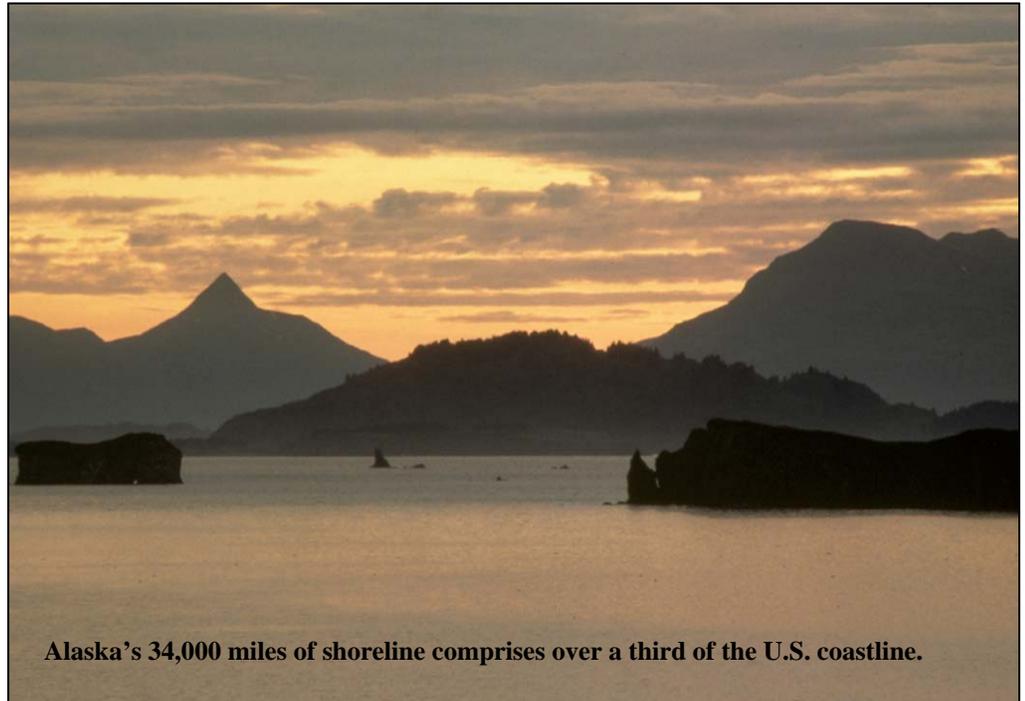




Alaska Coastal Program

Local Partnerships for Coastal Habitats

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program is to conserve healthy coastal ecosystems for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and people. It accomplishes this through cooperative partnerships that identify, restore, and protect habitat in priority coastal areas.



Alaska's 34,000 miles of shoreline comprises over a third of the U.S. coastline.

Importance of Coastal Habitats

Nationwide, coastal ecosystems make up only 10 percent of the land area, but 80 percent of the nation's waterfowl and non-game migratory bird species depend on these areas for nesting, foraging, and resting habitats.

Alaska's world-famous anadromous fish resources and shellfish industry depend on coastal ecosystems. Estuaries, nearshore marine waters, and coastal wetlands are also vital to the state's spectacular seabird and shorebird populations. All of Alaska's threatened and endangered animals live in or near coastal or marine habitats.

Why Do Alaska's Coastal Habitats Need Conservation Partnerships?

Three quarters of Alaska's residents live in its southern coastal ecosystems. These systems support a diversity of fish and wildlife species, while providing jobs, subsistence foods, and recreational opportunities for Alaskans and visitors. As the coastal population increases, and recreational and commercial enterprises expand, there is a growing need to maintain and restore the functions of these irreplaceable ecosystems. Therefore, the Coastal Program supports voluntary partnerships that restore and protect wetland, riparian, and upland coastal habitats or order to maintain their productivity.

