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ALASKA
Coastal Impact Assessment Program

State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Office of Project Management and Permitting

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Restoration

Res-to-ra-tion: The act or the process of returning something to its original condition, or to a state similar to its original condition (*Cambridge Dictionaries Online).*

This issue highlights some of the restoration projects that were completed using CIAP funds.

acknowledgements

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Photo: Visual Recording of Tammie Becker's AFE 2014 presentation, Living Lands & Waters

Restoring Alaska: CIAP Projects Underway

Various Restoration Projects Taking Place Around the State

The restoration of coastal areas and wetlands is one of several uses of CIAP funds authorized by Congress when it created CIAP. Alaska is using over $8.8 million of its $79.4 million in CIAP funds to finance 20 different restoration projects. Projects include river bank and lake shore restoration to improve fish habitat; trail hardening to restore wetlands by consolidating trail use; boat ramp construction to consolidate access and restore shoreline vegetation; bridge and culvert replacement to restore fish passage; marine debris removal to restore coastal and riverine areas; and the removal of sediment and nuisance vegetation from a lake to stop the eutrophication process and restore the lake's ability to support fish and wildlife.

20 Restoration Projects

$8.8 Million in Funds

In addition to these typical restoration projects, there are 20 more CIAP funded projects totaling $8.3 million that include a stream, lake, shoreline or other habitat restoration component, although the restoration may not be the main objective of the project. For example, there are several education projects that include a small restoration aspect as a learning tool. Additionally, several land fill improvement and waste backhaul projects funded through CIAP will help restore coastal areas currently impacted by the lack of properly maintained waste facilities. Two projects will improve fish waste disposal methods, thereby helping to restore marine areas currently degraded by an abundance of fish waste.

All combined, 40 of Alaska's 130 CIAP funded projects include some restoration. Unlike many of the other CIAP funded projects, where a benefit to the coastal environment is not necessarily tangible or realized immediately, restoration projects result in immediate, quantifiable, and observable benefits to the coastal environment.

kenai peninsula borough & public solicitation project summary

Beluga Slough Trail Reconstruction to Restore Wetlands

Project Manager: Carey Meyer, City of Homer
Project Dates: Mar. 2012-Sep. 2014
Total CIAP Funding: $513,467

The purpose of this project is to restore habitat and provide environmentally responsible visitor access to Beluga Slough by replacing 1070 feet of pre-engineered surface supported trail with 840 feet of new elevated trail and 230 feet of gravel trail.

Installed in 1997, the original Beluga Slough trail material was made of heavy plastic and designed to float with the tide. However, it did not function properly and become mired in the mud, interfering with the natural flow of water and destroying the plant life. An attempt to remedy the situation was made in the summer of 2006, when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service removed 162 feet of the failing plastic trail. With this portion of the trail gone, trail users were forced to walk through an often muddy area to reach the remaining constructed trail.

The new elevated trail will be constructed as an 8-foot wide walkway built on a foundation of helical piers, which are specifically designed for use in wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas. The trail surface will be grated galvanized steel that will allow light and precipitation to pass to the ground below, thus encouraging restoration of native saltwater marsh plants.

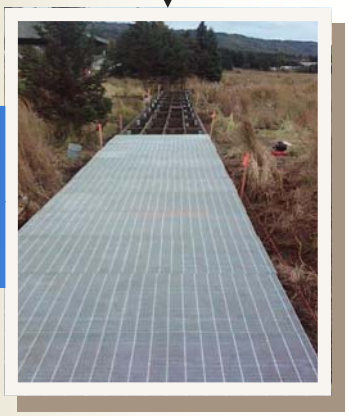
The 230 feet of gravel trail will provide access to a major storm drain outfall as well as provide for trail access. The gravel section will provide a pad from which construction equipment can complete outfall maintenance without damaging wetlands or impacting critical Beluga Slough wildlife habitat.

