

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Alaska Coastal Program

*2012-2016 Strategic Plan*



# ALASKA COASTAL PROGRAM CONTACTS

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**Front Cover:** Trumpeter swans in Spring Creek, Alaska by Jeremiah Millen.

**Back Cover:** Salmonids schooling in a clearwater Matanuska-Susitna waterbody by Jeffrey Anderson.

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# Executive Summary

This document updates the strategic plan and direction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Alaska Coastal Program for the period of 2012-2016. This plan contributes to Service-wide actions to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

The guiding vision, organizational mission, and priority conservation activities identified in this plan reflect regional and national guidance and the interests of key stakeholders and partners in Alaska. Incorporating the needs of our partners is central to this plan since the Alaska Coastal Program conservation delivery framework relies on working with others inside and outside the Service to achieve stated goals. This plan complements other Service programs including Fisheries, Endangered Species (ES), Conservation Planning Assistance (CPA), the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) System, Migratory Bird Management, and Marine Mammals Management. It draws on current Service priorities and initiatives including the Climate Change Strategic Plan, Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs), Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC), and the National Fish Habitat Partnership, or NFHP.

This document also considers planning efforts external to the Service such as the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADFG) statewide and regional plans, the Alaska Wildlife Action Plan, and other local aquatic resource, land use, and watershed plans. Where appropriate, the plan integrates the priorities of other habitat restoration and protection funding programs such as the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund (AKSSF), National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant (NCWG) Program, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), Pacific Joint Ventures (PJV), and Tribal Wildlife Grants (TWG).

In addition, the Alaska Coastal Program has led or participated in habitat assessment projects and conservation planning specific to individual land ownerships, watersheds, and wetland complexes. These local plans and activities inform work activities identified herein.

Strategic planning is an on-going priority for the Alaska Coastal Program. Inclusion of stakeholders and other Service programs in this process provides a broad understanding of the important issues and priorities of our partners. This enables the Alaska Coastal Program to deliver cost-effective projects relevant to the goals of the Service and our partners.

Consistent with national guidance, the primary goals of the Alaska Coastal Program are to:

1. Conserve coastal habitat.
2. Broaden and strengthen conservation partnerships.
3. Improve information-sharing and communication.
4. Enhance program workforce.
5. Strengthen program accountability.

In order to achieve these goals, program staff work with partners to implement the following objectives:

1. Identify important habitats for species of concern within geographic focus areas.
2. Carry out priority conservation actions (i.e., assessment and prioritization of habitats, protection and restoration of key habitats, and outreach).
3. Leverage existing and/or new partners and funding sources to execute strategic actions and track results.

4. Maintain workforce expertise and working relationships with other Service programs in order to sustain the diverse biological, planning, project management, and assessment skill sets needed to accomplish program goals.

The identification and execution of this plan's action steps is guided by the following considerations:

1. Does the action significantly benefit Service trust species and Service priorities?
2. Does it support the needs of our partners and existing partnerships (e.g., NFHP, LCCs)?
3. Does it enhance habitat connectivity between federal, state, or local designated fish and wildlife habitat areas, NWRs, parks and/or habitats of particular importance to communities in Alaska?
4. Does the action strengthen relationships with partners and their capacity to help the Service meet its mission?
5. Does the action leverage additional non-federal funds and in-kind support?

Strategic planning is a dynamic and iterative process. The Alaska Coastal Program will continue to refine this plan in response to new climate change information, emerging needs of Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs), and regional and national priorities.

# Acknowledgements

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ShoreZone / <http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/shorezone/>



*Semipalmated plover eggs resting  
just beyond the tide's reach on the  
Kenai Peninsula near Aialik Glacier.*  
Photo by Katrina Mueller



# Regional Overview

## Significance of Alaska's Coastal Ecosystems

Alaska is a land of superlatives. The State of Alaska is one fifth the size of the contiguous United States. It has over 45,000 linear miles of coastline (over half of the nation's total). Alaska's surface water resources include approximately three million lakes greater than five acres and 12,000 rivers: many of these coastally-connected systems support anadromous fish.

The coastal Alaska landscape is dominated by extensive wetland habitats. Alaska contains almost two-thirds of the total wetland acreage in the U.S. Wetlands provide a variety of functions that substantially contribute to the health of fish and wildlife populations, physical ecosystem services, and to the economic well-being of the state and the nation.

Alaska's diverse coastal habitats range from steep, rocky coasts and fjords to mudflats, eelgrass lagoons, and large, river valleys. Coastal wetlands in Alaska generally include bogs, muskegs, wet and moist tundra, fens, marshes, swamps, and salt marshes.

Deepwater habitats also include bays, sounds and inlets. Alaska is dominated by palustrine vegetated wetlands. Shrub and herbaceous bogs are conspicuous features of the landscape in Southcentral and Southeast Alaska. These areas also include floodplain wetlands and wetlands in deltas of large river systems such as the Copper and the Stikine. Wetlands in Alaska vary in elevation from tidal systems at sea level to hillside slopes at 1,500 feet in elevation.

Alaska wetlands, coastal areas and other habitats are nationally and internationally significant. Alaska is home to millions of ducks, seabirds, and geese, thousands of miles of streams that support



anadromous and resident fish, and hundreds of thousands of marine mammals. Over half of the state's surface area is deemed suitable waterfowl habitat. Upwards of 10-12 million ducks, one million geese, and 120,000 swans are a part of annual waterfowl migrations to and from Alaska. Visitors and residents marvel at these and other wildlife spectacles along much of Alaska's long coastline.

Alaska hosts fish and wildlife species that are shared by Canada, Mexico, Russia, Japan and other countries. Five of the 58 sites designated in the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network are located in Alaska. The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance designated the Izembek State Game Refuge and the Izembek NWR as the U.S.'s first Wetland of International Importance. Izembek Lagoon is a critical stopover for nearly the entire world population of Black Brant. To date, the National Audubon Society has identified and designated 145 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Alaska, the majority of which are ranked as globally significant and almost all of which are coastal. Alaska has almost half of all globally significant IBAs identified in the U.S.



Chiswell Islands. K. Mueller / USFWS

## Regional Overview

Alaska's coastal regions support abundant marine and anadromous fish species. Five species of Pacific salmon are present in Alaska's coastal waters and rivers. In the Bristol Bay region alone, more than 100 million sockeye salmon return each year to spawn.

No group of species is more important to sustaining the state's vibrant subsistence culture and economy than salmon. Recent economic studies underscore this point. For example, commercial and recreational fishing support over 40,000 total jobs in Alaska and over \$1 billion of total income to Alaska workers (UA/ISER 2001).

A more recent study commissioned by Trout Unlimited (and using data from 2007) found that the total economic output from commercial, sport and subsistence salmon and trout fisheries is an estimated \$986 million in Southeast Alaska.

This same study found a significant amount of jobs are directly linked to salmon and trout — approximately 7,282 estimated jobs were directly or indirectly linked to the fisheries or hatchery operations.

Three fishing sectors — commercial, sport, and subsistence/personal — accounted for an estimated 10.8 percent of regional employment in southeast Alaska.

In 2009, the University of Alaska Institute for Social and Economic Research published its report analyzing the economic importance of sportfishing in the Matanuska-Susitna (Mat-Su) Borough:

- In 2007, resident and nonresident anglers fished almost 300,000 days.
- Anglers spent anywhere between \$63 million and \$163 million in the Borough on goods and services primarily used for sport fishing.

- Alaska residents spent an average of between \$126 and \$517 per angler day, while nonresidents spent an average of between \$344 and \$602.
- After accounting for multiplier effects, this spending generated between 900 and 1,900 jobs and between \$31 million and \$64 million of personal income for people who work in the Borough.
- Sport fishing activity in the Mat-Su generated between \$6 million and \$15 million in state and local taxes.

*Commercial and recreational fishing support over 40,000 total jobs in Alaska and over \$1 billion of total income to Alaska workers (photo contributed by Phil Brna).*



## Regional Overview

### Resource Issues: Threats & Challenges

Alaska's fish and wildlife populations and coastal areas appear virtually pristine to the casual observer. However, they face many of the same issues and threats challenging the rest of the U.S. Alaska's coastal resources are vulnerable to both natural and human impacts. Earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis can radically alter coastal habitat and wetlands in a single event.

More than three quarters of the state's population lives near the coast, with the largest growth occurring in Southcentral Alaska. Over 80% of the state's economic activity – including the majority of its fishing, tourism, logging, and oil and gas development – occurs near the coast. Resource extraction and urbanization pose a significant potential threat to currently intact coastal habitats.

Tourism, one of the fastest growing industries in the state, brings its own suite of impacts to fish and wildlife habitats. Visitors and residents alike enjoy the state's wildlife and scenic beauty. Improved public access to wildlife viewing and recreation areas provides important economic benefits to the state and local communities.

Increased public access can also result in habitat degradation and the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species. When poorly managed, urbanization, tourism, and the state's resource-based economy can pose a threat to Alaska's coastal wildlife, land, and water resources. In addition to the near-term threats associated with development, Alaska's coastal habitats and associated ecosystem services are vulnerable to climate change.

Neglecting to conserve and protect intact coastal habitat and wetlands in Alaska today may prove to be a costly oversight from an economic, community, and fish and wildlife management perspective.

Communities across the country are spending significant resources to restore coastal estuaries, riparian habitat, and wetland functions. By implementing proactive community-supported coastal habitat conservation projects, the Alaska Coastal Program can help safeguard important habitats for the present and future benefit of fish, wildlife, and the American public.

Cecil Rich / USFWS

*The introduction and spread of nonnative species – such as submersed aquatic plants in the genus *Elodea* – is becoming an increasing problem in Alaska. Invasives can out-compete native species, alter coastal and inland habitats, and be difficult (if not impossible) to eradicate.*

*Streambanks and riparian habitats can be impacted at high-use recreation areas.*

David Wigglesworth / USFWS



## Regional Overview

### Conservation Delivery Opportunities for Alaska Coastal Program

As a direct conservation assistance program, the Alaska Coastal Program invests funding, staff time, technical expertise, and other resources into coastal habitat conservation projects in partnership with non-governmental organizations, private landowners, local governments, state agencies and Alaska Native organizations.

The Alaska Coastal Program implements strategic actions benefiting migratory birds, anadromous fish, and other native species and their habitats.

While the flexibility of the Coastal Program allows for execution of a broad range of strategic conservation actions, the ability of local staff to work with willing private landowners to conserve habitat in perpetuity is a unique program attribute nationally and an important program emphasis in Alaska.

The Alaska Coastal Program has established an effective conservation delivery framework. The framework is built on the following key components:

- *Targeted Geographical Focus Areas:* Conserve key habitats within the strategic geographic framework outlined in identified focus areas.

