



THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Department of
Fish and Game

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
Headquarters

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May 13, 2014

Mr. Rick Steiner
PO Box 6484
Sitka, AK 99835-6484

Dear Mr. Steiner:

On April 17, 2014, you notified us of a public record request for "records that detail the total financial cost of the state's IM program in each of the last five years." You also requested that this "should include all costs to run the IM program, including administrative and field operation costs. As well, I would appreciate knowing the amount of funds used to conduct the state's IM program that derive from federal Department of Interior Pittman-Robertson transfers to ADFG."

The information you are requesting is routinely made available in our annual reports to the Board of Game found at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=intensivemanagement.programs>. I understand that you have perused this site and compiled figures that you have subsequently asked via an email dated April 18, 2014, to Commissioner Campbell and Lt. Governor Treadwell for us to review (enclosed). Our assessment of your figures follows.

In general, the figures you provided in the email appear correct based on the reports on the site. However, in our review we noticed some inconsistencies in the way we report cost estimates that we will correct in the future. This pertains to how research "associated" with Intensive Management (IM) is reported. In many cases we report research for a population (predator or prey) that we perform even if we are not planning or performing IM. The Kenai is a good example. We would be conducting research on moose regardless if we perform any wolf control, given the low moose numbers. The same is true for research dollars we are investing in wolves and deer in Southeast Alaska. We will be correcting this in future reports. Also, no federal funds are used for actual wolf or bear control. We use some federal funds for assessment of populations, but again we would likely be performing this research even if no predation control occurs.

Regarding your cost estimates, we get a total of \$1.15M versus your estimate of \$1.4M. The discrepancy is most likely due to \$250K Kenai IM research for FY12 that was mistakenly included in the Total Management Column. In fact, no IM was conducted on the Kenai that year. Costs that are clearly research and not necessary for conducting or monitoring the IM program are reported separately. The total for research associated with IM was \$930K in FY13. Regarding Unit 16, bear removals were conducted by the public. The few costs associated with the program are reported completely and accurately. The funds spent in Unit 26B were mostly spent on surveillance and survival estimation for musk ox across most of the subunit.

Mr. Rick Steiner

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May 14, 2014

The cost to actually remove the bears was most likely 10% of the total. For Unit 24, most of the funds were spent on additional survey and inventory work. In terms of wolf removal numbers, we get 207 (63 public and 144 staff), while you reported 200.

Thank you for your interest in our intensive management program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. Lang".

Doug Vincent-Lang
Acting Director

Enclosure: Email references

Anderson, Alisha D (DFG)

From: Campbell, Cora J (DFG)
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2014 1:38 PM
To: Vincent-Lang, Douglas S (DFG)
Subject: FW: Public Records Request

FYI

From: Richard Steiner [mailto:richard.g.steiner@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, April 18, 2014 7:07 AM
To: Lieutenant Governor Mead Treadwell (GOV sponsored)
Cc: Campbell, Cora J (DFG)
Subject: Re: Public Records Request

Mead and Cora,

FYI, I made one small alteration in my statewide summary of ADFG IM take and cost, so my corrected final is below. I changed the total cost of the 26B bear control to \$126,000, as the additional \$19K was reported for "other recovery activities."

Again Cora, if any of this is not accurate, I would appreciate knowing. And I look forward to hearing from you re: the portion of these funds that may have derived from federal Pittman-Robertson funds transferred to the state.

Regards,

Rick

Statewide Summary: ADFG Predator Control take and cost

Most recent full reporting year, **Regulatory Year 2012; Fiscal Year 2013**, not counting the reported public harvest by trapping and hunting:

Total Wolves: 200 (63 by ADFG, 137 by Public Control)

Total Black Bears: 165 (85 by ADFG, 81 by Public Control)

Total Brown Bears: 11 (3 by ADFG, 8 by Public Control)

Cost (FY2013): Total = \$1.4 million (state and private), but incomplete accounting*

Some cost tables are incomplete, particularly cost table for GMU16, where high bear take is reported, but no predator control costs or total IM costs are reported

In some areas - 26B (Prudhoe Bay, etc.) - 3 brown bears were taken by ADFG at total predation control cost of \$126,000 = \$42,000/bear

In 24B (Upper Koyukuk), 23 wolves were taken by ADFG, total cost of \$194,000 = \$8,400/wolf.

