



Alaska Region Step-down Plan

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

2007-2011

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The Alaska Region

Encompassing 586,000 square miles, Alaska is one-fifth the size of the lower 48 States. If superimposed on a United States map, Alaska would stretch from Florida to Minnesota to California. Its 34,000 miles of coastline are twice that of the entire lower 48, and it boasts 3 million lakes larger than 20 acres, more than 3,000 rivers, 63 percent of the Nation's wetlands, 17 of the 20 highest peaks in North America, 1,800 islands, and 100,000 glaciers.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has played a key role in Alaskan conservation for decades. In addition to stewarding the state's 16 National Wildlife Refuges, which at 77 million acres, comprise more than 85 percent of the entire National Wildlife Refuge System, the Service has a long history of conserving endangered species, migratory birds, marine mammals, and fisheries. Over the last decade, the agency has increasingly focused its attention on conservation partnerships off its land base, particularly on Alaska's 48 million acres of private lands. A centerpiece of this new approach to conservation is the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

Overview of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Alaska

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, the Service's primary program to provide technical and financial assistance to promote habitat restoration on private lands, was established in Alaska in 1995, 8 years after its inception in the lower 48. An initial allocation of \$60,000 allowed the Service to support 8 stream bank restoration projects on the Kenai River and 1 fish passage project on Ophir Creek, near Yakutat.

The impacts of increasing recreational use and rural and urban development on riparian and in-stream habitats had already been recognized in Alaska, setting the stage for the program's primary focus during its early years: streambank restoration. A 1994 study conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) demonstrated that 12 percent of Chinook salmon rearing habitat along the Kenai River had already been destroyed. The ADFG was then pioneering the development of riparian habitat restoration techniques in Alaska, and had substantial financial resources from Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Criminal Settlement Funds and other sources available for Kenai River efforts. The ADFG, however, had no administrative mechanism for funding projects on private lands.

This confluence of interests led to the formation of a very successful habitat restoration partnership with the ADFG, whereby funds were transferred from ADFG to the Service for distribution to private landowners. To date, more than 400 projects have been undertaken on the Kenai, most with technical and financial assistance from both agencies.

The Alaska program grew steadily. Initially administered from the Regional Office, funding increases in 1999 allowed the Region's four Ecological Services Field Offices to begin program delivery. Landowner agreements increased from 34 in 1996 to more than 70 in 2006. In total, some 550 projects had been undertaken statewide by 2006. Service funding and in-kind match increased from \$158,000 in 1995 to \$1.2 million in 2001 to \$1.5 million in 2006.

Since 2000, the issue of fish passage has become prominent in Alaska. Inventories have identified thousands of partial or complete barriers on both public and private lands across the State. While

transportation standards are beginning to better address fish passage in new road construction, the existing legacy of poorly designed and undersized road crossing structures will take decades to remedy. Removal of fish passage barriers can be cost-effective, particularly in Alaska's often otherwise healthy waterways, where individual barrier removals can open dozens of miles of productive fish habitat. As a result, the Partners Program now prioritizes barrier removal on otherwise intact streams above site-specific streambank restoration on heavily-impacted stream reaches. Where substantial partnerships and complementary funding sources exist to repair past riparian impacts, such as on the popular Kenai River, we continue to play an active role.

In the coming years, the Partners Program will closely align its activities with the goals of the recently established National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP). At present, our activities in the Matanuska-Susitna Focus Area are an integral component of the Matanuska-Susitna Basin Salmon Conservation Partnership, one of five NFHAP Pilot Habitat Partnerships in place nationally. We envision increasing alignment with NFHAP as additional partnerships are established in the State in the future. Additionally, our program activities now tier to the recently-enacted Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act, P.L.109-294.

Approximately 70 Partners projects were undertaken in 2006, resulting in restoration of 45 miles of instream and riparian habitat, 164 acres of wetlands, removal of 7 fish passage barriers, and exotic species removal from 10,000 acres. In total, the program has restored more than 400 miles of aquatic habitat since 1995.

Habitat restoration projects are increasingly being conducted using the combined authority and funds of the Service's Partners, Fish Passage (initiated in 1999) and Coastal (initiated in 2000) Programs. Integration of these three programs allows project biologists to undertake projects that are larger and more expensive, and on virtually any land base.