#### The Alaska Coastal Program leverages funds in partnership with others including:

- **National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program – funds habitat conservation projects throughout the U.S.**
- **Coastal Impact Assistance Program – supports conservation actions to mitigate habitat impacts associated with offshore oil and gas development.**
- **Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund – leverages projects to address the habitat and management information needs necessary to sustain healthy populations of pacific salmon.**
- **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – supports a broad suite of habitat protection and restoration initiatives.**
- **Land Trust in-lieu fee programs – used by land trusts to ensure no net loss of marine and freshwater wetland habitat important to salmon, migratory birds and other wildlife.**
- **Private foundations – provide non-federal funding to conservation partners which can match Coastal Program funds.**

### Coastal Program at Work in Alaska

The mission of the Alaska Coastal Program is to conserve healthy coastal ecosystems for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and people. We accomplish our strategic goals by:

- **Providing technical assistance and substantial involvement in project implementation.**
- **Executing cooperative funding agreements with our partners to assess, protect and restore wetland, riparian, and upland coastal habitats.**
- **Serving as an information center for habitat conservation funding from multiple federal programs.**
- **Collaborating with NFHP, LCCs, and other partnership programs.**

- *Voluntary Conservation Partnerships:* Implement projects through cooperative agreements with community-based non-federal partners.

- *Technical Assistance:* Service staff bring expertise to and hands-on involvement in all coastal projects.

- *Cross-Program and Interagency Coordination:* Coordinate with other Service programs, including FHPs and LCCs, to identify, prioritize and execute coastal conservation projects.

- *Leverage Program Resources:* Enhance the reach of Region 7 Coastal Program funds by identifying projects that also meet the goals and objectives of other federal, state, local and private coastal habitat conservation funders.

- *Continuous Improvement:* Provide training and access to technical resources to maintain staff competencies. Coordinate with LCCs to improve program capacity to integrate climate change information into program activities.

The Alaska program is comprised of the Southeast and Southcentral service areas. Both service areas are managed by field office biologists. A Program Coordinator is located in the Regional Office in Anchorage, providing a nexus between field activities, the Regional Office, other Service Program areas and the National Coastal Program office in Washington, D.C.

The Southcentral Alaska service area has one permanent full-time employee located in the Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office (FWFO). The Southcentral program serves all of Southcentral Alaska, Kodiak, Southwest Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. Several large federally-managed conservation system-units are located in this service area in addition to many state-managed conservation units. The majority of the state's privately owned land is in this area.

The Southeast Alaska service area has the equivalent of one full-time employee located in the Juneau FWFO. The Southeast program serves the Alaska Panhandle north to Icy Bay. The glacially carved watersheds of Southeast support abundant runs of Pacific salmon and other marine species, supported by some of the last intact temperate rainforest in North America.

## Regional Overview

While the much of the land area in southeast Alaska is managed by the U.S. Forest Service, over two million acres of State, local and private Alaska Native Corporate lands offer a rich diversity of coastal habitat also important to many bird species and terrestrial mammals. Many endemic subspecies of animals are found on the islands of Southeast Alaska.

The Alaska Coastal Program is one component of Region 7's overall conservation partnerships initiative that also includes the Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) Program, National Fish Passage Program (NFPP), and NFHP. Each partnership program has unique capabilities and together they create an effective toolbox for conservation delivery. Region 7 manages its combined habitat 'Conservation Partnership' programs under a single Assistant Regional Director, creating greater programmatic and administrative efficiencies. This structure also enables these programs to work seamlessly in order to achieve cost-effective conservation outcomes.

Approximately 70% of the annual Alaska Coastal Program allocation is used to fund projects meeting the conservation objectives of the

program. The remaining 30% is used to support the Service staff that provide technical assistance to partners and assist with project implementation.

Because the Alaska Region includes more coastline than all of the other Regions combined and because it receives the smallest annual national program allocation, the Alaska Coastal Program is judicious and strategic about where, when, and how it invests its time and resources into conservation projects. With additional resources beyond its current allocation, the Alaska Coastal Program would:

- Fully vest the core Alaska Coastal Program service areas in Southeast and Southcentral Alaska at fiscal levels commensurate with other national programs.
- Increase its conservation delivery to underserved areas including: Southeast communities (Sitka, Prince of Wales, Ketchikan), the Kodiak and Afognak Archipelago and Southwest Alaska.
- Expand program participation in the activities of LCCs and FHPs.

- Enhance inventory and prioritization of wetland parcels in Southwest and Southeast Alaska for conservation and restoration.
- Inform coastal conservation management decisions by enhancing investments in actions to integrate climate change science and information into existing habitat assessment and prioritization decision-support tools;
- Enhance delivery of GIS support services to statewide land trusts, watershed councils, and small municipalities.

Examples of recent Coastal Program successes in Alaska can be viewed on the Region's website at: <http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/restoration/coastal.htm>.

Clark James Mishler

*Youth Employment in Parks,  
Campbell Creek Project.*



# Goal 1: Conserve Coastal Habitat

*protect the best and restore the rest*



Right: Black oystercatcher.  
Photo by K.Mueller

Habitat loss or degradation is a leading threat to the sustainability of coastal resources in North America, including Alaska. In order to address this threat, the Alaska Coastal Program works with private landowners, the State of Alaska, Alaska Natives, regional and national non-governmental organizations, local communities, and other Service programs to voluntarily conserve intact habitats and to restore degraded habitats for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people. In Alaska, our strategy is to *protect the best habitat and restore the rest.*

## Goal 1 Objectives

1. Implement voluntary habitat conservation actions supported by scientific research, identified in habitat assessments, and prioritized in watershed or habitat conservation plans.
2. Facilitate stewardship of coastal habitats and achieve efficiencies in habitat conservation delivery at multiple scales.
3. Increase investment in coastal habitat conservation and restoration by working with partners to leverage resources from and stewardship actions by other federal, state and local agencies, communities and the private sector.

## Sustaining Value of Protected Lands

The Coastal Program has strong positive working relations with the State of Alaska resulting in the first comprehensive inventory of private in-holdings (and their associated habitat value) inside State Game Refuges and Game Sanctuaries in the Cook Inlet region.

## Key Strategic Activities, Objective 1

1.1 Identify private land, other coastal habitats, and restoration opportunities within geographic focus areas. Sub-activities include but are not limited to:

- a. Identifying and mapping habitats; and assessing conservation needs.
- b. Determining potential threats to these habitats and their importance to anadromous fish, migratory birds, and other trust resources in partnership with stakeholders.

1.2 Prioritize habitat conservation actions for annual project implementation (including restoration and protection of key habitats, and education and outreach). Sub-activities include:

- a. Prioritizing these habitats based on their conservation values and species benefits (e.g., fish, wetland type, wildlife use, and anadromous waters classification).
- b. Determining the ecosystem functions these habitats provide for fish and wildlife including: stormwater retention, and water quality/ quantity.
- c. Considering community values such as open space, fishing access, recreation, and other social values in proportion to ecosystem function.

1.3 Collaborate with land trusts and other partners to secure funding to implement priority habitat conservation actions and bolster private landowner contributions to a network of protected coastal/riparian habitats within identified focus areas.

1.4 Execute cooperative funding agreements with program partners to implement priority conservation actions.

1.5 Evaluate conservation and restoration actions to track outcomes, improve decision-support tools (e.g., assessment methods and GIS analysis) and overall program effectiveness.

## Southeast Alaska GIS library: a case study in information delivery

The Coastal Program has been an institutional partner in the Southeast Alaska GIS Library since 2009. This State, Federal, NGO and University partnership serves almost 100 natural resource GIS datasets through an online data portal to students, researchers, land managers, and decision makers. See Library holdings and interact with this unique site at:

<http://seakgis.alaska.edu/>



## Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest

### Key Strategic Activities, Objective 2

*(Facilitate stewardship of coastal habitats and achieve efficiencies in habitat conservation delivery at a landscape scale)*

2.1 Foster robust external partnerships with local communities, private landowners, state and federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations through conservation technical assistance provided by Alaska Coastal Program staff.

2.2 Collaborate with Fisheries and Ecological Services programs, NWRs, and Alaska-based LCCs and FHPs. Sub-activities include:

- a. Lead and /or participate on the technical committees of Alaska-based FHPs.
- b. Use habitat assessments to inform conservation actions of FHPs and facilitate land trust participation in FHPs.
- c. Consult with PFW, NFHP, and NFPP staff to ensure effective and strategic use of annual program allocations.
- d. Work with LCCs to identify coastal habitat conservation information needs and to incorporate the latest information

### Supporting NFHP in Alaska

**Coastal Program funding and staff expertise have been strategically deployed to assist with the capacity-building and organizational development needs of Alaska's FHPs. Today, Alaska has three nationally recognized FHPs. Coastal Program resources are now being used to assist the Southeast Alaska candidate FHP work through the strategic planning processes required for national recognition. In addition, Coastal Program funds are also being used to augment project-specific funding needs of Alaska FHPs where there is alignment of program interests. Examples include: funding support for stream gauging, additions to the anadromous waters catalog, conservation of important fish habitat, and stream temperature monitoring to help improve understanding of climate change impacts on stream temperatures and salmon sustainability.**

### Technical Assistance Leveraging Funds for Conservation

**Successfully securing competitive state and national grant funds for coastal habitat conservation projects is a challenge for even the most sophisticated partner organization. Partners take advantage of the technical expertise provided by Coastal Program staff to leverage non-federal funds that support Coastal and other Service Program projects and missions. For example, in Southeast Alaska, the Coastal Program has been instrumental in helping Trout Unlimited create sufficient capacity to hire a coordinator for the Southeast Alaska FHP. In Southcentral Alaska, the Coastal Program partnered with Great Land Trust (GLT) to leverage non-federal funds to support outreach to private individuals owning lands with important salmon spawning and rearing habitats. This is now leading to greater coordination between the Coastal Program, GLT and the Service's Fisheries Program to prioritize and deliver outreach to landowners with the best salmon habitat.**

on climate change into annual Coastal Program project selection decision-making.

- e. Facilitate Coastal Program partner involvement in LCC activities to the degree practicable.
- f. Work with Kenai NWR and the Kenai Peninsula FHP to identify private lands habitat conservation actions in support of climate change adaptation (e.g., habitat refugia, habitat connectivity).
- g. Partner with the Service's CPA Program to help inform coastal habitat conservation through in-lieu fee habitat acquisitions and other conservation actions.

2.3 Expand the use of Alaska Coastal Program expertise with external partners to foster voluntary actions to avoid, minimize or restore impacts of habitat alteration on fish and other aquatic species. Sub-activities include:

- a. Serve as an information clearinghouse for habitat conservation funding from state and federal programs.
- b. Provide technical assistance and substantial involvement in project implementation from conception to completion.