Trail Reconstruction Photo Story

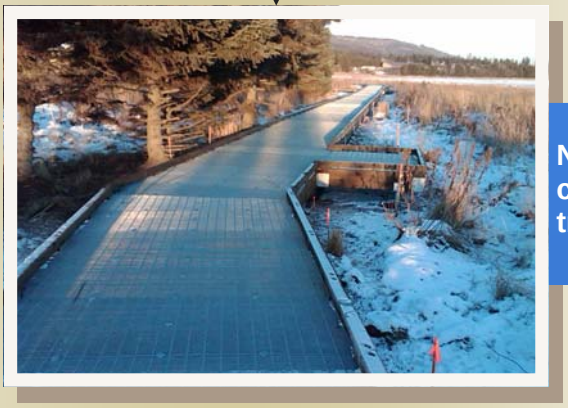
Original trail

Removal of original trail

Installation of helical piers



Grated galvanized steel trail surface in place



New completed trail

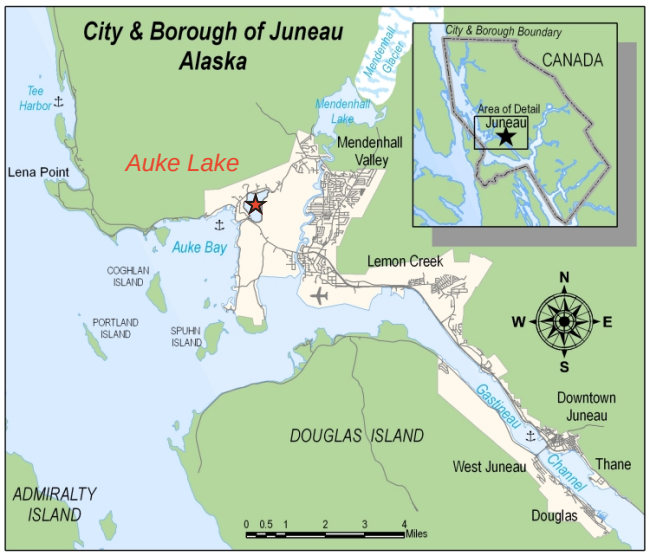
public solicitation project summary

Auke Lake Launch Ramp Reconstruction

Project Manager: Teri Camery
Project Dates: Nov. 2007-Oct. 2011
Total CIAP Funding: $250,000

The Auke Lake Launch Ramp Reconstruction project replaced the informal, unpermitted gravel launch ramp in Auke Creek, in response to water quality and habitat concerns. The new ramp aims to improve small scale recreational access to the lake and to alleviate habitat concerns from an unpermitted boat launch ramp (an abandoned state highway bridge landing). Previously, vehicles that launched watercraft carried, or dislodged, sediment down the slope of the ramp into the creek and wake action from the watercraft disturbed the creek banks. Idling watercraft introduced hydrocarbons into the creek. These disturbances affect the critical migration zone for salmon in Auke Creek. Returning salmon migrate through this area to spawn in Auke Lake and fry move from the lake, down the creek, before discharging into the ocean.

In addition to recreational use, Auke Lake is used for research and study by the University of Alaska (Southeast and Fairbanks) and the National Marine Fisheries Service. The lake is located in Juneau, Alaska and is owned by Alaska Department of Natural Resources and periodic water quality sampling is performed by Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. The work that these agencies perform directly benefits from improved water quality and habitat functions, and improved access.



This project improves migrating salmon passage and habitat values in Auke Creek through relocation of watercraft launch activities. The ramp has been located as far from Auke Creek as possible. The new engineered launch ramp has been constructed to access Auke Lake using rip rap and concrete plank surface. The use of rip-rap and concrete minimizes sediment run off into Auke Lake.

The City and Borough of Juneau has prohibited vehicular access to the former gravel launch ramp site in Auke Creek and stabilized the slope to restore the riparian edge and creek shoreline. Boulders have been placed at the top of the slope and the upland portions of the ramp have been planted with spruce, alder, ferns and native grasses. The base of the slope has been vegetated with wetland emergent plants.

Left: Access to the previous water craft launch point has been blocked by boulders and the functional value of 4,600 square feet of disturbed shoreline has been revegetated.

Below: The completed launch ramp.

Cold Bay Boat Ramp Rehabilitation

Project Contact: Anne Bailey
Project Dates: Jul. 2011-Jan. 2013
Total CIAP Funding: $90,000

Cold Bay is located in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge at the western end of the Alaska Peninsula. It lies 634 miles southwest of Anchorage.

