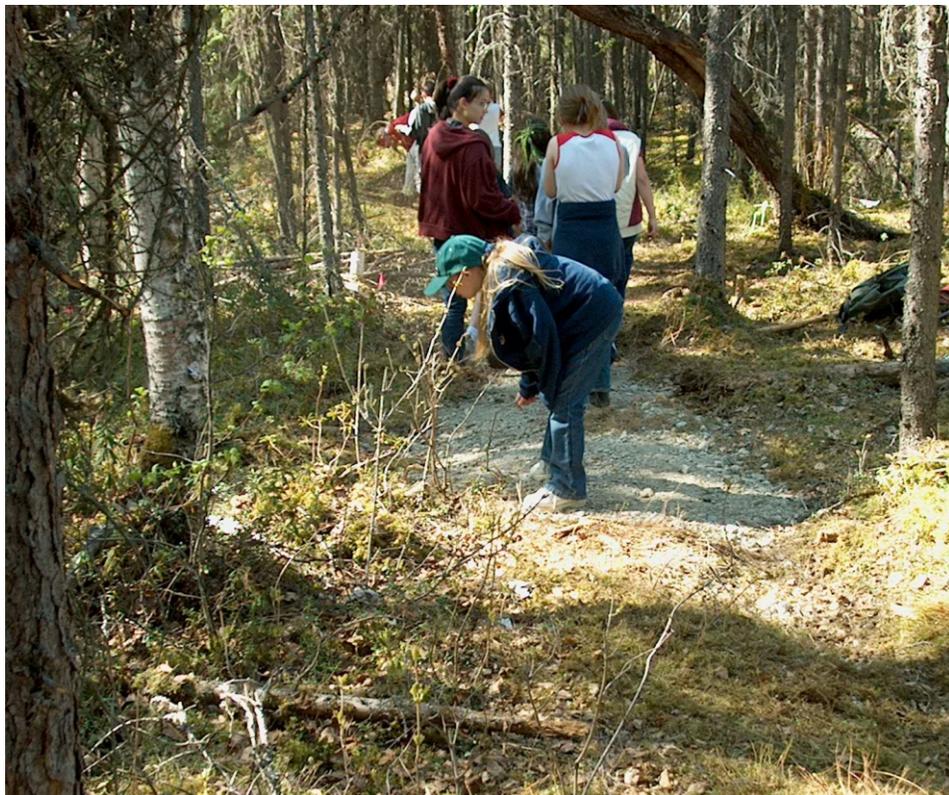




Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

Voluntary Habitat Restoration on Private Lands in Alaska

In a Partners for Fish and Wildlife project, the USFWS worked with Meadow Lakes Elementary School and others to improve environmental education opportunities and fish and wildlife habitat. This new nature trail leads to a light-penetrating boardwalk and teaching platform. USFWS photo by Anita Goetz.



What is the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program?

The Partners program works with private and other non-federal landowners who wish to voluntarily restore fish and wildlife habitats on their land. The program emphasizes removal of barriers to fish passage, as well as restoration of riparian (streambank) and upland vegetation. Environmental education projects may also receive funding. Projects are designed to benefit fish and wildlife while meeting the needs and desires of private landowners.

Habitat Restoration Benefits Fish and Wildlife Resources

A national program, Partners for Fish and Wildlife was introduced to Alaska in 1995. Since then, nearly 300 habitat restoration projects have been completed across the state.

Many projects have focused on restoration of wetlands, riparian areas, and streams. These restored habitats

now provide important food, cover, and breeding and rearing areas for fish, mammals, waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds, and birds of prey. Other projects are restoring fish passage, replanting forests, and initiating watershed-scale conservation efforts.

Each project, small and large, contributes to the sustainability of Alaska's fish and wildlife populations. Anglers, hunters, and wildlife enthusiasts will reap benefits from these partnerships for generations to come.

Habitat Restoration Benefits Landowners and the Public

The Partners program offers technical and financial assistance to landowners to protect or restore habitat on private,

The Anchorage Firewise Partnership works to reduce fire danger in the wildland-urban interface of Alaska's largest city. Hundreds of acres of beetle-killed spruce are being removed for fire safety. A Partners for Fish and Wildlife project contributed funds to replant native white spruce. Photo courtesy Bill Sobers, Anchorage Soil & Water Conservation District.





USFWS biologists monitor work on a Partners for Fish and Wildlife bank restoration project on Montana Creek in southcentral Alaska. USFWS photo by Anita Goetz.

Nearly 300 Restoration Projects Have Been Implemented State-wide!

The Service worked with the Municipality of Anchorage, Enstar Natural Gas Company, and a local restaurant to stabilize a seriously eroding stream bank and restore salmon and Dolly Varden fish habitat along Campbell Creek in Anchorage.

A condo association, watershed partnership, and the City and Borough of Juneau are partnering with the Service to reduce Duck Creek flooding in residential areas and remove a barrier to fish passage by replacing a culvert and road with a bridge, and then replanting the stream bank.

Private home-owners, neighbors, a Native corporation, and NRCS Partnered with the Service to restore over 1,500 feet of Chena River shoreline in Interior Alaska, providing riparian habitat for fish and wildlife while protecting property values.

Over the last 7 years, 200 Partners projects have restored and protected miles of Kenai River shorelines with thousands of feet of elevated light-penetrating walkways, access stairways, miles of cabled spruce tree revetments, and other bank protection techniques.

municipal or borough lands. Once a project is approved through a competitive process, the Service normally pays up to 50 percent of project costs. Landowners may also receive assistance from a wide variety of other partners, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), State natural resource agencies, Native groups, schools, businesses, and local watershed councils. The landowner's cost share may be in cash, or "in kind" contributions of materials, services, or labor.

As vital habitats on private lands are restored, trust and cooperative partnerships between private landowners and the Service are strengthened. Across the nation, private landowners are the stewards of the vast majority of fish and wildlife habitats. The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program provides a win-win solution, because it protects and enhances fish and wildlife resources while maintaining or increasing private land values.

Successful Alaskan Projects

Take Many Forms

Restoration projects include, but are not limited to:

- Removal or replacement of structures blocking fish passage (bulkheads, perched or undersized culverts)

- Stream bank restoration and protection (revegetation, setbacks, light-penetrating walkways, exclusion of livestock from waterbodies)

- Restoration of natural water flow in wetlands

- Wildlife habitat restoration or enhancement (creation of nesting platforms or snags, browse improvement, prescribed burning)

Fish habitat improvement (creation of off-channel rearing ponds, instream cover, or connections between wetlands)

Partners projects also benefit landowners by preventing erosion of river-front or lake-front property; improving water quality and watershed health; and enhancing recreational values.

The Program is Responsive, Stream-lined, and Flexible

Assistance offered by the Service to private landowners ranges from informal advice on the design and location of potential restoration projects, to on-the-ground project construction. To encourage participation, the Partners program is designed to be short on paperwork and long on success. A unique and voluntary cooperative agreement is developed specifically for each participating landowner, and will run for a minimum of 10 years.



This Big Lake family partnered with the Service to restore their eroded lake-front property. Photo courtesy Herold Sherman, landowner.

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For more information, please contact our Alaska Region Coordinator Mike Roy at 907/786 3925

Visit the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program at:
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