2.4 Identify and implement projects to ensure that habitat conservation and restoration is an integral component of watershed management actions. Sub-activities include:

a. Continue involvement in and/or support for watershed councils to promote aquatic habitat stewardship activities.

b. Participate in and help support functional watershed assessments and planning through program funding and/or technical assistance.

### Using Science to Set Priorities

**With assistance from the Southeast Alaska Coastal Program and Service staff based in Juneau, the Juneau Watershed Partnership (JWP) completed the Auke Lake Watershed Assessment and Watershed Action Plan. These offer an inventory and assessment of general watershed characteristics and identify unplanned development in the watershed as the greatest threat to fish habitat and water quality in Auke Lake. JWP has also worked closely with Service staff to identify, assess, and map important water resources and fish and wildlife habitats in the Auke Lake, Pederson Hill Creek, and Montana Creek watersheds. The resultant conservation plans provide recommendations for the maintenance of watershed and habitat integrity as future development occurs via such means as conservation and riparian easements, development planning, stormwater management, and the minimization of impervious areas and wetland fill.**



## Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest

### Key Strategic Activities, Objective 3

*(Increase investment in coastal habitat conservation and restoration)*

3.1 Provide technical support to land trusts and other partners applying for funding under NCWG, CIAP, AKSSF, NFWF, private foundations and other funding sources.

3.2 Seek opportunities to participate on habitat conservation and restoration proposal review committees to help inform funding decisions.

3.3 Work with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources to identify opportunities for achieving habitat conservation, with emphasis on private lands within or adjacent to state-managed wildlife refuges and game sanctuaries.

3.4 Coordinate with the Service's CPA Program and FHPs to leverage coastal habitat conservation and restoration through in-lieu fee programs and mitigation banks.

3.5 Partner with local governments and to identify opportunities to integrate habitat conservation and stewardship into overall land-use management actions and local comprehensive plans.

3.6 Strengthen partnership base to address information needs and to identify growth areas for the Alaska program. Sub-activities include but not limited to:

a. Increase Coastal Program capacity in the Southwest and Kodiak geographic focus areas.

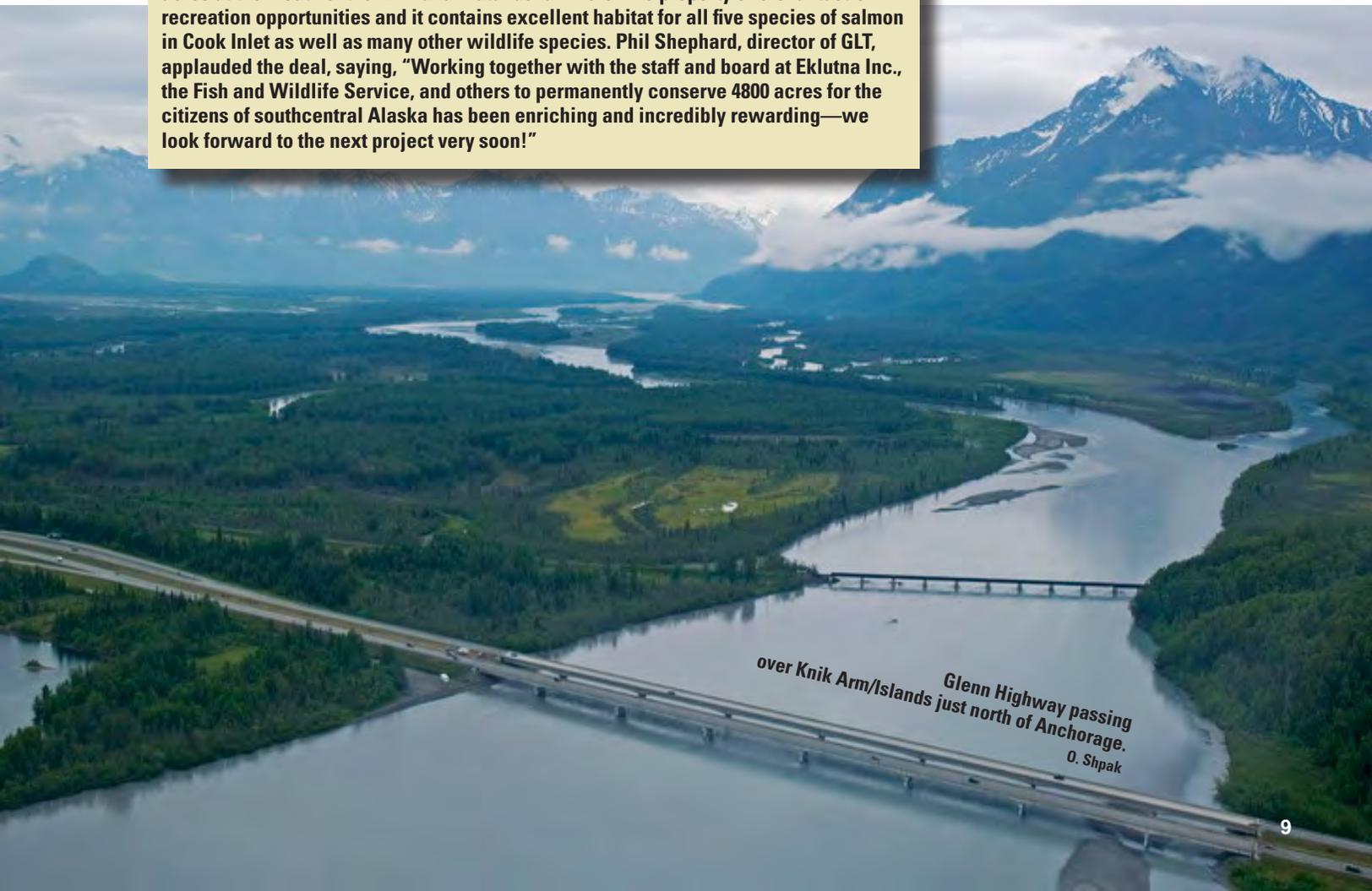
b. Increase Coastal Program capacity in Southeast Alaska through delivery of staffed GIS services to NGO partners and municipalities.

c. Continue to support the needs of land trust partners by investing in the evaluation of services, functions, economic, and social values provided by healthy, intact coastal habitats.

d. Implement partnerships to assess climate change and other threats to designated coastal IBAs. Coordinate with the PFW Program to work with private landowners to conserve bird refugia and to conduct activities to maintain habitat values of private lands within or adjacent to coastal IBAs.

### Partnering with the Alaska Native Community

The Knik Islands Conservation Project resulted in the protection of nearly 4800 acres at the mouth of the Knik and Matanuska Rivers. The property offers fantastic recreation opportunities and it contains excellent habitat for all five species of salmon in Cook Inlet as well as many other wildlife species. Phil Shephard, director of GLT, applauded the deal, saying, "Working together with the staff and board at Eklutna Inc., the Fish and Wildlife Service, and others to permanently conserve 4800 acres for the citizens of southcentral Alaska has been enriching and incredibly rewarding—we look forward to the next project very soon!"



Glenn Highway passing  
over Knik Arm/Islands just north of Anchorage.  
O. Shpak

# Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest

## Performance Measures

Goal 1 Performance Measures are a list of accomplishment metrics as reported through the Service’s Habitat Information Tracking System (HabITS). Through this database, accomplishments are tracked and reported at national, regional and local levels. Measures include quantities of habitat restored or protected, such as wetland acres protected and stream miles restored. Field and Regional Office staff enter performance measure data throughout the year, which is then reported out on an annual basis.

In addition to these spatially explicit measures, the Coastal Program plays an equally important role in habitat conservation through actions that are less easily measured, such as habitat assessment, project and program coordination, landowner consultation, outreach, and grant writing.

The strength of the Alaska Coastal Program lies in its ability to conserve coastal habitats through synergy with numerous and diverse partners, and to build a foundation for new initiatives. For example, we serve as a catalyst for watershed conservation by working with local groups who want to broaden the scope of habitat protection and restoration efforts. Cooperating with watershed groups and land trusts allows us to focus on landscape scale planning and assessment rather than on a project-by-project basis.

Program accomplishments will be tracked through the Technical Assistance portal in HabITS, as well as via fact sheets and case studies for publication on our regional website and other earned media.

## 5-Year Habitat Conservation Targets by Geographic Focus Area

The Alaska Coastal Program’s priority conservation measures for the next five years consist of wetland, uplands and stream miles protected.

The numeric targets (goals) identified in Table 1 were informed by several Alaska Coastal Program-supported habitat prioritization assessments, including the Anchorage Wetland Parcel Prioritization, Resource Mapping of Alaska’s Kenai Peninsula, Prioritization of Lands for Conservation in the Mat-Su Valley, and the State of Alaska Conservation Areas In-holding Assessment.

Because Coastal Program funds cannot be used to acquire a real interest in property, the actual accomplishments over the next five years could be higher or lower depending on several variables outside the direct control of the program including: landowner decisions, real estate markets, actual funding for land conservation and partner capacity.

Table 1: 5 year targets (goals) by geographic focus area.

(5 YEAR TARGETS)	Wetlands		Uplands	Riparian Zone/Stream		
	acres protected	acres restored	acres protected	miles protected	miles restored	barriers removed
Anchorage Bowl	1,275	0.5	3,333	7.0	0.5	0
Kenai Peninsula	165	1.0	54	1.0	0.5	0
Kodiak Island Archipelago	9,000	0.0	61,000	100	0.0	4
Mat-Su Valley	4,000	1.0	3,435	20	0.5	0
Southwest Alaska	52,000	0.0	12,892	200	0.0	0
Southeast Alaska	200	2.0	150	2	0.5	1

The rationale for the targets identified herein are based on several habitat protection assessments funded by the Alaska Coastal Program and communications with “experts” within relevant program partners, FHPs, Kenai NWR, In-lieu Fee/IRTs and local, state, and federal officials. Assessment examples include: 1) Great Land Trust – Anchorage Wetland Parcel Prioritization – 2010 (Top 350 parcels in Municipality of Anchorage (i.e., Anchorage, Girdwood and Eagle River); 2) Kachemak Heritage Land Trust – Resource Mapping of Alaska’s Kenai Peninsula -2007; 3) American Land Conservancy determination of habitat conservation opportunities on Kodiak Archipelago- 2010; 4) Great Land Trust – Prioritization of Lands for Conservation in the Mat-Su Valley – 2010 (Top 500 parcels); 5) The Conservation Fund assessment of habitat conservation opportunities for SW Alaska-2011; 6) Assessment of In-holdings in State Game Refuges and Critical Habitat Areas, 2002. Based on this information, the Coastal Program worked with its land trust partners to finalize the subject 5-year habitat conservation goals. Actual achievement of these goals is influenced by land trust workloads, staff capacity, landowner interest, and funds raised to conserve these habitats.