Examples of recent Partners projects in Alaska can be viewed on the Alaska Partners Website at <http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/restoration/partners.htm>. Information on the program nationally can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/partners>.

The Strategic Planning Process

In early 2004, Alaska Region staff hosted meetings with our partners in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai, and Juneau. A total of 35 Federal, State, and local agencies, community groups, Native groups, and non-governmental organizations sent representatives, as well as several individual private landowners. Upon completion of Part 1 (Vision Document) of the Partners Program's National Strategic Plan in 2006, we drafted this step-down plan and provided it to our original stakeholders for further input. This step-down plan focuses and guides our activities for the next 5 years.

Summary of Stakeholder Input

By the time of the 2004 stakeholder meetings, the Partners Program was already well established in Alaska, with reasonably high visibility among potential partners. The program already had a clear track

record of accomplishments. We heard from our stakeholders that the program had been flexible and responsive to their needs, and that we had done a generally good job of minimizing our partner's administrative workload associated with participating in the program. Our stakeholders repeatedly voice concerns about several administrative and programmatic aspects of the program. In particular, we heard concern about the challenge that small landowners face in providing the desired 50% non-Federal match, and the limitations of the program's \$25,000 financial assistance cap (to address this concern, we have since successfully received funding cap waivers from the Washington Office on several occasions). Our agency partners also called for increased physical science capability to augment the program's biological capacity. We have addressed this concern in part through establishment of a restoration hydrologist/engineer position in the Anchorage Field Office. Stakeholders also recommended identification of program focus areas, both geographic and issue-based, a need addressed by this step-down plan. Finally, stakeholders expressed concern that site-specific restoration projects may achieve limited success in the face of broad-scale environmental threats, such as rapid urban development, climate change and the spread of invasive species. These concerns remain valid for the Partners Program, as well as all Service programs.

Participating Agencies and Organizations Assisting with Strategic Planning

Environmental Protection Agency
National Park Service, Rivers, Trails, and
Conservation Assistance
Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
NOAA Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Alaska DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor
Recreation
Alaska Natural Heritage Program
Center for Alaska Coastal Studies
Anchorage Division of Community Planning
and Development
Anchorage Waterways Council
Fairbanks North Star Borough

Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation
District
Kenai Peninsula Borough
Kenai Watershed Forum
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Anchorage Watershed Mgmt. Services
Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District
City & Borough of Juneau
Anchorage Soil & Water Conservation
District
Chickaloon Village Traditional Council
Audubon Alaska
Chena Slough Neighborhood Committee
Great Land Trust
Northern Alaska Environmental Center
The Nature Conservancy
Mendenhall Watershed Partnership

Goal 1: Conserving Habitat

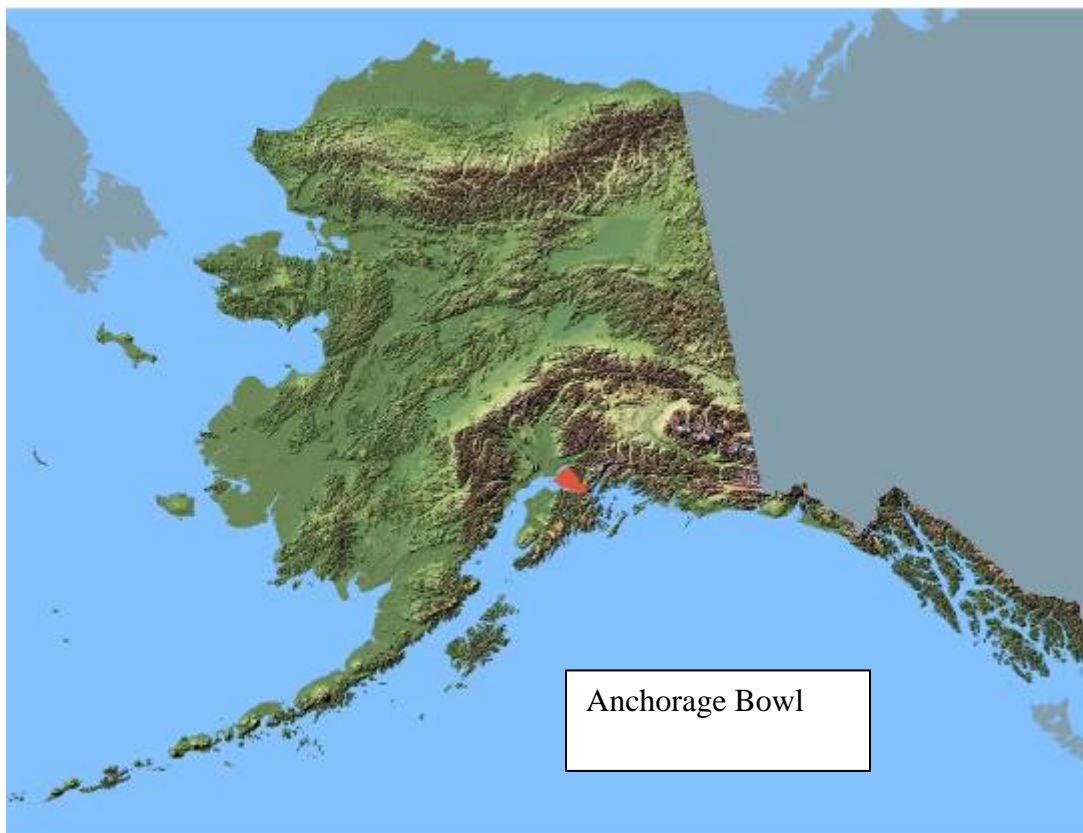
The mission of the USFWS Alaska Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is to efficiently achieve voluntary habitat restoration on private lands, through financial and technical assistance, for the benefit of Federal trust species.

