guide-Outfitters to register for specific guide use areas with the board. Guides must be certified in the Game Management Unit the area is in before they can register for the area and can register for a term of 3-5 years.

Guides are charged with stewardship of the land and conservation of the species hunted, limiting the number of guides that can provide services in any specific area will help to reduce potential overharvesting as the number of hunters in that area will be reduced.

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**Regulation Recommendations - Proposed Regulations for FY 2023**

**No Recommendations**

The Board has no recommendations for proposed regulations at this time.

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**Recommendations**

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed regulations:

At the time of this report the following regulation topics will be considered for regulation amendments:

1. Adding survivorship for emergency transfers
2. Supervision regulation clarification
3. Definitions of “physically present”, “primarily in the field”, “in or near camp”
4. Unlawful provisions by transporters
5. Marine Transporter Regulation
6. Trainees
7. Guide Use Area registration - clarification
8. Booking Agents/Hunt Planners/Hunt Consultants

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**Goals and Objectives**

**Part I**

**FY 2022's goals and objectives and how they were met:**

The board's primary goal was to complete current projects:

- Implementation of proposed Professional Development criteria for all classes of guides - withdrawn at request of Dept. of Law
- Implementation of proposed UVC regulation clarification - effective 11/2021
- Add Survivorship for Emergency transfers regulation - ongoing project
- Re-write Supervision regulation criteria for clarity and purpose - ongoing project
- Define "physically present" for Assistant Guide supervision - ongoing project
- Define "primarily in the field" for contracting Registered Guide criteria - ongoing project
- Remove caribou from minimum harvest criteria - effective 3/2022
- Regulate activities of Transporters - ongoing project

The following are on-going and continuous goals of the board:

- Continue to strengthen the ethics standards. We continue to incorporate ethical violations into sanction actions. Moving forward, ethics violations may need to be incorporated into the disciplinary guidelines and precedence matrix. These violations are very difficult to maneuver through and often lack enough proof to justify board action. The board recognizes these barriers and plans to move forward with procedures to aid in the decision process of ethics violations once current projects are complete.
- Continue to build and strengthen partnerships between the various agencies involved in the Guide Profession including ADF&G, Alaska Wildlife Troopers and the various land managers.
- Continue to monitor trends in violations and make adjustments as required.
- Continue to strengthen public trust and participation through communication, education and efficiency.

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**Goals and Objectives (continued)**

**Part II**

**FY 2023's goals and objectives, and proposed methods to achieve them.**

**Describe any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and required resources:**

The board will continue to work on regulations projects and make efforts to streamline processes where possible with the assistance of staff.

Continue to build and strengthen partnerships between the various agencies involved in the Guide Profession including ADF&G, Alaska Wildlife Troopers and the various land managers.

Continue to monitor trends in violations and make adjustments as required.

Continue to strengthen public trust and participation through communication, education and efficiency.

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**Sunset Audit Recommendations**

**Date of Last Legislative Audit:** 09/14/2018

**Board Sunset Date:** 06/30/2024

**Audit Recommendation:**

DCBPL's director should improve management oversight procedures to ensure required documentation is obtained, reviewed, and retained to support licensure.

**Action Taken:**

n/a

**Next Steps:**

n/a

**Complete :**  No

Yes

**If yes, date completed:** n/a