**Coastal Program funds are not used to acquire an interest in real property. Rather, funds are used to support the myriad of tasks necessary to achieve voluntary coastal conservation. For example, through cooperative agreements with our partners and willing private landowners, program funds support actions including (but not limited to): habitat surveys, parcel prioritizations, landowner outreach and due diligence, and property appraisals. Alaska Coastal Program staff also work with partners to identify sources of funding to achieve habitat conservation goals.**

## Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest



### Geographical Focus Areas

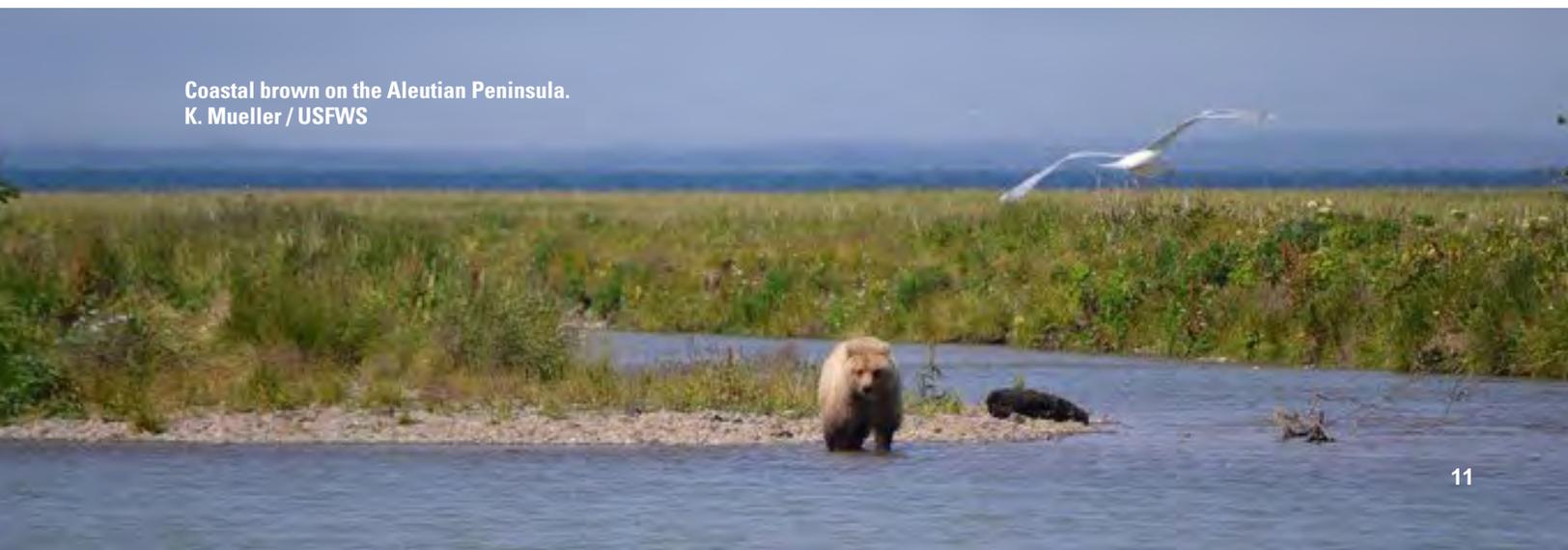
The Coastal Program supports strategic actions that encourage broad partnerships with other Federal, State, Native, and local government agencies, conservation organizations, businesses, and private landowners. Within the Coastal Program, we leverage Service funds with partner funds and in-kind services to increase our ability to conserve important habitats, and assists partners in applying for National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grants,

North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants, and Tribal Wildlife Grants, and grants from other Federal agencies such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Alaska can be characterized as a landscape of intact, fully functioning ecosystems, teeming with waterfowl, marine mammals, and healthy runs of wild fish. Our population centers, with their associated impacts and threats,

are located within this matrix of wild lands. The strategic planning process identified several geographic focus areas where the Alaska Coastal Program's financial resources and human capital will be focused during the next five years. The following geographical areas represent the highest value habitats for Pacific salmon and migratory waterfowl that are most vulnerable to human-caused impacts: *Cook Inlet Basin, Kodiak Archipelago, Southwest Alaska, and the Southeast Alaska Panhandle.*

Coastal brown on the Aleutian Peninsula.  
K. Mueller / USFWS



## Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest

### Cook Inlet Basin

The Cook Inlet Basin includes the Anchorage Bowl, the Mat-Su Valley, and the Kenai Peninsula. Taken together the Cook Inlet Basin encompass nearly 60,000 square miles. This area has a higher percentage of private landownership than other areas served by the Alaska Coastal Program. Elevation in the region spans from sea level to the highest point in North America, Mount McKinley (20,320 feet). Several large rivers (including the Susitna, Kenai and Matanuska) drain glaciers in the surrounding mountains. The entire basin has abundant fish and wildlife resources, with many federal and state designated conservation units, including the majority of the state-managed critical habitat areas, game refuges, and wildlife sanctuaries.

#### *Anchorage Bowl*

Located on the shores of Cook Inlet, the Anchorage Bowl is home to approximately half of the state's human population. This urban area provides unparalleled opportunities to connect people with nature.

Ecosystems within the Bowl include nearshore marine habitats, extensive estuarine mudflats and salt marsh, freshwater streams and lakes, evergreen needle leaf forests, stands of birch and aspen, subalpine shrub thickets, and coastal alpine tundra.

Land ownership consists of a matrix of private and public lands, with an extensive system of municipal parklands, military lands, and



State lands. Land use patterns are diverse, with both commercial and residential lands, surrounded by salt water to the west, and public lands to the north, east, and south.

The area's streams and wetlands are important habitats for five species of Pacific salmon and a variety of plant and animal species of conservation concern. High priority habitats to be targeted for restoration and protection efforts include anadromous waters, wetlands, riparian habitats, and increasingly tenuous aquatic and terrestrial wildlife corridors. Coastal wetlands in this area provide outstanding resting, feeding and breeding habitat for

migratory birds. The area includes the Anchorage Coastal IBA of Continental Significance which supports some of the greatest numbers and diversity of birds in the Anchorage area. Ten thousand or more Snow Geese use the site during spring and fall migration. Approximately 220 bird species have been recorded, of which about 160 occur annually either as migrants or breeders. Bird species of conservation concern that are present include: Peregrine Falcon, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Rusty Blackbird, Trumpeter Swan, and Surfbird.

*Chester Creek/West Chester Lagoon.*



John Schoen

*Campbell Creek estuary*



Municipality of Anchorage

*Campbell Creek estuary*



Carl Johnson



Partners conducting baseline habitat assessments at Knik Islands. D.Wigglesworth / USFWS

*Mat-Su Valley*

Home to nearly 90,000 people, the Mat-Su Valley is encompassed by the Alaska Range to the north, the Talkeetna and Chugach Mountains to the east, Cook Inlet to the south, and the Aleutian Range to the west. The Mat-Su Borough is one of the nation's fastest growing areas: its population has nearly doubled in the past 20 years and is expected to increase for the foreseeable future. Fish and wildlife resources include five species of Pacific salmon, anadromous rainbow trout and Dolly Varden char, and a diversity of migratory birds, including at-risk Tule White-fronted Geese. This focus area was chosen because of rapid and extensive urban development that threatens diverse riparian and in-stream habitats important to native fish and wildlife. Additionally, because it is so close to Anchorage

(Alaska's largest population center), it receives heavy recreational use, which impacts every type of habitat. Land uses include tourism and recreation, gravel extraction, agricultural farming, expanding subdivisions, and large retail establishments.

The Mat-Su Valley is dominated by rolling lowlands featuring hundreds of small lakes, bogs, and clear water streams. Large rivers (including the Susitna, Matanuska, and Knik) drain glaciers in the surrounding mountains. Mixed forests of white and Sitka spruce, aspen, and birch dominate the area. Black spruce stands occur in lowland wet soils, ericaceous (woody, often evergreen) shrubs are dominant in open bogs, and tall scrub plant communities, consisting primarily of willow and alder, occur in floodplains.

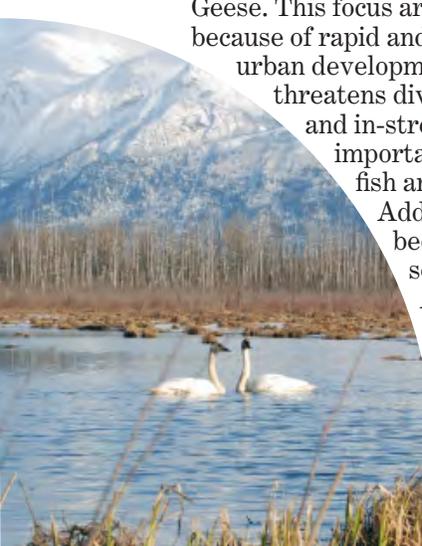
Six designed IBAs (Sheep Mountain, Palmer Hay Flats, Goose Bay, Susitna Flats, Jim Creek

*Chum salmon in Swiftwater Creek. K.Mueller / USFWS*



Basin, and Kahiltna Flats-Petersville Road) are located in this focus area. The Palmer Hayflats IBA annually attracts over 100,000 ducks, 50,000 geese and 15,000 swans in the spring.

In the spring when breakup is late and estuarine habitats in southern Cook Inlet are unavailable, this site is extremely important to waterfowl. Other species of conservation concern that occur include: Trumpeter Swan, Barrow's Goldeneye, Golden Eagle, and Blackpoll Warbler. High priority habitats targeted for restoration and protection in this focus area include anadromous streams, riparian zones, and wetlands.



*Trumpeter swans in Spring Creek. Jeremiah Millen*

## Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest

### Kenai Peninsula

Located south of Anchorage, this focus area includes the Kenai River, one of the most ecologically productive and economically important rivers in the State. Species on the Peninsula include the at-risk population of Kenai brown bears, five species of Pacific salmon, anadromous trout and char, marine mammals including sea otters, and a diversity of migratory birds. Two bird species occurring within this focus area include the Steller's Eider and Kittlitz's murrelet (a threatened species and candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act, respectively).

Land ownership in this focus area is primarily State and Federal, including the Kenai NWR, Kenai Fjords National Park, and the Chugach National Forest. Private land use patterns are residential, with numerous recreational cabins and second homes along the popular fishing streams and rural/wilderness interface. Commercial use is limited primarily to areas adjacent to local communities such as Kenai, Soldotna, Nikiski, and Homer. Oil and gas and hard rock mining have long been

important components of the local economy. Development in this focus area's lower watersheds is occurring rapidly, with new roads crossing anadromous waters and subdivisions encroaching on important wetland habitats. High priority habitats targeted for restoration and protection in this focus area include waters that support anadromous fish.