The start of the Cold Bay Boat Ramp Rehabilitation project.

The Cold Bay Boat Ramp Rehabilitation project corrected the erosion problem that was occurring under the former boat ramp, reducing the environmental impacts created by the runoff of sand and gravel and other ramp debris that was previously washing into the bay prior to the improvements.

Additionally, the boat ramp improvements have consolidated access to the sea, reducing the likelihood that vehicles will use other points along the beach to on and off load their boats and the environmental impact created by the vehicles trampling vegetation in the process.

The completion of this project is important for both the local boat ramp users in the community and for the surrounding Izembek and Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuges. Just prior to the start of construction in June 2012, the Cold Bay City Council needed to take the drastic measure of closing the ramp to the public due to hazard conditions from excessive erosion around and under the ramp. Since the project completion, users are once again able to safely use the boat ramp. Cold Bay City officials confirm that the construction design has been proven through several heavy rainstorms. and prevents sand and gravel runoff.

Information: AEB Brochure, Insider's Guide to Cold Bay, Alaska 2014

Did you know...

- Cold Bay was officially settled in August of 1941, when a military contractor arrived to build a secret military base and airstrip here. The goal was to build a post quietly, to defend the Aleutian Islands and mount offensives against the Japanese during World War II.
- Cold Bay has a golf course! Though it's not big – just two holes – this little patch of grass is a testament to the spirit that makes Cold Bay the wonderful community that it is.
- Kids between kindergarten and 12th grade attend the Cold Bay School. Enrollment averages 14 students. With two teachers and one half-time aide, the student-teacher ratio is excellent.
- Cold Bay is renowned for its excellent bird-watching opportunities, especially around Izembek Lagoon, which holds one of the world's largest eelgrass beds and attracts birds from around the world. More than 98 percent of the world's Pacific black brant arrive each fall to feed on the eelgrass in preparation for their 3,000 mile non-stop flight to Mexico. Other birds traveling through the refuge each fall include mallards, Canada Geese, and rock sandpipers. Steller's eiders and emperor geese stay through the winter.

Alaska Forum on the Environment 2014

akforum.com

Present your CIAP project at AFE 2015

AK CIAP participates in the Alaska Forum on the Environment (AFE) held every February in Anchorage by hosting an exhibit booth with project specific information and arranging for AK CIAP project managers to disseminate project information during scheduled sessions. If you are interested in presenting your AK CIAP project at AFE 2015 contact Sylvia Kreel for more information at sylvia.kreel@alaska.gov.

Below: L-R, Sarai Timothy of UAS, Kacey Kruger of UAF GINA, and Kim Homan of UAS, attend AFE 2014. Homan presented an update on AK CIAP project, Coastal GIS Module of the SE AK GIS Library.

Above: AK CIAP project information on display. The booth presentation included a feature exhibit of 5 CIAP projects, a video presentation and printed details of current projects.

AK CIAP at AFE 2014

What is AFE?

The Alaska Forum on the Environment (AFE) is an annual educational event that promotes productive and efficient relationships between government agencies, business, organizations, tribes and the public by:

- Developing a more common understanding and
- educational foundation;
- Providing an opportunity for the exchange of information and experiences; and
- Understanding the diversity of opinions and concerns of others.

AFE 2014 by the Numbers

Total Registrations: 1264

Including 210 Tribal Gov't. registrations
129 Federal Gov't. registrations
87 State Gov't. registrations

