

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2020

BIG GAME COMMERCIAL SERVICES BOARD



**Department of Commerce, Community
and Economic Development**

**Division of Corporations, Business
and Professional Licensing**

This annual performance report is presented in accordance with Alaska statute AS 08.01.070(10).

Its purpose is to report the accomplishments, activities, and the past and present needs of the licensing program.

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Identification of the Board

Board Member	Duty Station	Date Appointed	Term Expires
Henry Tiffany IV Board Chair	Ester	Mar 22, 2013	Mar 01, 2021
Jason Bunch Licensed Registered Guide-Outfitter	Kodiak	Mar 01, 2019	Mar 01, 2023
Tom Harris Private Landowner/Restricted	Anchorage	Sept. 11, 2018	Mar 01, 2022
Michelle Heun Licensed Transporter	Palmer	Jan 29, 2018	Mar 01, 2021
Nicholas Jackson Private Landowner/Restricted	Gakona	Mar 01, 2016	Mar 01, 2020
Cash Joyce Licensed Transporter	Wasilla	Jan 29, 2018	Mar 01, 2023
Adam Trombley Public Member	Anchorage	Feb 02, 2017	Mar 01, 2022
Lawrence Van Daele Designated Game Board Member/Restricted	Kodiak	Nov 20, 2017	Mar 01, 2020

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Identification of the Board (continued)

Board Member	Duty Station	Date Appointed	Term Expires
Vacant Public Member	--	--	Mar 01, 2021
Thomas Sullivan Public Member	Anchorage	Mar 01, 2017	Resigned
Robert Beans Public Member	City Location	Mar 01, 2017	Resigned

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Identification of Staff

Dawn K Hannasch – Records and Licensing Supervisor

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BIG GAME COMMERCIAL SERVICES BOARD

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Narrative Statement

The Big Game Commercial Services Board (BGCSB) has three scheduled public meetings per year. Traditionally these have been held in December in Anchorage and March in Fairbanks, as well as a July teleconference. In a cost savings measure, with input from the public, the board decided to hold both the December and March meetings in Anchorage in 2019, though the December 2019 earthquake required the board to postpone its December meeting until January and subsequently reschedule its March meeting to April.

Thus far in FY19, the period between July 1, 2018 and the present, we have held, in addition to our July teleconference, January and upcoming April public meetings in Anchorage, some executive judicial board meetings. The purpose of these executive judicial meetings, which by their very nature cannot be public, is to primarily address disciplinary actions the board is considering against licensees. This is done in an effort to limit the amount of time the board must go into private executive session during our three public meetings each year so as to allow for more robust public participation during the open public meetings. This practice was instituted approximately three years ago and seems to be an effective tool which helps to allow the three public meetings to be much more efficient with the public's valuable time.

The public meetings in Anchorage are generally reasonably well attended by guides and public with thirty to fifty attendees. The March and December meetings are typically attended by State of Alaska Wildlife Troopers, the Department of Natural Resource, the Department of Fish and Game, and the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development. Federal agencies included the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service, U.S National Park Service, and the Federal Aviation Administration. All of these agencies generally are invited to participate in our meetings though of late, due to budgetary constraints, some have elected to not be present. These interactions are a useful tool for all concerned because of often overlapping regulatory issues.

We welcomed a new private landholder board member to the BGCSB and look forward to their active contributions to the board and one public board member resigned without explanation. Our board also has a seat reserved for a Board of Game member, which is filled by Mr. Larry VanDaele, and it is an extremely useful cross membership since our boards often influence each other's regulations; therefore, close ties and communication are vital to a seamless regulatory fit between the boards and departments.

BGCSB has many areas of responsibility. We must help protect the natural resources of the state, establish and enforce professional standards and minimize conflicts between public and commercial big game hunters. Public protection concerns for Alaska residents seem to continue to be primarily over-crowding in some areas of the state by guides. Localized overuse may be caused by Transporters, Guides and in some cases hunting pressure by resident hunters. Game harvest levels are sustainable in most areas of the state. There are some local areas of concern primarily on state owned land. Guides and guided hunters are closely regulated on federal lands to maintain the management mandates for specific conservation system units.