Kenai Peninsula ecosystems range widely from glaciers, tundra, and stunted boreal forests in headwater areas to salt marshes, muskegs (thick water-saturated accumulations of peat produced by bog succession in glaciated regions), sedge meadows, and numerous forest and shrub communities in lower watersheds. Because of its topography, long coastline, relatively mild climate and abundant fish and wildlife resources, this area has a long tradition of human settlement. The Peninsula's oldest prehistoric site is near the confluence of the Kenai and Russian rivers, dating human use of the Kenai Peninsula to about 8000 B.C. The Dena'ina people have used the Peninsula as a

home since at least 1000 A.D., with evidence of other human habitation in the years between these dates. Russian fur traders began to settle the Peninsula in the late 1700's. After World War II, homestead land became available, and plans developed to create a road connecting Anchorage to both Seward and Homer.

The Peninsula's rich rivers are at the heart of the land and include over 1,000 streams that support anadromous fish and extensive, productive wetlands. Some land on the Peninsula is flat and marshy, dotted with many small lakes, ponds and kettles, while other areas are mostly mountainous.

The Kenai Peninsula contains several large glacial lakes (e.g., Skilak Lake and Tustumena Lake). The Peninsula supports magnificent salmon rivers, including the 82-mile Kenai Russian, Kasilof, Resurrection, and Anchor Rivers.

*Sockeye salmon migrating up the Kenai River. Kentaro Yasui / 2011  
USFWS Alaska Fish Photo Contest.*

*Combat fishing near the Russian/Kenai River confluence.  
K. Mueller / USFWS*

## Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest

*Sea otters in China Poot Bay.*  
K.Mueller / USFWS

*Gull Island.* K.Mueller / USFWS

Near the community of Homer lies the forty-mile long Kachemak Bay. Kachemak Bay encompasses the country's largest National Estuarine Research Reserve; it is the second most significant shorebird staging area recognized in Alaska. Hundreds of thousands of shorebirds pass through annually on their migration. Kachemak Bay is designated by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) as an International Shorebird Reserve. In 1995, the World Bank completed a ten-year inventory of the world's most biologically important marine sites, selecting one hundred fifty-five sites focusing on genetic diversity, breeding and migration, biological productivity, and important habitat for endangered species. Kachemak Bay was one of only two sites selected in the U.S.

This Kenai Peninsula contains 13 designated IBAs, some of which are of Global Significance such as the Kachemak Bay South Shore IBA. Two areas within the IBA are particularly significant: Gull Island and China Poot Bay.

China Poot Bay is one of two (along with Fox River Flats) primary fall staging areas for dabbling ducks. It is also major seaduck habitat for inner Kachemak Bay. Over 5,000 Mallards and 7,000 Black, Surf and White-winged Scoters overwinter. Flocks of Steller's Eiders, Mallards and scoters also traditionally use the mouth of China Poot Bay in winter. Gull Island is one of the most productive seabird colonies in the Gulf of Alaska. Nearly 17,500 seabirds were observed breeding on Gull Island during a 1990 census, including Red-faced Cormorants, an Alaska Audubon Watchlist species. Other species include Glaucous-winged Gull (Pelagic Cormorant Black-legged Kittiwakes and Common Murres Tufted Puffins, Horned Puffins, and Pigeon Guillemots are also present.

The Kenai Peninsula is one of Alaska's premier destinations for both residents and out of state visitors and is known for its world class sport fishing. The fresh and marine waters of the Peninsula average around 600,000 angler days per year. The Kenai River

alone accounts for almost half of the peninsula's angler days (~275,000).

The peninsula's salmon stocks also support vital subsistence, personal use, and commercial fisheries. These stocks are likewise important sources of food for grizzly and black bears, bald eagles and a variety of other animals and are a key source of nutrients for both terrestrial and aquatic environments. The national importance of these fisheries are particularly evident when compared to habitats and fish populations elsewhere in the nation, where many have been severely impacted by and declined or become extirpated as a result of human expansion and development. We are fortunate that fish habitat within the Kenai Peninsula Borough is relatively intact. The uniqueness of working in/with intact habitat provides us the ability to be proactive in the conservation of aquatic habitat in response to threats such as climate change, unregulated development, and mineral extraction.

## Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest

### Kodiak Island Archipelago

This area consists of a large group of islands off the south coast of Alaska in the Gulf of Alaska. The three primary islands in the archipelago (Kodiak, Afognak, and Shuyak) comprise approximately 5,000 square miles. The shores of these islands are considered some of the most biologically significant areas in the Gulf of Alaska, providing habitat to federally-listed species as well as breeding, nesting, feeding, and rearing habitat for a diverse array of other wildlife species, a number of which were impacted by the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

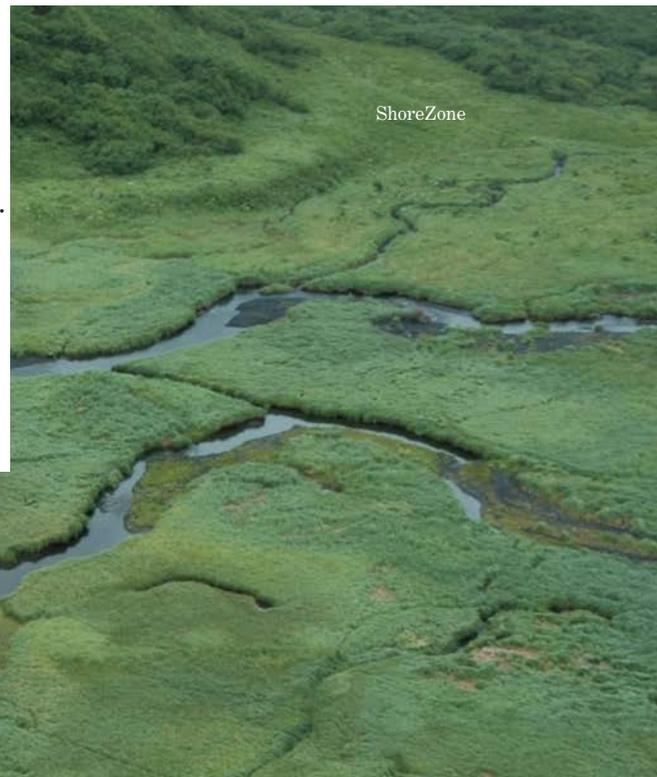
The islands provide feeding, pupping and calving habitats to 14 species of marine mammals, including sea otters, seals, harbor porpoises, sea lions and eight species of whales. Some 160 species of birds are common to the area, including bald eagles, pigeon guillemots, marbled murrelets, glaucous-winged gulls, mew gulls, horned puffins, black-legged kittiwakes, arctic terns, black oystercatchers, harlequin ducks and cormorants. The islands' healthy habitats support a vibrant economy based primarily on recreational and commercial fishing and tourism.

Ecosystems within the focus area include nearshore marine habitats, extensive estuarine mudflats and salt marsh, freshwater streams and lakes, evergreen needle leaf forest, subalpine shrub thickets, and coastal alpine tundra. Lower elevations on the northeastern portion of the island chain are dominated by large stands of Sitka spruce, while the vegetation of the southern portion of the islands consists of maritime tundra. The drainages located on the southwest portion of Kodiak Island comprise the Kodiak Late Glacial Refugium, an area that was ice-free during much of the Pleistocene. This

area provides one of the highest diversities of freshwater habitat and species abundance per-unit-area found anywhere in Alaska or the Pacific Northwest.

The Service is the largest single land owner in the archipelago, with Kodiak NWR comprising some 1.8 million acres alone. State lands include the islands' extensive tidelands, plus almost all of Shuyak Island's 47,000 acres, managed as Shuyak Island State Park. The Kodiak Island Borough owns roughly 56,500 acres. Approximately 20% of archipelago lands are in private hands, owned and managed primarily by Koniag Alaska Regional Native Corporation and associated village corporations. Much of this land is actively managed for timber production, particularly

on the southern half of Afognak Island. High priority habitats to be targeted for restoration and protection efforts include anadromous fish streams, wetlands, riparian habitats, and wildlife corridors in both wetland and upland habitats.



## Goal 1: Conserve Habitat - protect the best and restore the rest

### Southwest Alaska

Southwest Alaska, an area roughly the size of Washington State at 39.8 million acres (62,200 square miles), includes hundreds of miles of diverse coastal habitat – stretching from the lower Kuskokwim River to Bristol Bay and the Alaska Peninsula. This area includes six NWRs, three National Parks, and the largest State Park in the U.S. (Wood Tikchik State Park) The region is home to a diverse and abundant array of wildlife, including thousands of brown bears, vast herds of caribou, abundant moose, countless waterfowl and other migratory birds.

Set in a dramatic landscape, the region's pure waters and intact watersheds teem with millions of salmon, Dolly Varden, rainbow trout, and other species. Up to a 100 million salmon return annually, supporting subsistence lifestyles and multi-million dollar commercial and sport fisheries which provide thousands of jobs and support economies of over 40 Alaska Native coastal towns and villages. In short, the fish, wildlife, habitat and cultural resources values of the Southwest Alaska are unparalleled.

This region also contains habitat important to species including Kittlitz's murrelets (candidate for listing), Steller's eider (threatened) the Southwest Distinct Population Segment of northern sea otters (threatened), and Aleutian Shield Fern (endangered). This area contains over two dozen globally

recognized IBAs. For example, Kvichak Bay IBA is located at the head of the much larger Bristol Bay and encompasses lands from Etolin Point near Nushagak Bay east and south to the village of Knickknack (Cape Chichagof). The bay is fed by the Kvichak and Naknek rivers and several other smaller drainages. About 530 km of intertidal habitat fringes the bay mostly unvegetated mud-and sandflats. Areas especially attractive to shorebirds in autumn occur south of Knickknack off Johnston Hill; from Naknek north to Libbyville; throughout Halfmoon Bay. At low tide extensive intertidal habitat occurs throughout upper Kvichak Bay, but its use by shorebirds has never been quantified.

This site is an important spring and autumn staging and molting area for waterfowl, similar to Nushagak Bay. Both bays open into the larger Bristol Bay, and the offshore area between them is also important for waterfowl. In autumn, the area can support over 44,800 shorebirds, mostly Dunlin, but including large numbers of Black-bellied Plovers, Pacific Golden-Plovers, and Greater Yellowlegs. Nushagak and Kvichak Bays are also recognized as being of Regional Importance by the WHSRN.