Number of Sessions: 140

- 9 sessions scheduled at a time
- 7 AK CIAP project sessions

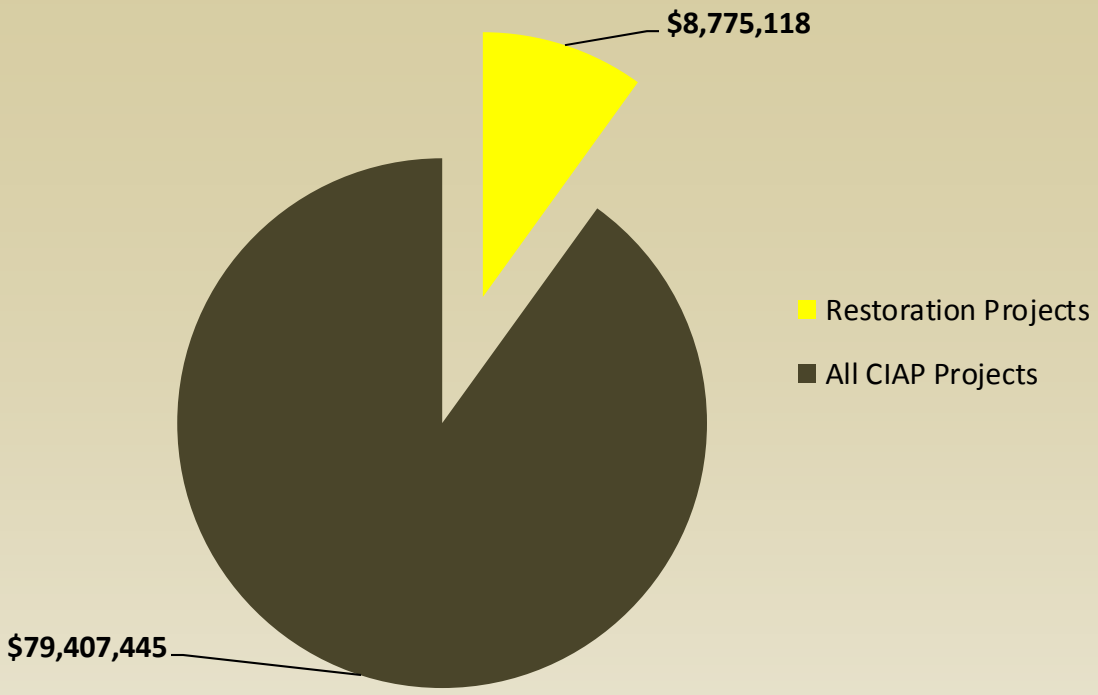
Number of Exhibitors: 54

Number of Trainings: 4

New at AFE 2014

A graphic facilitator attended many of the AFE sessions and created an image of the discussions created in real-time. Here is the visual record of the presentation given by project managers discussing AK CIAP project Environmental Contaminant Monitoring in Alaska Fish project.

Alaska CIAP Restoration Projects



CIAP Funding: Direct to CPS	Project Budget
Municipality of Anchorage	
Little Campbell Creek Fish Passage Improvements at the Alaska Zoo	$ 846,620
Chester Creek Channel Restoration to Mitigate Impacts to Fish Habitat	$ 2,036,635
Ship Creek Fishing Access Improvements for Stream Bank Protection	$ 1,000,000
Kenai Peninsula Borough	
Crooked Creek State Recreational Area River Bank Restoration	$ 287,512
Beluga Slough Trail Resconstruction	$ 65,834
North Slope Borough	
Restoration and Rehabilitation of Coastal Areas Through the Installation of Hardened Trail	$ 590,000
CIAP Funding: Direct to State	**Project Budget**
Matanuska-Susitna Trail Rehabilitation and Wetland Restoration	$ 140,000
North Road Pipeline Extensions, Crossing for Salmon Streams	$ 647,689
Beluga Slough Trail Reconstruction to Restore Wetlands	$ 448,116
Shakespeare Creek Restoration Project	$ 202,250
Auke Lake Launch Ramp	$ 250,000
Woodard Creek Rehabilitation, Planning and Design	$ 92,825
Cold Bay Boat Ramp Rehabilitation Project	$ 90,000
Unalaska Lake Restoration	$ 626,657
Lower Iliuliuk River Restoration	$ 351,657
Togiak Coastal, Subsistence and Recreation Access	$ 26,625
Coastal Habitat Restoration Project	$ 114,383
Sitka Swan Lake Restoration Project	$ 771,236
Sawmill Road Fish Passage Improvement	$ 101,386
Skagway Small Boat Harbor Improvement	$ 85,693
Total $ of all Alaska CIAP Restoration Projects	**$ 8,775,118**