Transporters that use federal lands are also required to obtain special use permits and abide by area-specific regulations but are not restricted to the number of hunters they may bring to a given area, whereas guides on federal lands are restricted to a specific number of hunters in an area. Resident hunters, however, have open access to most federal lands in the state, subject to area-specific federal subsistence hunting/trapping regulations. This issue of "overcrowding" on state land may be very adequately addressed if the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Guide Concession Program (GCP) is implemented and should that come to pass then the BGCSB would likely play a key role in that program, just as it did when a similar program was instituted on the Federal lands within Alaska.

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Goals and Objectives (continued)

Part II

FY 2020's goals and objectives, and proposed methods to achieve them.

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

- 1) Develop BGCSB Position Statements regarding, but not limited to firearm possession and how it relates to licensees who may have a felony on their record
- 2) Create a Supervision Flow Chart to aid the board, licensees, public and land managers in understanding the supervision regulates and how they apply in the field in practical terms
- 3) Clarify what materials and forms applicants for licenses must present at time of testing.
- 4) Explore developing a new class of guide license to encompass all those individuals or businesses that transport hunters, in any manner and by any method.
- 5) Continue work on the testing program, specifically to update the maps used in the Game Management Tests and portions of the Registered Guide-Outfitter written exam.
- 6) Continue working on Survivorship for Emergency Transfers issue.
- 7) Determine if Guide Schools are still applicable and necessary and if so finalize Guide School experience credit.
- 8) Continue to monitor, and address as required, the boards financial status and adjust annual filing fees, or other applicable fees, as necessary to ensure the board remains debt free moving forward.
- 9) Continue to conduct quarterly executive session judicial teleconference meetings.
- 10) Continue to use free state meeting locations, when and if feasible, rather than incurring the expense of rented facilities.
- 11) Consider, as the public has requested, moving the traditional March public meeting back to Fairbanks, Alaska

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Sunset Audit Recommendations

Date of Last Legislative Audit: September 14, 2018
Board Sunset Date:

Audit Recommendation:	DCBPL's director should improve management oversight procedures to ensure required documentation is obtained, reviewed, and retained to support licensure.
Action Taken:	<p>The department agrees that additional checks are needed to ensure the administrative record is complete. With over 22,000 new professional licenses issued by the agency in the last two fiscal years, additional supervisory resources have been needed to ensure that all necessary training occurs and that license files are regularly reviewed to meet this standard. The division requested and filled an additional Records and Licensing Supervisor position to reduce turnover and increase oversight of licensing processes, and a manual to formalize internal audit procedures is currently in development. The responsibilities of licensing examiner and licensing document have been consolidated under a single position now to maximize accountability. We propose to review licensing and documentation procedures and requirements to reflect accurate and complete documentation as the highest priority and responsibility.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Division Director and Deputy Commissioner are reviewing all regulations pertaining to this activity to ensure the Legislative intent can be reasonably fulfilled.</p>
Next Steps:	Not Applicable
Date Completed:	October 2017

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Sunset Audit Recommendations (continued)

Audit Recommendation:	DCBPL’s chief investigator should increase oversight to improve the timeliness of investigations.
Action Taken:	The division adopted an investigative Standard Operating Procedure on May 1, 2018, requiring each case file reflect documented progress at least every 30 days. This standard is being reinforced by in-service training with all investigators on a biannual basis, as well as improved management oversight by the senior investigator over this program. The senior investigator will conduct quarterly case reviews with the investigator along with reviewing any open matters greater than six months and determine if adequate progression is being made. The chief investigator will review any matters greater than one year to determine if adequate progression is being made and there are no untimely delays. The division constantly seeks to improve processes to resolve allegations completely and quickly.
Next Steps:	Not Applicable
Date Completed:	January 2, 2019

Audit Recommendation:	The Office of the Governor, Boards and Commissions director should work with the board to identify potential applicants in a timely manner.
Action Taken:	The department will continue to assist the Office of the Governor in publicizing openings on the board and providing them with lists of licensed guides and transporters.
Next Steps:	Not Applicable
Date Completed:	Ongoing