

Potter Marsh Watershed Conservation Project Phase I

FY2023 Request: \$1,000,000

Reference No: 63826

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Life / Health / Safety

Category: Natural Resources

Location: Statewide

House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Impact House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Contact: Jashryn Mendoza

Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2027

Contact Phone: (907)465-2495

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

The Potter Marsh Watershed Conservation Project Phase I will acquire 62.2 acres of land for conservation purposes with federal funds from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program. The grant application was submitted in June 2021. Grant award decisions are anticipated in Spring 2022.

Funding:	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	Total
1002 Fed Rcpts	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000				\$3,000,000
Total:	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000,000

<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"/> Ongoing
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

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

Project Description/Justification:

DNR Office of Project Management and Permitting has applied for a National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant. If awarded, the State of Alaska, in collaboration with the Municipality of Anchorage and Great Land Trust, will use \$1,000,000 in grant funds to permanently protect 62.2 acres of an imminently threatened coastal wetland ecosystem including nationally declining wetlands. The Potter Marsh Watershed Conservation Project Phase I will serve as the first complete phase of a three-phase effort ultimately to permanently protect over 300 acres. The total budget for Phase I is \$1,484,000, with \$400,000 in non-Federal match from the Municipality of Anchorage and \$84,000 from the Great Land Trust. Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (UASFLA or Yellow Book) appraisals will be used to establish the final purchase price of the parcels. The grant request includes \$35,000 to cover DNR staff time for grant management and real estate due diligence efforts.

The Phase I project will place deed restrictions on two adjacent property areas and form a new Municipal Natural Area under the management of the Municipality of Anchorage. Grant funds will be used to purchase the first property from GCI, the willing seller of the land. The Municipality of

Anchorage will donate the second property to the project to ensure conservation efforts are maximized and that the land base remains unfragmented. Both properties are located at a unique convergence in the southern part of Anchorage between Anchorage

Coastal Wildlife Refuge’s iconic Potter Marsh subunit and Chugach State Park. Potter Marsh is a key component of Anchorage’s coastal marsh ecosystem and is a significant attraction and resource for the City and state; it is heavily-utilized, ranging from birders photographing migratory birds to juvenile Pacific salmon rearing in the nutrient-rich environment of fresh- and salt-water. The Phase I project will protect major freshwater sources that ensure the viability and vitality of the coastal marsh, and therefore ensure that it remains enjoyed as public land, natural habitat, and sustenance in perpetuity.

The State of Alaska will work with project partners through 2025 to ensure that the threatened properties are permanently protected by facilitating an escrow transfer for municipal acquisition of the subject land and conducting all necessary due diligence for the process. As a result, the project will safeguard the hydrological function of Potter Marsh; productive Pacific salmon spawning habitat; nesting, feeding, and resting habitat for migratory and coastal-dependent birds; and Critical Habitat for the endangered Cook Inlet beluga whales, as well as achieve local, state, and federal-level conservation priorities and the expansion of well-managed natural areas for the enjoyment of recreational and educational opportunities.

Line 1000	22,662
Line 2000	
Line 3000	12,338
Line 4000	
Line 5000	965,000
Line 7000	
Total	1,000,000