Supporting Actions:

We pursue our goals through voluntary partnerships that assess, restore, protect, and inform the public about riparian areas, wetlands, and in-stream features. Projects include revegetating streambanks with native species, removing fish passage barriers, installing wildlife-friendly bank protection structures using coir (plant fiber) logs, spruce tree revetments and root wads, and constructing light-penetrating angler walkways.

Focus Areas

We have identified the following geographic focus areas where most of the Alaska Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program's financial and human resources will be strategically targeted during the next 5 years. These focus areas represent a subset of Region 7's entire area of jurisdiction.



Anchorage Bowl: This focus area, located on the shores of Cook Inlet, is home to more than half the state's population. This urban area provides unparalleled educational opportunities to both the young and old. Ecosystems within the focus area include nearshore marine habitats, extensive estuarine mudflats and salt marsh, freshwater streams and lakes, evergreen needle leaf forest, successional stands of birch and aspen, subalpine shrub thickets, and coastal alpine tundra. Land ownership consists of a matrix of private and public lands, with an extensive system of municipal parklands, military lands, and State lands. Land use patterns are diverse, with both commercial and residential lands, surrounded by

salt water to the west, and public lands to the north, east, and south. The area's streams and wetlands are important habitats for trust species, including five species of Pacific salmon and a variety of plant and animal species of conservation concern. High priority habitats to be targeted for restoration and protection efforts include anadromous fish streams, wetlands, riparian habitats, and increasingly tenuous aquatic and terrestrial wildlife corridors.

Our most significant **challenges** to successful restoration and protection of fish and wildlife habitat in this focus area are continued habitat loss and fragmentation stemming from increasing urbanization and development, and from increasing impacts of recreational use on streams and in remaining open spaces. Partnership **opportunities** include numerous state and local government agencies, and the State's largest cadre of nonprofits, including the Anchorage Waterways Council, the Anchorage Park Foundation, the Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District, and The Great Land Trust. **Strategies** for the program within this focus area include riparian and in-stream habitat restoration, largely in an urban, highly impacted environment, fish passage assessment and restoration, including dam removal, technical support for improved watershed planning, capacity building within the nonprofit community, and increased outreach and education. Our efforts will address conservation needs in several **existing conservation plans**, including the State of Alaska's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, the Municipality of Anchorage's Salmon in the City Action Plan, the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan, the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan, the Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan, Anchorage Coastal Management Plan, The Nature Conservancy's Cook Inlet Basin Ecoregional Assessment and ADFG's Living with Wildlife in Anchorage Plan.