In 15A (Kenai), no wolves reported taken, but total IM cost = \$286,300 (\$250,000 of which is research, \$36,300 is Other IM Activities).

On Thu, Apr 17, 2014 at 11:48 PM, Richard Steiner <richard.g.steiner@gmail.com> wrote:
Cora,

As per my PRA request earlier today, I will also appreciate learning what part of the \$1.4 million spent on the state's IM program last year derived from Pittman-Robertson federal funding, if any.

Thanks,

Rick Steiner

On Thu, Apr 17, 2014 at 11:42 PM, Richard Steiner <richard.g.steiner@gmail.com> wrote:
Dear Mead and Cora,

FYI, here are my results from the ADFG 2014 IM reports on the website:

Statewide Summary: ADFG Predator Control take and cost

Most recent full reporting year, **Regulatory Year 2012; Fiscal Year 2013**, not counting the reported public harvest by trapping and hunting:

Total Wolves: 200 (63 by ADFG, 137 by Public Control)

Total Black Bears: 165 (85 by ADFG, 81 by Public Control)

Total Brown Bears: 11 (3 by ADFG, 8 by Public Control)

Cost (FY2013): Total = \$1.4 million (state and private), but incomplete accounting*

Some cost tables are incomplete, particularly cost table for GMU16, where high bear take is reported (81 black bears, 3 brown bears, all as Public Control Removals), but no predator control costs or total IM costs are reported

In some areas - 26B (Prudhoe Bay, etc.) - 3 brown bears were taken by ADFG at total cost of \$145,000 = \$48,000/bear

In 24B (Upper Koyukuk), 23 wolves were taken by ADFG, total cost of \$194,000 = \$8,400/wolf.

In 15A (Kenai), no wolves reported taken, but total IM cost = \$286,300 (\$250,000 of which is research, \$36,300 is Other IM Activities).

Cora, if any of this is inaccurate, I would appreciate hearing from you on such.

Cheers, and have a good Easter!

Rick Steiner

On Thu, Apr 17, 2014 at 7:53 PM, Richard Steiner <richard.g.steiner@gmail.com> wrote:
Thanks much Mead.

I will be looking through the ADFG IM reports this evening, and will certainly let you both know the totals, both for take and cost, at least for the most recent reported year. But I would encourage the department in the future to develop such annual summaries for the public.

And I sympathize with you on your federal request, as I too have had difficulties with federal FOIA requests. But I must say, my request in 2007/2008 (I know, before your time there) of ADFG for the state's science review of the federal polar bear listing, for which ADFG then asked for \$470,000, was certainly the best yet...I asked if they would take a check! (and finally got the document I needed from the feds, for free).

Again, thanks, and I'll let you both know the totals when I have them.

All for now,

Rick

On Thu, Apr 17, 2014 at 7:22 PM, Lieutenant Governor Mead Treadwell (GOV sponsored) <lt.governor@alaska.gov> wrote:

Rick, thanks for your note. I checked with the Commissioner. They have not added up the numbers themselves, as I think the figuring by district makes sense as the numbers are aimed at management goals in each particular area. I have no reason to believe the numbers you were pointed to are incomplete.

In this case, I will take their defense and argue it is not obfuscation, just granular data.

If you add up the totals and trends I am interested to see what you get.

By the way we just officially asked a federal agency for some data to support our Cold War historical work, and that federal agency put up a giant brick wall as if we'd sought the family jewels. I hope we all get what we need!

Best. Mead

Mead Treadwell
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meadwell@alaska.net (personal) or
meadtreadwell@treadwellalaska.com (political)

lt.governor@alaska.gov (state business)

Sent from my iPad. Pardon the fat fingered typos!