Alaska Coastal Program Goals:

- Support projects taking place primarily off Federal lands;
- Encourage broad partnerships with other Federal, State, Native, and local governments, conservation organizations, and private landowners;
- Provide partners with both technical and financial assistance for on-the-ground fish and wildlife projects;
- Leverage U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funds with partner funds and in-kind services to increase our ability to conserve important habitats;
- Assist partners in applying for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Wetlands Grants, North American Wetlands Conservation Grants, and, as well as grants from other Federal and state agencies.

What Does the Coastal Program Do?

Within coastal Southwestern, Southcentral and Southeast Alaska, the Program provides technical and financial assistance for projects that:

- Protect or restore coastal habitats;
- Compile and analyze coastal natural resource data which then informs habitat management and conservation.
- Inform and educate about coastal fish and wildlife resources and their habitats.

Project Examples

The Coastal Program supports a diversity of projects, including those that:

- Restore stream-side and coastal habitats;
- Protect undeveloped coastal mud flats, tidal marshes, wetlands, riparian areas, buffering uplands, and other coastal habitats;
- Improve fish passage;
- Control exotic invasive species;
- Assess threats to coastal resources, and develop solutions to those threats;
- Inform the public about the values of coastal habitats and low-impact methods of access, use or development.

Contact Us:

For more information about these or other projects in Southcentral and Southwest Alaska, contact John DeLapp at (907) 786-3925
john_delapp@fws.gov

For projects in Southeast Alaska, contact Neil Stichert at the Juneau Field Office, (907) 780-1180
neil_stichert@fws.gov

Alaska Coastal Program Website:

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

Accomplishments

Since establishment in 2000, Alaska's Coastal Program has cooperated on more than 180 projects.

Recent partnerships include:

Habitat Protection Funding

The Coastal Program has become an information clearinghouse for partners in pursuit of private and agency funding for habitat protection projects. We actively reach out to state agencies and non-governmental organizations to educate them about available funding programs, and provide technical assistance, including grant writing support. Since 2000, our partners have successfully competed for nine North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants, eleven National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants, and three National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grants totaling almost \$11,000,000.

Homer Habitat Valuation-2007

The Coastal Program is partnering with the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District and local organizations to make use of Green Infrastructure land-use planning tools, mapping and linking key fish and wildlife habitat and identifying its value to the community.

Crooked Creek Restoration and Education-2007

The Kenai Watershed Forum is collaborating with the Coastal Program to coordinate a partnership of local students and community volunteers to restore Crooked Creek at a failed road crossing. This effort is a model community conservation project that is stabilizing a flood damaged reach while mitigating ongoing bank trampling. Crooked Creek provides 61 miles of direct stream and riparian habitat for migratory birds, Chinook and coho salmon and one of the northernmost runs of steelhead in Alaska.

Building Capacity For Watershed-Based Conservation in Resurrection Bay-2007

The Coastal Program is providing support to the Resurrection Bay Conservation Alliance in order that they may establish an office in Seward, establish and coordinate the Resurrection Bay watershed program, host public meetings and workshops, produce educational materials, compile existing information on area ecosystems, and monitor sources of habitat degradation within the Resurrection Bay watershed.

Juneau Area Conservation Acquisition Planning-2007

The Coastal Program is supporting the Southeast Alaska Land Trust in prioritizing coastal habitats for protection near Juneau. Several habitat protection projects are underway or planned, with nearly 200 acres of coastal wetlands and uplands to be protected for wildlife habitat and public use.

Pullen Creek Restoration Planning-2004

This project supported the Taiya Inlet Watershed Council to identify habitat restoration needs, generate community interest, and identify funding sources for work on this impaired urban stream, where up to 800,000 cruise ship visitors annually have the opportunity to observe spawning coho and chum salmon.

SE Alaska Coastal and Intertidal Map Database-2005

In a joint project with The Nature Conservancy, National Marine Fisheries Service, State of Alaska, and the National Park Service, approximately 2,400 miles of SE Alaska shoreline was inventoried in 2005 using the ShoreZone imagery and mapping protocol. Acquisition of this high resolution shoreline and intertidal imagery will contribute to long term monitoring, oil spill contingency planning, and sustainable coastal development, and will eventually link to existing mapping databases in Southcentral Alaska, British Columbia and Washington State.