Greater Fairbanks Watersheds: This focus area surrounds Alaska’s second largest urban area. Trust species include two species of Pacific salmon (Chinook and chum salmon), and a diversity of migratory birds. The dominant ecosystem within this focus area is boreal evergreen needle leaf forest, including black spruce/scrub shrub, emergent wetlands, sloughs, white spruce forest and birch/aspen forest. Land uses includes mining operations, gravel extraction, farming, large subdivisions and commercial “box” stores. With over 80,000 landowners in the focus area, ample opportunity exists for future partnerships.

Existing and expected partnership *opportunities* include large mining operations along Goldstream Creek and Fairbanks Creek to restore fish habitat by connecting deep (over-wintering habitat) ponds to creeks, and several recently-established watershed councils. The most important *challenges* to the successful restoration and protection of fish and wildlife habitat in this focus area include rapid development along the already-urbanized Chena River and nearby sloughs and limited public understanding of the value of intact habitat. The most important *strategies* we will use in this focus area include support for watershed planning with local watershed councils, organizing riparian management classes for agency staff and landowners, and working with State and local agency partners to restore fish passage. Our efforts will address conservation needs in several *existing conservation plans*, including the State of Alaska’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, Fairbanks North Star Borough Regional Comprehensive Plan, and Chena Slough Adaptive Restoration Plan.



Kenai Peninsula: Located south of Anchorage, this focus area includes the Kenai River, one of the most ecologically productive and economically important rivers in the state. Trust species on the Peninsula include the at-risk population of Kenai brown bears, five species of Pacific salmon, anadromous trout and char, and a diversity of migratory birds. Diverse ecosystems in this focus area range from glaciers, tundra, and stunted boreal forests in headwater areas to salt marshes, muskegs (thick water-saturated accumulations of peat produced by bog succession in glaciated regions), sedge meadows, and numerous forest and shrub communities in lower watersheds. Land ownership in this focus area is primarily State and Federal, including the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Kenai Fjords National Park, and the Chugach National Forest. Alaska native and privately owned lands fragment these agency landholdings, particularly in lower elevation areas. Development in this focus area's lower watersheds is occurring rapidly, with new roads crossing salmon streams and subdivisions encroaching on important wetland habitats. High priority habitats targeted for restoration and protection in this focus area include riparian and wetland areas.

With a rapidly growing population, our most important *challenges* to the successful restoration and protection of fish and wildlife habitat in this focus area are increasing road and subdivision development and limited public understanding of the value of intact habitat. We will continue to

work with existing partners, such as Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Kenai Watershed Forum, and the Alaska Department of Transportation on fish passage and riparian restoration programs, and will explore new *opportunities* for partnerships with local native Alaskan groups, and agencies and non-profits working in the southern part of the Kenai Peninsula, where we have not had a large presence in the past. Our *strategies* will include planning and implementing riparian and instream restoration and protection projects in critical areas, working with partners to prioritize and restore fish barriers, and providing education opportunities to the public on the importance of maintaining and restoring important riparian habitat. Our efforts will address conservation needs in several *existing conservation plans*, including the State of Alaska’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, Draft Kenai River Watershed Conservation Area Plan, Draft Kenai/Kasilof Conservation Area Plan, and the Draft North Kenai Conservation Area Plan.



Matanuska-Susitna Valley: This focus area, home to more than 60,000 people, is encompassed by the Alaska Range to the north, the Talkeetna and Chugach Mountains to the east, Cook Inlet to the south, and the Aleutian Range to the west. Trust species include 5 species of Pacific salmon, anadromous trout and char, and a diversity of migratory birds, including at-risk Tule white-fronted geese. This focus area was chosen because it contains the fastest growing communities in the state. This rapid and extensive

urban development threatens diverse riparian and in-stream habitats needed by fish and wildlife resources. Additionally, because of its proximity to Anchorage, the largest population center in the state, it receives heavy recreational use which impacts every habitat type. This focus area consists of rolling lowlands featuring hundreds of small lakes, bogs, and clear water streams. Large rivers, including the Susitna, Matanuska, and Knik, drain glaciers in the surrounding mountains. Mixed forests of white and Sitka spruce, aspen and birch dominate the area. Black spruce stands occur in lowland wet soils, ericaceous shrubs are dominant in open bogs, and tall scrub plant communities consisting primarily of willow and alder, occur in floodplains. Land use includes tourism and recreation, gravel extraction, forestry, agriculture, large subdivisions, and commercial “box” stores. The biggest threat in this focus area is lake shore and streamside development and continued construction of new road-stream crossings with inadequate fish passage structures. High priority habitats to be targeted for restoration and protection efforts include anadromous fish streams, wetlands, riparian habitats, and wildlife corridors in both wetland and upland habitats.

