

25 Years of Partnership for Coastal Conservation

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Nationwide coastal areas make up only 10% of the land area, but 80% of the nation's waterfowl and non-game migratory bird species depend on these areas for nesting, foraging and resting habitats. In addition to supporting a diversity of fish and wildlife species, maintaining healthy coastal wetlands in Alaska is vital to sustaining the state's vibrant commercial and sport fisheries, subsistence communities and recreational opportunities.

For these many reasons, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) – Coastal Program is pleased to partner with Kachemak Heritage Land Trust and other land trusts in the state to increase awareness of the importance of coastal ecosystems and to conserve healthy coastal habitats for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Service's national Coastal Program and its partnerships for coastal conservation. Throughout the United States, Service Coastal Programs have pioneered a voluntary, non-regulatory approach to coastal habitat conservation through partnerships with State agencies, Tribes, communities, non-governmental organizations, and private landowners.

The Alaska Coastal Program, established in 2000, implements cooperative agreements and provides technical assistance for coastal conservation efforts, with particular focus on projects benefiting anadromous fish, migratory birds, marine mammals and endangered species, and their habitats. Assistance offered through the Coastal Program serves as a catalyst for innovative conservation projects, ranging from wetland, upland, and stream habitat protection and restoration to development of watershed-scale conservation plans.

The Service's cooperative approach to conservation has leveraged millions of dollars in non-federal funds, actively engaged communities in conserving coastal ecosystems and produced lasting partnerships for the protection of fish and wildlife.

As the Service celebrates 25 years of partnerships for coastal conservation, we want to use this occasion to thank Kachemak Heritage Land Trust and our many other partners for your contributions to protecting and conserving habitat for fish and wildlife. By working together, we can sustain all the many benefits healthy coastal ecosystems provide to our communities and the nation. ♦

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