On Apr 17, 2014, at 4:10 PM, "Richard Steiner" <richard.g.steiner@gmail.com> wrote:

Mead,

What is one to think of a state government that conducts an "Intensive Management" (predator control) program, ostensibly on behalf of the citizens of the state, but then will not disclose in a straightforward form, the total number of wolves and bears it, and its agents, kill?

I have tried to get this simple number for months, and they will not provide such, but instead send me to sort it all out of their many reports, by GMU, on their webpage. This appears to be intentional obfuscation, and leads to the conclusion that the state has something to hide.

Certainly, not a very public spirited posture.

Rick

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Richard Steiner** <richard.g.steiner@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Apr 17, 2014 at 4:28 PM

Subject: Re: Public Records Request

To: "Haight, Sunny C (DFG)" <sunny.haight@alaska.gov>, Cora Campbell <cora.campbell@alaska.gov>

Dear Commissioner and Ms. Haight,

Thanks for the link to your website, which I already had. I find it disappointing that the Department is unwilling, or unable, to provide the total statewide take of wolves and bears, to the Alaska public.

Cora, apparently I misinterpreted the offer you made in a previous email, to provide information that the public asks for without the need for a public records request. As you know, I was assured earlier that the department knows the total number of wolves and bears taken in its IM programs annually, but clearly you will not disclose that number.

If you would disclose the total number, outside of the Public Records Act, then I ask that you do so in response to this email.

I'll look forward to hearing from you on this, as well your reply to my additional PRA request, for the total cost of the IM program, and the derivation of the funds, submitted earlier today.

Rick Steiner

On Thu, Apr 17, 2014 at 1:15 PM, Haight, Sunny C (DFG) <sunny.haight@alaska.gov> wrote:

Dear Mr. Steiner:

Commissioner Campbell asked that I respond to your Alaska Public Records Request received on April 4, 2014.

The Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G) Intensive Management (IM) programs continue to have significant public and legislative interest, and information pertaining to those programs is made publicly available through our website. This information is also presented to the public and the Board of Game on a regular basis.

You asked for "documents that enumerate the total number of wolves and bears killed statewide by the state of Alaska, pursuant to its Intensive Management programs." Information regarding the number of wolves and bears taken in the IM programs can be found on our website at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=intensivemanagement.programs>. Although this information is gathered and presented by Game Management Units, the information needed to enumerate the total number of wolves and bears statewide is made publicly available online. Per 2 ACC 96.210(b), ADF&G is not required to compile or summarize its public records in response to a request for public records. If ADF&G were to compile or summarize the existing information as a means to enumerate the total number of predators taken statewide, we would use the same information available on the website. We do not have any records or information outside of our website that would provide a quicker or easier method of obtaining the information you are seeking. By providing you a link to this public information, ADF&G has fulfilled your request and provided you an opportunity to compile and analyze the available information as you like.

Thank you for your continued interest in the Intensive Management programs. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sunny Haight

Director

Division of Administrative Services

Department of Fish and Game

P.O. Box 115526

Juneau, AK 99811

(907)465-5999

Begin forwarded message:

From: Richard Steiner <richard.g.steiner@gmail.com>
Date: April 4, 2014 at 11:27:47 AM AKDT
To: Cora Campbell <cora.campbell@alaska.gov>
Subject: Public Records Request

Dear Commissioner Campbell,

Under the auspices of the Alaska Public Records Act, I am requesting copies of documents that enumerate **the total number of wolves and bears killed statewide by the State of Alaska**, pursuant to its Intensive Management programs. The information I am requesting should cover the total take statewide by ADFG, or its agents, over **the past 5 years**.

You had been copied on my earlier unsuccessful attempts to obtain this information outside of a public records request, and thus will request such through the Act. I would appreciate the information being sent electronically.

I look forward to hearing from you on this.

Regards,

--

Rick Steiner

Oasis Earth

Anchorage, Alaska

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[907-360-4503](tel:907-360-4503)