Our most important *challenges* to the successful restoration and protection of fish and wildlife habitat in this focus area are continued, minimally-planned rural development and limited public understanding of the value of intact habitat. Existing and future partnership *opportunities* are with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (County), the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, private land owners, local businesses, and non-profit organizations. Our *strategies* in this focus area include riparian and in-stream habitat restoration and protection, fish passage assessment and restoration, support for watershed planning, capacity building in the nonprofit community, and increased outreach and education. Our efforts will address conservation needs in several *existing conservation plans*, including the State of Alaska’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough’s Coastal Management Plan, The Nature Conservancy’s Cook Inlet Basin Ecoregional Assessment, as well as the Conservation Action Plan for the Matanuska-Susitna Basin Salmon Conservation Partnership (to be completed in mid-2007).



Nome Watersheds: This focus area was chosen due to its century-long legacy of intensive placer mining for gold. Gold mines continue to be developed in the watersheds surrounding Nome. Home to four species of Pacific salmon, as well as Dolly Varden char, whitefish, and a diversity of migratory birds, this area is characterized by tundra wetlands dominated by low shrub-sedge/lichen communities underlain by permafrost. Area wetlands provide important nesting, feeding, and rearing habitat for a variety of bird species, including shorebirds, waterfowl, and passerines. This focus area supports moose, black bear, red fox, lynx, river otter, beaver, muskrat, mink, least weasel, and other small mammals.

Numerous ***opportunities*** for partnership have already been identified, with many local landowners and tribal groups, including Kawerak, Inc. and Norton Sound Economic Development Council, currently working with the Partners Program to restore coho salmon habitat. Our most important ***challenges*** to the successful restoration and protection of fish and wildlife habitat in this focus area are removing fish passage barriers, maintaining/improving riparian habitat, and educating the public on the value of intact habitat. Program ***strategies*** include watershed planning, working with individual miners and large mining corporations to reclaim and restore habitat, and working with partners such as Alaska State agencies to ensure that fish passage is maintained in all culverts in the focus area. Our efforts will address conservation needs in several ***existing conservation plans***, including the State of Alaska's

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, Nome Coastal Management Plan and Bering Strait Regional Community Development Plan.



Southeast Alaska: This focus area features the nation’s largest remaining tracts of coastal rainforest, and its adjacent estuarine, intertidal, and freshwater habitats. The focus area hosts five species of Pacific salmon, some 15,000 bald eagles, and some of the highest densities of brown bears in the world. Riverine wetlands such as those at the mouths of the Stikine and Mendenhall Rivers are major migratory bird stopovers, providing estuarine habitat for juvenile salmon, and nesting sites for waterfowl. Conservation issues in Southeast Alaska differ substantially from the remainder of the 49th state due to geographic, climatic, and physical distinctions.

Our most important *challenge* to the successful restoration and protection of fish and wildlife habitat in this focus area is the fact that Southeast Alaska’s most productive habitats – its coastal plains and forelands – are also the most developable lands in the region. As communities expand, native wetlands become scarce, and urban development impacts to streams and riparian corridors similar to those in the Pacific Northwest states are often repeated. Years of road building during the pioneering days of the timber industry also have left a legacy of salmon streams bisected by improperly placed culverts. Our *opportunities* include maintaining existing

partnerships and developing new projects with watershed councils in Yakutat, Haines, Skagway, Juneau, and Klawock, communities that contain a larger proportion of municipal, State, Native Corporation, and private lands than other Southeast communities enveloped by the Tongass National Forest federal land base. Program *strategies* include habitat restoration project development and implementation, technical assistance to cooperators, and assessment and remediation of fish passage in watersheds in multiple ownerships. Our efforts will address conservation needs in several *existing conservation plans*, including the State of Alaska's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, Southeast Sustainable Salmon Strategy, ACWA Program Stewardship Actions, TNC/Audubon Alaska's Southeast Alaska Conservation Assessment, and local watershed management plans.