Terrestrial and marine ecosystems are bridged by millions of Pacific salmon that return to the region's rivers and lakes each year. Subsistence and commercial uses

of fish and wildlife are central to the economic and cultural life of the region's human communities. The terrain includes coastal mountains, large lakes, and extensive lowland coastal wetlands. Coastal vegetation includes highly productive brackish marshes and wet meadows important to waterfowl and anadromous fish and rocky beaches with great numbers of walrus, sea lions, and sea birds. Lowlands are home to large concentrations of lakes, ponds, meandering rivers, and wetlands that serve as important staging and migration areas for an abundance of waterfowl. These habitats support the largest run of sockeye salmon in the world, which, in turn, sustains large populations of brown bears, eagles, and osprey.

Priority habitats to be targeted for restoration and protection efforts include anadromous fish streams, wetlands, riparian habitats, and wildlife corridors in both wetland and upland habitats. Approximately 11% of the region is in private ownership, predominately Alaska Native-owned lands. The land is largely undeveloped, with vast tracts of intact wilderness, some of which are in-holdings or adjacent to state and federal-managed conservation units. Southwest Alaska is home to numerous small, predominately Alaska Native communities, with a regional population of less than 20,000 people.

*The Agulowak River, running through the heart of a 21,000 acre conservation easement, provides spawning habitat for 200,000 sockeye salmon and passes an additional 1.2 million to spawning areas higher in the drainage.*

Charles Horan



*"Reds heading to redds"* Todd Radenbaugh / 2011  
USFWS Alaska Fish Photo Contest.



## Southeast Alaska

Southeast Alaska features the nation's largest remaining tracts of coastal rainforest and its associated estuarine, intertidal, and freshwater habitats. Southeast hosts all species of Pacific salmon and steelhead, thousands of bald eagles, and some of the highest densities of brown bears in the world. Riverine wetlands such as those at the mouths of the glacier-fed Stikine, Mendenhall, and Alsek Rivers are major migratory bird stopovers, and also provide estuarine habitat for juvenile salmon, and resting sites for waterfowl.

Conservation issues in Southeast Alaska differ substantially from other parts of the state due to geographic, climatic, and physical distinctions. Our most important challenge to the successful restoration and protection of fish and wildlife habitat is the fact that Southeast Alaska's most productive habitats – its narrow coastlines – are also the most developable lands in the region. As communities expand, native wetlands become scarce, and urban development

impacts to streams and riparian corridors similar to those in the Pacific Northwest states are often repeated. Years of road-building during the pioneering days of the timber industry have left a legacy of fish-bearing streams bisected by inadequately sized culverts that impede fish passage during some or all flows. In urbanizing areas, storm water and invasive plants diminish riparian area productivity.

The Southeast Alaska Coastal Program will continue to maintain existing partnerships and develop new projects with locally-based watershed councils in Yakutat, Haines, Skagway, and Juneau, as well as provide developmental support the Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, the regional network of watershed councils. The communities with watershed councils contain a larger proportion of municipal, State, Native Corporation, and private lands than other Southeast communities, which are largely enveloped by the Tongass National Forest. We will also maintain our strong

relationship with the Southeast Alaska Land Trust, the only locally-based land trust protecting conservation parcels in the area.

Program strategies include habitat protection and restoration/rehabilitation, technical assistance to non-profit partners, and assessment and remediation of fish passage impediments in mixed-ownership watersheds. These efforts, in part, address or complement conservation needs in several existing conservation plans, including the State of Alaska's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, Southeast Sustainable Salmon Strategy, ACWA Program Stewardship Actions, TNC/Audubon Alaska's Southeast Alaska Conservation Assessment, and local watershed management plans. High priority habitats to be targeted for restoration and protection efforts include anadromous fish streams, wetlands, riparian habitats, and wildlife corridors in both wetland and upland habitats.

# Goal 2: Broaden and Strengthen Partnerships

*leverage partner resources to conserve fish and wildlife habitat*

The Alaska Coastal Program has active and strong relationships with many conservation partners, including the State of Alaska, Alaska Native organizations, land trusts and other non-governmental organizations. A key focus of past strategic plans was to identify and cultivate new partnerships. Over the next five years, primary program objectives will be to:

## Goal 2 Objectives

1. Strengthen capacity of local land trusts, watershed groups and other key partners working to conserve and restore coastal habitat.
2. Enhance habitat conservation work of our partners by leveraging private and public sector funding needed to complete collaborative projects.
3. Foster lasting habitat conservation partnerships with Alaska Native organizations.

## Key Strategic Activities, Objective 1

- 1.1 Identify and address habitat conservation training and organizational needs of key partners through the following actions:
  - a. Identify relevant training opportunities through the Service's National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) or other service providers.
  - b. Share Service expertise with our partners through informal and at least three formal local training workshops.
  - c. Provide opportunities for partners to incorporate summer student interns and project-related training needs into annual assistance agreements.

d. Facilitate partner training opportunities through regional forums including watershed work groups; Alaska FHP science symposiums, and other professional association meetings

1.2 Schedule annual meetings with at least five key partners in order to assess and/or address capacity and training needs.

1.3 Create opportunities for Alaska Coastal Program partners to interact with other Service programs to better understand the needs of these programs, the datasets they may have available for continually improving habitat conservation prioritization actions, and to identify projects with benefits to as many Service programs as possible.

## Key Strategic Activities, Objective 2

2.1 Increase success rate of Alaska habitat conservation funding proposals by expanding partner understanding of the primary objectives and evaluation criteria of nationally competitive habitat conservation and restoration funding programs.

2.2 Actively work with land trust and other partners to identify habitat conservation projects which can successfully compete for funding through programs such as the NCWG Program, North American Waterfowl Conservation Act Program, PJV, NFWF, the Forest Legacy Program, AKSSF, and private foundations.

2.3 Coordinate with CPA and land trust partners in order to identify priority coastal habitat protection projects suitable for funding under in-lieu fee programs and/or incorporation into mitigation banks.

## Broad-based Partnerships Leverage Success

The Great Land Trust (GLT), in partnership with the Southcentral Alaska Coastal Program, led a broad-based coalition to achieve permanent protection of 60 acres of the Campbell Creek Estuary in Anchorage. The now-protected lands, surrounded by the 32,500 acre state-owned Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, will be transferred to public ownership with the Municipality of Anchorage. GLT retains a conservation easement to ensure that the property's habitat values are protected in perpetuity. Key project partners included AKSSF, ADNDR, ADFG, Audubon Alaska, CIAP, Ducks Unlimited, Rasmuson Foundation, the Municipality of Anchorage, and the Service's National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program.

This estuary provides some of the last remaining intact coastal ecosystems in Anchorage. Campbell Creek and its estuary provide movement corridors and habitat for five species of Pacific salmon and other native wildlife. The Campbell Creek greenbelt and its associated pedestrian trail is also very popular among Anchorage residents and visitors, and is frequently used by educators as a focal point to illustrate the connections between intact habitats, healthy fish and wildlife populations, and vibrant communities and economies.



*Campbell Creek Clean-up, 2011.  
K.Mueller / USFWS*

## Goal 2: Broaden and Strengthen Partnerships

### Key Strategic Activities, Objective 3

*(Foster lasting habitat conservation partnerships with Alaska Native organizations)*

3.1 Coordinate with the Service's Alaska Native Affairs Specialist to identify opportunities to discuss Alaska Coastal Program goals and key activities with Alaska Native organizations.

3.2 Partner with land trusts to continue outreach to Alaska Native landowners and to prioritize these lands for additional voluntary conservation and restoration.

### Performance Measures

Actions to broaden and strengthen program partnerships with Alaska Native and other organizations will be measured both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Qualitative performance will be measured by capturing partner feedback on the value of the Alaska Coastal Program and the technical assistance and support provided by staff. The organizational effectiveness of key program partners will also be examined (in collaboration with these partners) to identify opportunities to enhance partner capacity to ensure program success in meeting conservation targets as identified in Goal 1.

Quantitative performance will be measured through achievement of annual habitat conservation performance targets.

Additional performance measures under Goal 2 include:

- Build partnerships with Alaska Native organizations by executing at least two cooperative agreements addressing habitat conservation and restoration needs of mutual concern.
- Work with all partners to achieve at least five successfully-funded projects through the NCWG Program or other conservation grant programs.
- Support the capacity needs of Alaska land trusts by convening statewide information-sharing forums for the Alaska land trust community.

*Below: Signing ceremony for the Knik Islands Conservation Project. From left: Geoff Haskett (Alaska Regional Director, USFWS), Dan Sullivan (Anchorage Mayor), Curtis McQueen (CEO of Eklutna, Inc), Phil Shephard (Director, Great Land Trust) and Lieutenant Commander Stone (US Army Corps of Engineers).*



D.Wigglesworth / USFWS

# Goal 3: Improve Information-Sharing & Communication

*supporting partner needs, achieving conservation results*

The Alaska Coastal Program is a recognized leader in the sharing of information with our partners, decision-makers, and other Service programs. This role is one of the primary strengths of the program. Information-sharing supports the program's SHC actions. It also leads to effective development and implementation of on-the-ground conservation projects benefitting Trust species. A Regional outreach strategic plan is currently in development for Region 7 conservation partnership programs and is scheduled for completion in FY2012.

## Objectives

1. Maintain our current comprehensive level of coordination with other agencies (local, State and Federal), stakeholders in project development and implementation, and community-based watershed organizations.
2. Address information needs of the Coastal Program and its partners.
3. Ensure land trust partners have easy access to the most current GIS, fish and wildlife and other geospatial datasets in order to plan, execute and monitor habitat conservation projects.
4. Improve understanding of and support for Coastal Program projects and related activities.
5. Communicate program outcomes and activities within Region 7 and nationally.

*Examples of Alaska-specific resource guides include: Willows of Southcentral Alaska Guide for Restoration Applications, Wetland Sedges of Alaska Identification Guide, Streambank Revegetation and Protection Guide, Guide to Common and Potentially Invasive Aquatic Plants in Alaska, and Living in Harmony with Bears safety guide.*

## Key Strategic Activities, Objective 1

1.1 Expand Alaska Coastal Program participation in regional FHPs and fully consider the strategic priorities of these partnerships as Coastal Program projects are being developed.

1.2 Routinely present papers and posters on program protection and restoration projects at state, regional, and national symposia and conferences.

