

STATE OF ALASKA  
ANNUAL REPORT  
ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE III  
WATER RESOURCES PLANNING ACT  
PL 89-80

Report Period - October 1, 1979 - March 31, 1981, Federal FY 80.

Water resources planning in Alaska received a funding augmentation from Title III in FY 80 which allowed a substantial expansion of the program. Uncertainty over the level of funding plus negotiations on the resolution of the 1973-78 audit delayed the grant award and, as a result, many of the Title III activities took place in the latter part of the reporting period. Much of the emphasis of the Title III program was preparation for the anticipated increase in state grants funding. We now know that is not to be (probably); however, many products were realized which should be a benefit to Alaska.

A. Accomplishments

1. Instream Flow

The Department of Fish and Game completed analysis of the Willow and Deception Creeks instream flow data. Recommendations to improve field and computer analysis procedures have also been drafted and incorporated into the two reports:

ADF&G, 1980. "A synthesis and evaluation of ADF&G fish and wildlife resources information for the Willow and Talkeetna Sub-basin." Habitat Protection Section. Anchorage. 180 pp.

Estes, C.C., K. Hepler, and A. Hoffmann, 1981. "Willow-Deception Creeks instream flow demonstration study (draft)." ADF&G. Habitat Protection Section and Sports Fish Division. Anchorage. 71 pp.

A subcommittee of the Alaska Land Managers' Cooperative Task Force, an organization comprised of state and federal land managing agencies and the Alaska Federation of Natives, was formed on instream flows. The purpose of this subcommittee is coordination and cooperation in quantifying instream flows in Alaska. Subcommittee members will pursue the development of joint budgets toward that end and help review the instream flow reservation regulations which are being written by the Department of Natural Resources.

## 2. Placer Mining

1980 was a busy year for placer mining in Alaska. The state agencies most involved, the Departments of Natural Resources, Environmental Conservation and Fish and Game, concentrated on developing a single permit process for miners and on a coordinated agency field presence. The triagency permits proved workable and have been improved based on the experience gained from the 1980 season. The placer mining working group identified in the 1980 grant application has been instrumental in maintaining the cooperation necessary for implementing the triagency permit and coordinating field visits.

## 3. Regional Studies

At the end of the reporting period the Kotzebue Sound regional guide was in draft form in preparation for review distribution. With the apparent demise of the Title III program as a funding source, this guide will be examined closely for a determination on whether to seek state funding for the entire project (regional guides for all of Alaska).

Water resources in the Bristol Bay region were investigated in FY 80. A hydrologic reconnaissance of Togiak River, an important fishery, was supported in part by the Title III program and water use by seafood processors was investigated.

The Alaska Waterbodies Study developed ethnohistorical and navigability reports on the Gulkana River, the Western Bristol Bay region, the Kvichak River area and lakes of the Upper Alaska Peninsula, and the Nushagak River System.

"Water Resources Investigation of the Nenana Agricultural Project Area" was completed. A conclusion of the study was that available data on the area was insufficient for decisions on project size agriculture development requiring irrigation. The exploratory well drilled indicated low water yield and possible water quality problems with nickel and arsenic. As part of the study a data collection strategy to obtain adequate water resources information for the area was developed.

## 4. Floodplain Management

Through the Title III program the Department of Natural Resources provided review and technical assistance to the State Assistance Program funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. During the 1980 legislative session the state law accepting blanket responsibility for flood control projects was repealed. This will allow more careful review and consideration by the state for alternative methods of flood control.

5. Water Resources Planning Coordination

The Alaska Water Resources Board met four times during the reporting period. An important event was the Board accepting responsibility as the state 208 Water Quality Planning Advisory Board. Comprised of seven citizen members, the board continued to provide valuable citizen input into agency programs and also functioned as a forum for discussion of the water resources problems of the general public. At the meetings the Title III program was reviewed and open for public comment.

The Water Resources Working Group was reactivated during the reporting period. Meetings concentrated on discussions of current activities and on the development of a cooperative agreement on coordination of programs. This cooperative agreement was still in draft form at the close of the fiscal year.

6. Water Use Data System

The Water Use Data System program of the Department of Natural Resources (principally a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey) was initiated in FY 80. The Department has procured hardware that will enable it to access the Alaska Land and Resource System and is developing water use data collection strategies for the major water user types in the state.

7. Community Water Use Studies

An Interagency Personnel Act agreement was entered into with the U.S. Geological Survey to have expert staff for the provision of information on ground-water availability for proposed land disposal sites.

Prince of Wales Island Community Profiles were brought to near completion during the fiscal year. Part of a continuing series, these community profiles provide baseline data necessary to do community planning for 7 communities on Prince of Wales Island in Southeast Alaska. Data includes: history, economy, government, facilities, land status, physical features and environmental conditions. Data on land use, ownership, community facilities, physical features and utilities is overlain on aerial photographs of each community.

As of March 31, 1981, the community profiles were completed to a print-ready state. Printing will occur during the month of April with delivery of the completed profiles the first week of May.

8. Water Management Library Organization

Under a reimbursable service agreement with the Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center the nearly 1,000

items in the shelves of the water management section were organized. These publications can now be located by author, title, geographical location and key words.

9. Special Districts

"Organizing for Cooperative Water Resources Development" was printed and distributed during the reporting period. The report was designed to give general information on the use of districts and nonprofit corporations in the development of water resources projects in Alaska. The report discusses the capabilities of cooperative organizations and suggests model legislation that would enable the establishment of districts.

10. Training and Education

Title III funds were used to send one or more water resources personnel to the following courses:

Snow Survey Training School  
ADABAS Data Base Management System  
Using and Choosing Contractors  
Principles of Federal Grants, Contracts and Cooperative Agreements  
Instream Flow Field Techniques Short Course  
Water Resources Remote Sensing Workshop  
Hydrology and Hydraulics for Fishery Biologists  
Surface Water Dynamics  
Instream Flow Computer Analysis

In addition the Water Management Section of DNR presented three water officer training sessions, in February, August and December of 1980 and a placer mining workshop in July.

B. Modifications

The only major change in the approved program was the failure to accomplish integration of the Department of Environmental Conservation's data base management system into DNR's Alaska Land and Resource System (ALARS). This activity was to be done via a reimbursable services agreement between the two agencies but wasn't because of a lack of time plus communication and accounting problems. Some of the funds allocated to this project were reprogrammed into community profiles and regional water planning guide activities. \$21,400 will be returned to the WRC.

C. Impact of Title III Funds.

In the past four years Title III funds have been used principally to fund new programs or activities, promote coordination between agencies and provide training for staff. With these funds it has

been possible to bring planners onto the water management staff and begin to integrate planning into the water rights administration process. Partly as a result of the Title III program, water resources has become a much more visible management activity.