Performance Measures:

Performance Measures are a list of accomplishment measures that are reported by the Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Information Tracking System (HabITS), which tracks and reports accomplishment information at national, regional, and local levels. At the national level, performance measures chosen include habitat restoration that can be quantified, such as wetland acres or linear length of river/stream miles restored, enhanced, established, and/or protected. Field and Regional office staff enter performance measure data throughout the year, which is used by the Washington Office in end-of-year reporting to determine whether targets have been met.

However, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program also has an important role in habitat protection by actions that are less easily measured, such as habitat assessment, project coordination, program/policy coordination, landowner consultation, outreach, and grant writing. The strength of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Alaska lies in its ability to conserve habitats through synergy with numerous and diverse partners, and to build a foundation for new initiatives. For example, we serve as a catalyst for watershed conservation by working with local groups who want to broaden the scope of habitat protection and restoration efforts. Cooperating with watershed groups has allowed us to focus on ecosystem planning and assessment rather than on a project-by-project basis.

Conservation targets for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Alaska that are currently quantified as Performance Measures include acres of wetlands restored, miles of instream and associated riparian habitats improved and restored, and number of fish passage barriers removed. Our primary 5-year habitat conservation targets are listed in the table below.

5-Year Habitat Conservation Targets by Geographic Focus Area

Opportunities for wetland restoration are limited in Alaska, as most wetland losses to date have resulted from urban residential and commercial development. These conflicting uses are largely perpetual in nature. Our primary conservation targets for the Partners Program focus more on riparian and instream habitat improvement on relatively intact anadromous fish streams and rivers, and on the recently-recognized challenge of fish passage restoration.

Focus Area	Wetlands Restored	Riparian/Instream Improved	Barriers Removed
Anchorage Bowl	1.0 Acre	10 Miles	5 Barriers
Fairbanks Area	15.0 Acres	40 Miles	4 Barriers
Kenai Peninsula	10.0 Acres	80 Miles	5 Barriers
Mat-Su Valley	1.0 Acre	10 Miles	6 Barriers
Nome Watersheds	10.0 Acres	5 Miles	2 Barriers
Southeast Alaska	10.0 Acres	2 Miles	3 Barriers
TOTAL	47.0 Acres	147 Miles	25 Barriers

Goal 2: Broaden and Strengthen Partnerships

Since the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program was established in 1995, Region 7 has continued to engage external partners in stewardship activities that restore, enhance and protect fish and wildlife habitats. We will work with existing partners while proactively reaching out to new partners in the coming years. However, annual increases in new partnerships will be constrained by current, fully-engaged, staff levels, as well as the limited universe of governmental and non-governmental partners in some of our more remote focus areas.

Focus Area	Number of New Partnerships Annually	Number of Partners Adopting Recommendations Annually	Cash and in-Kind Services leveraged Annually
Anchorage Bowl	5	5	\$100,000
Fairbanks Area	3	10	\$200,000
Kenai Peninsula	40	10	\$400,000
Mat-Su Valley	5	5	\$170,000
Nome Watersheds	2	1	\$30,000
Southeast Alaska	1	5	\$150,000
TOTAL	57	37	\$1,080,000

Goal 3: Improve Information Sharing and Communication

Information sharing and communication with our partners, stakeholders, potential future partners, decision-makers, and others to protect, restore and enhance Trust Resources has been, and will continue to be, a major goal of the partners Program. We believe that these information sharing roles are one of the primary strengths of the program. Based on current staffing and funding levels, we expect to maintain our current, relatively comprehensive level of coordination with other agencies (local, State and Federal) and stakeholders in project development and implementation, and to make modest increased investments, particularly with community-based watershed organizations.

Alaska Region Conservation Partnerships staff routinely present papers and posters on our restoration projects at state-level, regional, and national symposia and conferences. We will continue to support these efforts. Additionally, in 2004, Alaska Region staff organized and hosted the first annual Alaska Statewide Habitat Restoration Workshop, which was attended by more than 80 representatives of more than 20 State, Federal, municipal, and non-governmental restoration professionals – virtually the entire cadre of such experts in Alaska! We will continue to participate in this biennial event and will host it on a recurring basis. In 2006, staff also organized seven regional workshops for agency personnel, contractors, and private landowners to discuss various techniques to restore and protect riparian habitat. These workshops are organized annually, based on demand.