1.3 Host workshops and training events in support of statewide habitat restoration and conservation.

## Key Strategic Activity, Objective 2

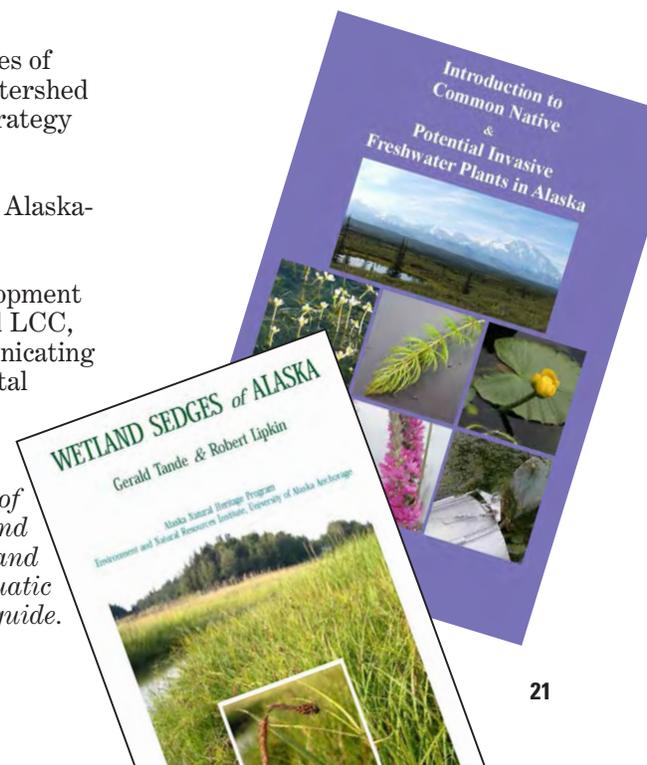
2.1 Support development and distribution of curricula, maps, technical tools, and publications in order to meet locally-important information needs for our partners. Sub-activities include but not limited to:

- a. Update and expand actions to assess, characterize and prioritize habitats for conservation throughout the program's service area.
- b. Maintain lending libraries of fish passage literature, watershed plans, and conservation strategy documents.
- c. Continue distribution of Alaska-specific resource guides.
- d. Participate in the development and activities of FHPs and LCC, and assist LCCs in communicating their work to Alaska Coastal Program partners.

## Supporting Partner Needs

The Coastal Program has strong positive working relations with local governments and the State of Alaska resulting in the completion of several useful products including:

- Publication of the first field guide addressing common native and potential invasive freshwater plants in Alaska. The document was used to verify the first recorded invasion of *Elodea Canadensis* in Alaska.
- Completion of fish passage inventories on Kodiak Island and in the Haines Borough to determine fish passage barriers on local road systems.
- Implementation of culvert prioritization project in Copper River area to target culvert replacement projects with highest benefit to salmon.
- Execution of Spotted Knapweed eradication - targeting the two dozen known infestations in Alaska.
- Investment in development of a coordinated Invasive Species Action Plan for the City of Anchorage.



## Goal 3: Improve Information-Sharing and Communication

### Key Strategic Activities, Objective 3

*(Ensure land trust partners have easy access to the most current datasets)*

3.1 Convene partners and key agency stakeholders to identify existing datasets.

3.2 Formulate and execute plan to combine datasets into regionally relevant accessible repositories.

3.3 Identify dataset gaps, services, and tools and work with project partners to address associated needs.

3.4 Support efforts to maintain these systems and repositories.

### Key Strategic Activities, Objective 4

*(Improve understanding of and support for the Alaska Coastal Program)*

4.1 Track implementation of the Coastal Impact Assistance Program and other grant programs.

4.2 Participate in the review and ranking of proposals submitted under local, state, and national grant programs.

4.3 Conduct regular in-reach to Service programs including: Refuges, Realty, CPA, ES and Fisheries.

### Strategic Activities, Objective 5

*(Communicate Alaska Coastal Program outcomes and activities at the local, regional and national level)*

Work with Region 7 Fisheries Outreach Coordinator to prepare communications package for distribution to a variety of internal and external audiences.

5.2 Communicate program outcomes through Regional and National Coastal and Partners Coordinators meetings.

5.3 Identify projects and partners to formally recognize through annual regional Honor Awards, the Department of Interior Partners in Conservation Award program, and other venues.

5.4 Seek out opportunities to conduct field trips for key audiences to increase understanding and appreciation of coastal program projects, program staff, and program partners.

### Performance Measures

The number of salient information sharing activities and associated audiences will be documented as an indicator of the level of information sharing and communication activity. These activities include the number accomplishments for audiences as defined in HabITs. The quality and the value of Coastal Program investment in this goal is also measured through feedback from stakeholders receiving information,

accounts of how information was used to advance beneficial outcomes for Trust species and depth of involvement of Alaska Coastal Program staff in these activities.

In addition to the above actions, over the next five years the Alaska Coastal Program will document the following outcomes in an effort to demonstrate information sharing and communication with our partners and the general public:

- Work with the Service's Fisheries and Partners Programs to deliver fisheries and habitat conservation outreach to approximately 7,000 Alaskans annually at the Great Alaska Sportsman Show and Alaska Forum on the Environment.
- Support the communication needs of Alaska land trusts, by helping to facilitate four meetings of the Alaska land trust community.
- Nominate up to three partners for Region 7 Honor Award Recognition. Document previous actions to recognize the work of our partners.
- Facilitate the creation of and/or access to GIS datasets specific to the needs of land trust partners.
- Better document and distribute program successes to national, state and local audiences through a variety of media.



*Local staff conducting public outreach at the 2012 Great Alaska Sportsman Show in Anchorage.*

# Goal 4: Enhance Our Workforce

*a fully integrated conservation delivery framework supported by experienced and qualified staff*

Over the past five years the Alaska Coastal Program has reached many of its goals for building coastal conservation capacity within Region 7. Despite these efforts, Region 7 has few staff resources to take advantage of substantial coastal habitat conservation opportunities. Much of Alaska’s coastal areas are underserved, with limited staffing levels relative to the extensive geographic area. Therefore, in order to be effective, the Alaska Coastal Program must work across Service habitat conservation partnership and other programs to fully realize its goals, objectives and outcomes.

The current staffing profile for Region 7 Habitat Conservation Partnership Programs (Coastal Program, PFW, NFPP, and NFHP) is shown in Table 2:

### Objectives

1. Strengthen program capacity to deliver services in Alaska.
2. Maintain professional skills of and relationships developed by program staff.
3. Maintain and improve GIS competency among Coastal Program staff.
4. Maintain staff competency in stream and habitat assessments, restoration, fish passage design, realty (e.g., appraisals, conservation easements), coordination and facilitation.

### Key Strategic Activity, Objective 1

1.1 Prepare a formal program prospectus providing basis for additional Alaska Coastal Program resources to address underserved areas and partner needs.

### Key Strategic Activities, Objective 2

2.1 Support staff participation in and attendance at annual meetings of professional societies such as the American Fisheries Society, American Water Resources Association, River Restoration Northwest, River Management Society, Land Trust Alliance, Restore America’s Estuaries, The Wildlife Society, Society for Ecological Restoration, and Society for Conservation Biology.

2.2 Encourage staff to participate in temporary details at the Alaska Regional or other Service offices. Ensure these details allow staff to gain exposure to regional and national-level policy development and implementation.

2.3 Encourage staff to coordinate, lead, or present training events for professional development of themselves and partners.

*Below: A 2-day fish passage workshop organized and led by Service and ADFG staff in April 2012 reached over 60 engineers, planners, biologists, and other stakeholders. K.Mueller / USFWS*

*Table 2: Region 7 Habitat Conservation Partnership Programs staffing profile.*

Office	Staff
Regional Office (Anchorage)	1 Conservation Partnerships Coordinator 1 NFHP Coordinator 1 Fisheries Outreach Coordinator
Anchorage FWFO	1 Supervisory Habitat Hydrologist/Engineer 2 Habitat Restoration Biologists 1 Coastal Program Manager
Kenai FWFO	2 Habitat Restoration Biologists
Juneau FWFO	1 Supervisory Habitat Biologist/Coastal Program Manager 1 Habitat Restoration Biologist
Fairbanks FWFO	1 Habitat Restoration Biologist



## Goal 4: Enhance Our Workforce

### Key Strategic Activity, Objective 3 (Maintain and improve GIS competency among Coastal Program staff)

3.1 Identify and incorporate appropriate GIS/geo-spatial training into staff Individual Development Plans (IDP).

### Key Strategic Activity, Objective 4 (Maintain staff competency in stream and habitat assessments, restoration, fish passage design, reathy, coordination and facilitation)

4.1 Encourage each of our Conservation Partnerships staffers to attend 40 hours of training annually for professional development and in support of the goals of this strategic plan. Training opportunities particularly valuable to the Alaska Coastal Program are identified in Table 3.

### Performance Measures

Performance under this goal will be measured by staff completion of training as described in their IDPs, documentation of presentations provided and/or papers published and the breadth of involvement in professional societies and peer working groups. A key measure of success under this goal is ultimately documenting the contributions of program staff to the advancement of the habitat protection and restoration field in Alaska and elsewhere. Specific metrics under this goal include:

- 40 hours of training annually for professional development and in support of the goals of this strategic plan for Alaska Coastal Program staff.
- Achievement of annual Government and Performance Results Act (GPRA) targets.

Table 3: Training opportunities for Region 7 staff.

Training Type	Course Name
<i>Technical</i>	River Restoration Northwest Design Symposium Alaska Statewide Habitat Restoration Workshop Applied Fluvial Geomorphology River Morphology and Applications River Assessment and Monitoring River Restoration and Natural Channel Design Land Trust Alliance - Habitat protection short courses ESRI - ArcGIS Introduction to River Science Management Designing for Aquatic Organism Passage at Road-Stream Crossings
<i>Developmental</i>	Federal Agencies and Non-Profit Partners Natural Resource Negotiation and Conflict Resolution Stepping Up to Leadership Advanced Leadership Development Program Effective Budgeting for Supervisors & Managers Congressional Operations



*Service staff from Anchorage and Alaska Coastal Program partners visiting project sites with past Service Director, the late Sam Hamilton, a champion of habitat conservation partnership programs.*

D.Wigglesworth / USFWS

# Goal 5: Increase Accountability

*maintain strong performance in the area of fiscal management and program implementation*

## Objective

Sustain strong track record of fiscal management and program implementation.

## Key Strategic Activities

- 1.1 Maintain dedicated Coastal Program staff within Anchorage and Juneau FWFOs with the responsibility for annual performance plans, project implementation, and managing program funds.
- 1.2 Sustain regular coordination and communication between program staff and the regional coordinator. Under the direction of the Regional Conservation Partnerships Coordinator, increase communication with Washington Office and field program staff through scheduled videoconference and other briefings.
- 1.3 Conduct two management control reviews over the next five years (by Regional Coastal Coordinator).
- 1.4 Continue to enter all habitat restoration and technical assistance projects into the HabITS database on a frequent basis and increase the use of images to enhance entries.
- 1.5 Strive to meet the overall program's commitment to dedicating 70% of Regional allocations to on-the-ground projects, with the remaining 30% used for staffing and other administrative functions.

