



MEMORANDUM

TO: Rachel Bylsma
Deputy Chief of Staff

DATE: April 1, 2026 (Amended
May 7, 2026*)

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Regulations & Legislative Research
Section

SUBJECT: Department of Fish and
Game Regulatory Reform Plan under
Administrative Order 360

FROM: Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner,
Department of Fish and Game

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Vincent-Lang".

In accordance with guidance for implementation of Governor Dunleavy's Administrative Order (AO) 360, this memorandum constitutes the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Regulatory Reform Plan to reduce discretionary regulatory requirements by 15 percent by December 31, 2026.

AO360 also directs the State's licensing and permitting agencies to make recommendations to improve permitting processes. While some changes are outlined in this reform plan, additional recommendations are being developed concurrently with AO359. Licensing and permitting improvements are focused on increasing consistency in processes, simplifying application requirements, streamlining workflows, and enhancing interagency coordination.

Agency Baseline Calculation

Department-wide, ADF&G identified approximately 338 discretionary requirements under Fish and Game regulations in Title 5 of the Alaska Administrative Code (AAC). The department's baseline count does not include Boards of Fisheries and Game regulations, which will be provided in each board's regulatory reform plan.

The baseline goal for 2026 is to reduce discretionary requirements to approximately 288. ADF&G will achieve the 2026 reduction goal by focusing on the regulatory requirements identified under the department's authority in Title 5.

The baseline may increase after review of all guidance documents and materials adopted by reference, which will be the focus of upcoming efforts to achieve the cumulative 25 percent reduction of discretionary regulatory requirements by December 31, 2027.

Stakeholder Engagement

ADF&G has solicited and considered stakeholder recommendations regarding regulations and materials incorporated by reference that are most burdensome and should be prioritized for reform.

Recommendations from the public will continue to be considered during review and actions by the department to revise regulations.

The open public scoping period for the following regulations occurred between October 29, 2025, and December 15, 2025:

- Title 5, Chapter 39 (5 AAC 39.109, .110, .130, .132, .135, .195, and .198) regarding commercial fishing reporting requirements, release of information, and foreign fish processing permits.
- Title 5, Chapter 40 (5 AAC 40.100 – .990) regarding private nonprofit salmon and shellfish hatcheries.
- Title 5, Chapter 41 (5 AAC 41.200 – .400) regarding aquatic farming.
- Title 5, Chapter 93 (5 AAC 93.001 – .080) regarding miscellaneous department programs, including permit applications, fee schedules, endangered species, wildlife stocking, and raffles and auctions of big game harvest permits.
- Title 5, Chapter 93 (5 AAC 93.200 – .235) regarding the educational fishery program. [external link](#)
- Title 5, Chapter 93 (5 AAC 93.310 – .400) regarding salmon use and salmon fishery associations.
- Title 5, Chapters 75 and 93 (5 AAC 75.007 and 5 AAC 93.510 – .595) regarding fish and game licensing, license vendors, and reciprocal sport fishing license program for Yukon residents.

The open public scoping period for the following regulations occurred between December 12, 2025, and January 12, 2026:

- Title 5, Chapter 95 regarding fish and game habitat, prohibited activities, and special areas

All comments received from stakeholders and the public are summarized in Attachment 1.

Proposed Regulatory Reform

Many existing regulations are essential to supporting ADF&G's mission to protect, maintain, and improve the fish, game, and aquatic plant resources of the state, and manage their uses 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. However, regulations can be improved to enhance clarity, streamline processes, and reduce unnecessary burden for industry, communities, and individual hunters and fishery participants.

ADF&G's review identifies opportunities to modernize procedures, consolidate redundant requirements, and clarify expectations, while maintaining the regulatory safeguards critical to fisheries and game management and habitat protection. Reforms align with the Governor's expectation to maintain harvest opportunities, support economic activity, and ensure that Alaska's

regulatory system remains effective, defensible, and responsive, delivering meaningful regulatory reform that benefits all Alaskans.

The department prioritized reforms that:

- Enhance regulatory efficiency by reducing and streamlining repetitive administrative processes and fee structures
- Reduce unnecessary delays and compliance costs while enhancing data collection by modernizing and simplifying reporting and permitting regulations for commercial fisheries and sport fishing guides and operators statewide

Projects identified for 2026:

5 AAC 39.130: Rewrite and reorganize sections to clarify and streamline permitting and reporting requirements for fishermen, processors, buyers, exporters, transporters, and operators of commercial fishing vessels. Clarifies language for permitting each facility or vessel, modernizes fish ticket and eLandings requirements, updates language for Commercial Operator's Annual Reports (COAR), and revises definitions for clarity. Changes will help improve consistency and support accurate, timely commercial fisheries reporting.

5 AAC 39.132: Repeal. This section requires annual surveys for seafood processing capacity. These surveys were historically used to assess salmon processing needs but have been conducted only intermittently for specific fisheries when capacity concerns arise. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires the governor to determine whether adequate domestic processing capacity exists, and whether that capacity will be used to process the available harvest, in considering whether to allow foreign fish processors into state waters. Because modern reporting tools now provide the information needed, mandatory surveys are no longer necessary or utilized annually.

5 AAC 39.198: Repeal. This section allows foreign-flagged vessels to process fish in Alaska's waters. The regulation has not been used in decades and now serves only as an unnecessary allowance for competition with domestic processors. Repealing this section removes an outdated provision and aligns with goals prioritizing domestic industry in Alaska and the U.S.

5 AAC 75.009: Repeal. This section establishes the effective date for the hatchery surcharge under AS 16.05.340(j), which has since sunset and is no longer in effect.

5 AAC 75.076: Modernize online reporting requirements by removing year-specific reference for materials adopted by reference and clarifying language for proper electronic submission of logbook data to streamline compliance for sport fishing guide operators, improving data accuracy and timeliness, reducing confusion caused by outdated references, and eliminating the need for operators to obtain new forms each year.

5 AAC 93.060: Remove unnecessary fees and align fee structure across Division of Sport Fish access site cabins and other public use facilities. Reduce front counter workload and administrative

burden and ensure fair public access to reservations by implementing a 24/7 online system for bookings, cancellations, changes, and automated receipts and reminders.

5 AAC 93.010: Simplify fee structure for public use of state-owned shooting range facilities by removing fees that are no longer utilized and reducing some fee prices in regulation.

5 AAC 93.070: Update material adopted by reference to the more recent and well-established Division of Wildlife Conservation Wildlife Transplant Policy.

*5 AAC 95.011: Annual updates to the *Atlas and Catalog of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* adopted by reference, which streamlines habitat permitting processes.

5 AAC 95.500 – .640: Review and streamline management plans adopted by reference, maintaining requirements for the protection and preservation of fish and wildlife populations and critical habitat while providing decisional flexibility to allow for hunting, trapping, fishing, subsistence activities, wildlife viewing, photography, recreation, and other public uses of special areas.

5 AAC: Errors and Omissions. Under a delegation of authority issued by the Alaska Board of Fisheries, ADF&G annually proposes to adopt regulation changes correcting errors and omissions, ambiguities, and technical deficiencies.

5 AAC: Improve consistency in phrases, terminology, and definitions. To improve clarity and understanding of regulatory requirements for the public, technical changes may be identified such as grammatical changes, removing definitions that are repeated in multiple sections and applying the definitions chapter-wide, or making consistent references across regulations.

Approved Deadline Extensions

ADF&G received a deadline extension to complete and submit its baseline calculation and 2026 Regulatory Reform Plan by April 1, 2026.