Goal 4: Enhance our Workforce

The Alaska Region's fully integrated Conservation Partnerships Program, comprising the Partners, Coastal, Fish Passage, and Private Stewardship Grant Programs, is staffed as follows:

Regional Office: (PFW/FP/C/NFHAP)	1 Conservation Partnerships Division Chief
Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office: (PFW/FP/C/NFHAP)	1 Supervisory Habitat Restoration Biologist 1 Habitat Restoration Biologist 1 Habitat Restoration Hydrologist/Engineer
Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office:	1 Habitat Restoration Biologist (PFW/FP/NFHAP)
Juneau Fish and Wildlife Field Office:	1 Habitat Restoration Biologist (PFW/FP/C)
Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office:	1 Habitat Restoration Biologist (PFW/FP)

The Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office is fully staffed; our goal during the next 5 years is to reach an optimum staffing level of two Habitat Restoration Biologists and/or Habitat Restoration Hydrologist/Engineers in each of our Field Offices.

The Alaska Region encourages each of our Conservation Partnerships staffers to attend a minimum of 80 hours of training annually for professional development and in support of the goals of this strategic plan. Training opportunities that we have found particularly valuable to Habitat Restoration staffers include the following, which are available at the National Conservation Training Center and elsewhere:

Continuing Education - Technical:

- River Restoration Northwest Design Symposium
- Alaska Statewide Habitat Restoration Workshop
- Designing for Aquatic Organism Passage at Road-Stream Crossings
- Bio-Engineered Streambank Restoration ((ADF&G; USFWS)
- Applied Fluvial Geomorphology (Wildland Hydrology (Rosgen))
- River Morphology and Applications (Wildland Hydrology (Rosgen))
- River Assessment and Monitoring (Wildland Hydrology (Rosgen))
- River Restoration and Natural Channel Design (Wildland Hydrology (Rosgen))
- Stream Habitat Measurement Techniques
- Introduction to River Science Management
- Engineered Log Jam Technology
- Fish-Friendly Stream Crossings
- Decision Analysis for Natural Resource Management
- Macroinvertebrate Ecology & Identification
- Freshwater Biomonitoring Using Benthic Macroinvertebrates
- GIS Introduction for Conservation Professionals
- GIS Design for Fisheries Management

Continuing Education - Developmental:

- Stepping Up To Leadership
- Advanced Leadership Development
- Conservation Partnerships
- Conservation Partnerships in Practice

Alaska Region Habitat Restoration staffers are encouraged to join professional societies such as the American Fisheries Society, American Water Resources Association, River Restoration Northwest, River Management Society, The Wildlife Society, Society for Ecological Restoration, and Society for Conservation Biology.

Our Habitat Restoration staffers have an average of 5 years of experience with the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. The Conservation Partnerships Division Chief has completed the FWS Advanced Leadership Course and 2 of the 6 field level Habitat Restoration staffers have completed the Service's Stepping Up to Leadership Course. While the small size and wide geographic spread of our Conservation Partnerships staff limit our options for formal mentoring programs, these same factors demand that our field staff regularly consult with each other to address project-specific and programmatic issues. In particular, our Habitat Restoration Hydrologist/Engineer plays a key consulting role in project design at all field stations. This on-going collaboration between staff and field offices fosters a shared learning environment that provides similar benefits to a formal mentoring program. Our staff have also participated in several temporary details at the Service's Washington Office. We will continue to encourage these details to allow our staff to gain exposure to national-level policy development and implementation.

Goal 5: Increase Accountability

The Alaska Region Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program has an enviable track record of fiscal integrity; we have been successful in meeting the program's Service manual instruction of dedicating 70% of Regional allocations to on-the-ground projects, with the remaining 30% used for staffing and other administrative functions. Assuming that future budget allocations match inflation, we will continue to meet this mandate. Similarly, if funding levels balance inflation, we will maintain the habitat conservation targets depicted under Goal 1. Should funding increases allow us to fully staff one or more of our now-understaffed field offices, we anticipate increases in conservation target output of approximately 5% per additional staffer annually. We expect to accomplish 4 management control reviews (1 per field office) during the next 5 year period.

We will continue to enter all habitat restoration and technical assistance projects into the HabITS data base annually, and will link all projects to trust species. We will use images to document at least 75% of our project accomplishments in HaBITS.