## Performance Measures

Control audits and frequent communication between the Regional Office and the Field Offices document that spending and programmatic activities are in alignment with regional and national program objectives.

Performance measures for this goal include:

- Implement two management control reviews over the next five years by the Regional Coordinator.
- Conduct annual meeting of Coastal, PFW, NFPP, and NFHP Program staff to share information, discuss performance, and ensure consistent and cost-effective service delivery.
- Track actions to achieve annual allocation goal of 70% funding for on-the-ground projects.
- Evaluate status of legacy projects (before 2008) in HabITS in order to move these projects from active to completed status.

# Stakeholder Involvement

## Strategic Planning Process

Strategic planning is an on-going activity for Alaska Coastal Program staff. Program biologists work continuously with our key partners to address annual and long term program needs and direction. Program partners participated in the development of this strategic plan, particularly with respect to developing habitat conservation targets and through implementation of habitat prioritization assessments and watershed planning within key focus areas. These assessment and planning activities are described elsewhere in this document. The threats, opportunities, habitats and partners vary widely between the Southeast and Southcentral programs (and within program focus areas). This plan reflects this diversity as it guides our activities for the next five years.

## Summary of Stakeholder Input

The Alaska Coastal Program is well-established in Alaska, with high visibility among our existing and potential partners. The program has a clear track record of accomplishments. During the previous planning process for 2007-2011, stakeholders indicated that the program had been flexible and responsive to their needs and that the administrative workload associated with participating in the program was minimal. This perspective continues among our stakeholders today.

The primary concerns voiced by stakeholders are in regard to funding limitations of the program. We have responded to this concern by working with our partners to identify other sources of funding to further leverage our existing support. In an effort to minimize our partners' administrative workload, we have adjusted our requirements to allow semi-annual reporting for

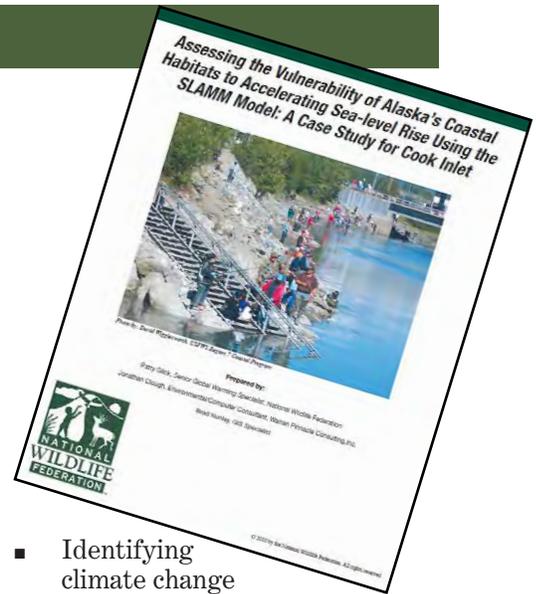
partners demonstrating a strong administrative and reporting record on previous cooperative agreements. This action allows more project funds for direct conservation activities.

Stakeholders also recommended identification of program focus areas, both geographic and issue-based; a need addressed by a 2007-2011 step-down plan and further refined in this plan.

Finally, stakeholders expressed concern that site-specific restoration projects may achieve limited success in the face of broad-scale environmental threats, such as rapid urban development, climate change, and the introduction/spread of invasive species. These concerns remain valid for the Alaska Coastal Program, as well as all Service programs. The plan expands upon this concern and underscores the fact that the Alaska Coastal Program has been a leader in advancing actions to assist the Service and our partners address climate change, invasive species and other emerging threats to coastal habitats.

For example, the Alaska Coastal Program is active in the development of Alaska LCCs and is supporting field work to help our partners and the Service better understand and respond to climate change impacts. Selected examples include:

- Working with the Southwest Alaska Salmon Habitat Partnership to integrate invasive species and climate change elements into its strategic plan.
- Facilitating communication and coordination between Coastal Program partners and LCCs.



- Identifying climate change related information needs for consideration by LCCs.
- Partnering with the National Wildlife Federation to apply the Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model for the first time in Alaska to explore the potential impacts of sea level rise on Alaska fish and wildlife habitats.
- Supporting projects to prevent, detect and respond to invasive species.
- Funding cooperative agreements to conduct stream gauging and stream temperature monitoring in watersheds important to Alaska FHPs. These data sets help provide important baseline monitoring upon which to track physical process changes that may be linked to climate change.
- Implementing habitat conservation projects to reduce stressors that may impact the ability for species to adapt to climate change affects on their habitats.

## Stakeholder Involvement

### Selected Agencies and Organizations Directly and Indirectly Contributing to Strategic Plan Development

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Friends of Mat-Su	Districts (e.g., Kodiak, Wasilla, Anchorage, Homer, Palmer, Upper Susitna)
Alaska Department of Fish and Game	Great Land Trust	
Alaska Department of Natural Resources	Kachemak Heritage Land Trust	Southeast Alaska Land Trust
Alaska Center for the Environment	Kenai National Wildlife Refuge	Southwest Alaska Salmon Habitat Partnership
Alaska Natural Heritage Program	Kenai Peninsula Borough	The Conservation Fund
Alaskans for Palmer Hay Flats	Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership	The Nature Conservancy
American Land Conservancy	Kenai Watershed Forum	Trout Unlimited
Anchorage Parks Foundation	Kenaitze Indian Tribe IRA	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Anchorage Waterways Council	Matanuska-Susitna Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Aquatic Restoration and Research, Inc.	Matanuska-Susitna Borough	U.S. Forest Service
Audubon Alaska	Mendenhall Watershed Partnership	U.S. Geological Survey
Center for Alaska Coastal Studies	Municipal Watershed Roundtable	USDA Forest Service
Chickaloon Village Traditional Council	Municipality of Anchorage	Wildlife Forever
City and Borough of Juneau	National Park Service	Youth Employment in Parks
City of Homer	Native Village of Eklutna	
City of Kenai	Natural Resources Conservation Service	
City of Seward	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	
City of Soldotna	Nushagak-Mulchatna/Wood-Tikchik Land Trust	
ConocoPhillips Alaska	Resurrection Bay Conservation Alliance	
Eklutna, Inc.	Soil and Water Conservation	

## Appendix A: Selected Species Benefiting from Alaska Coastal Program Activities

Aleutian Canada Goose, <i>Branta canadensis leucopareia</i> (Delisted)	King Eider, <i>Somateria spectabilis</i>
Aleutian Shield Fern, <i>Polystichum aleuticum</i> (Endangered)	Kittlitz's Murrelet, <i>Brachyramphus brevirostris</i> (Candidate)
Aleutian Tern, <i>Onychoprion aleuticus</i>	Leach's Storm-petrel, <i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>
American Peregrine Falcon, <i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i> (Delisted)	Marbled Murrelet, <i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>
Arctic Loon, <i>Gavia arctica</i>	Marten, <i>Martes americana</i>
Bald Eagle, <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Northern Goshawk, <i>Accipiter gentilis laingi</i>
Black Oystercatcher, <i>Haematopus bachmani</i>	Northern sea otter, <i>Enhydra lutris</i> (SW DPS threatened)
Black Turnstone, <i>Arenaria melanocephala</i>	Olive-sided Flycatcher, <i>Contopus cooperi</i>
Black-bellied Plover, <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Pacific lamprey, <i>Lampetra tridentata</i>
Black Brant, <i>Branta bernicla nigricans</i>	Pacific Loon, <i>Gavia pacifica</i>
Black-legged Kittiwake, <i>Larus tridactyla</i>	Pacific walrus, <i>Odobenus rosmarus</i> (Candidate)
Blackfish (Alaska), <i>Dallia pectoralis</i>	Parakeet Auklet, <i>Aethia psittacula</i>
Blackpoll Warbler, <i>Dendroica striata</i>	Pelagic Cormorant, <i>Phalacrocorax pelagicus</i>
Brown bear, <i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i>	Pigeon Guillemot, <i>Cephus columba</i>
Cassin's Auklet, <i>Ptychoramphus aleuticus</i>	Rainbow trout, <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>
Chinook (king) salmon, <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i>	Red Knot, <i>Calidris canutus</i>
Chum salmon, <i>Oncorhynchus keta</i>	Red-faced Cormorant, <i>Phalacrocorax urile</i>
Coho (silver) salmon, <i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i>	Red-throated Loon, <i>Gavia stellata</i>
Common Loon, <i>Gavia immer</i>	Rock Sandpiper, <i>Calidris ptilocnemis</i>
Common Murre, <i>Uria aalge</i>	Sandhill Crane, <i>Grus canadensis</i>
Cook Inlet beluga whale, <i>Delphinapterus leucas</i> (Endangered)	Short-billed Dowitcher, <i>Limnodromus griseus</i>
Crested Auklet, <i>Aethia cristatella</i>	Sockeye salmon, <i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i>
Cutthroat trout, <i>Oncorhynchus clarkii</i>	Spectacled Eider, <i>Somateria fischeri</i> (Threatened)
Dolly Varden, <i>Salvelinus malma</i>	Steelhead trout, <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>
Double-crested Cormorant, <i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	Steller's Eider, <i>Polysticta stelleri</i> (Threatened)
Dunlin, <i>Calidris alpina</i>	Surfbird, <i>Aphriza virgata</i>
Emperor Goose, <i>Chen canagica</i>	Three-spine Stickleback, <i>Gasterosteus aculeatus</i>
Fork-tailed Storm-petrel, <i>Oceanodroma furcata</i>	Townsend's Warbler, <i>Dendroica townsendi</i>
Golden Eagle, <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	Trumpeter Swan, <i>Cygnus buccinator</i>
Great Blue Heron, <i>Ardea herodias</i>	Tufted Puffin, <i>Fratercula cirrhata</i>
Gyrfalcon, <i>Falco rusticolus</i>	Western brook lamprey, <i>Lampetra richardsoni</i>
Harbor seal, <i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Western Sandpiper, <i>Calidris mauri</i>
Harlequin Duck, <i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>	Whimbrel, <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Horned Puffin, <i>Fratercula corniculata</i>	Whiskered Auklet, <i>Aethia pygmaea</i>
Hudsonian Godwit, <i>Limosa haemastica</i>	Wood frog, <i>Rana sylvatica</i>
Pink salmon, <i>Oncorhynchus gorbuscha</i>	Yellow-billed Loon, <i>Gavia adamsii</i> (Candidate)

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<http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/restoration/coastal.htm>

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