

National Coastal Wetlands Grant

FY2013 Request: \$1,060,000

Reference No: 39042

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Parks / Recreation

Category: Natural Resources

Location: Statewide

House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Impact House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Contact: Jean Davis

Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2012 - 06/30/2017

Contact Phone: (907)465-2422

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

The Coastal Wetlands program focuses on coastal wetlands ecosystems including both wetlands and upland buffers. Wetlands provide essential fish and wildlife habitat, which in Alaska support many commercial and recreational human uses, particularly in and near communities, parks, and refuges. Wetlands provide substantial contributions to water quality, flood and storm water control as well as providing habitat for fish and wildlife. This program provides federal funding to the state for the long-term protection of wetlands, which is matched with private sector donations. The program considers acquisition, restoration, enhancement or management of coastal wetlands.

Funding:	<u>FY2013</u>	<u>FY2014</u>	<u>FY2015</u>	<u>FY2016</u>	<u>FY2017</u>	<u>FY2018</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fed Rcpts	\$1,060,000						\$1,060,000
Total:	\$1,060,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,060,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

SLA11/CH5 \$1,000,000 Just received, no work to date
 SLA10/CH43 \$1,000,000 Ongoing 1% complete
 SLA07/CH30 \$1,000,000 Ongoing 9% complete
 SLA06/CH82 \$2,422,004 Ongoing 74% complete
 SLA05/CH13 \$1,000,000 Complete

Project Description/Justification:

Currently there are two National Coastal Wetlands grant proposals for FY2013. Goose Bay (\$60,000) and Upper Knik Arm (\$1,000,000). These two projects are designed to protect coastal wetlands, including anadromous waters, and estuarine habitat, located in the Western Knik Arm region of Upper Cook Inlet. These projects are part of a larger conservation strategy called the "Knik Arm Coastal Wetland Conservation Initiative" which began in 2002 as collaboration between the State of Alaska, non-profit conservation organizations, local governments and federal partners. Over the past 10 years this initiative has received a number of federal and private grants to support the conservation of over 600 acres of coastal wetlands within the Knik Arm Region.

The Goose Bay project, if approved would acquire four parcels comprised of 352 acres and is located in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's Goose Creek watershed, which includes Goose Creek. The parcels are currently inholdings within the 10,000 acre Goose Bay State Game Refuge. These parcels supports 80 percent of nationally decreasing wetland types including riparian and riverine drainage, tidally influenced areas, estuarine and near shore habitat making Goose Creek Estuary one of the last critically important unprotected estuaries in Knik Arm.

The Upper Knik Arm project proposes protection of approximately 3,091 acres of coastal wetlands including anadromous waters, nesting and rearing habitat for 168 species of migratory birds and estuarine habitat important to Beluga whales. This project includes two project areas the Turner parcels and the Knik River Estuary parcels. Both project areas are adjacent to the Alaska Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge and Chugach State Park. The acquisition of the Turner parcels will be an addition to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge and achieve the stated Refuge management plan objectives and prevent future development in this sensitive area. Conserving the Knik River Estuary through a permanent conservation easement will protect estuarine habitat and provide a wildlife and recreational corridor between Chugach State Park and Palmer Hay Flats Refuge.

Why is this Project Needed Now?:

Private In-holdings, threatened wetlands, and adjacent parcels are placed on the market every year. To secure priority in-holding and adjacent parcel acquisitions, agencies need to be ready to work with landowners, local land trusts, and other non-profit organizations to protect wetlands that would otherwise be converted to other uses. Each year willing sellers come forward and desire to sell either a conservation easement or fee title to their lands. The state has a tremendous opportunity with the National Coastal Wetlands program to receive federal funds coupled with private sector matching funds for one or two critical purchases each year. If the state is unable to participate in this program, wetlands, adjacent uplands and parcels within Legislatively Designated Areas or parcels that provide access to state waters and resources will be converted to other uses resulting in the loss of access to state resources, fishing, hunting, scenic resources, and other outdoor recreation opportunities.

Specific Spending Detail:

LINE ITEM	DOLLAR AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION (text)
Personal Services	\$ 20.0	Personnel to administer grant
Services	\$ 15.0	Other operating expenses associated with acquisition
Grants	\$ 1,025.0	Land acquisition

State Match Required:

- NO
- YES

Project Support:

The Great Land Trust

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Audubon Alaska
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
US Fish and Wildlife Service
The Conservation Fund

Project Opposition:

None identified.