

John Boyle
Commissioner

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Department of
Natural Resources

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STATE OF ALASKA

MEDIA ADVISORY

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“Dinosaur Parcel” on Kasilof River conserved

DNR, The Conservation Fund secure key coastal wetland habitat

KENAI PENINSULA, Alaska – Today, Alaska’s Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and nonprofit partner [The Conservation Fund](#) announced the addition of 309 acres to the Alaska State Parks system within the Kasilof River estuary. Known as the Dinosaur Parcel for its unique shape, the site has long been prioritized for conservation.

“This unique partnership with The Conservation Fund and University of Alaska conserves an important coastal wetland area on the Kenai Peninsula,” said **DNR Commissioner John Boyle**. “Moving the Dinosaur Parcel into the State Parks system furthers our Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation’s mission that includes providing outdoor recreation opportunities as well as conserving natural, cultural, and historic resources for the people of Alaska.”

The property makes up roughly 20 percent of the Kasilof River Flats Important Bird Area (IBA) and contains 2.25 miles of the river’s shoreline. At its mouth, the Kasilof River Flats IBA—one of Audubon Society’s global-priority IBAs—is a rich estuarine delta. About 85% of the project’s scope is composed of nationally declining coastal wetland types. It supports habitat for seabirds, migrant waterfowl, and shorebirds, as well as salmon and Cook Inlet beluga whales. An astonishing 165 bird species have been observed in the Kasilof River Flats, including 37 identified by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game as Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

“Public ownership of this property by Alaskans made both ecologic and economic sense,” said **John Wros, The Conservation Fund’s Alaska Associate**. “In addition to protecting extraordinary bird and salmon habitat, revenue from the sale supports the educational programs and student scholarships for the University of Alaska with non-state funds.”

In cooperation with DNR, The Conservation Fund secured federal and private funding to purchase the Dinosaur Parcel from the University of Alaska. In April 2023, The Conservation Fund transferred the land to DNR to be managed by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Funding for the effort was provided by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)’s National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program (NCWCG), a competitive grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation through the ConocoPhillips SPIRIT of Conservation Program, Conoco Phillips, Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture, the Alaska Conservation Foundation, and anonymous private individuals.

The NCWCG is a federal funding program that provides grants annually to coastal states to protect, restore and enhance coastal wetland ecosystems and associated uplands.

“The Kasilof River project presented a great opportunity for the Federal and State governments to collaborate on a project of mutual interest,” said **Michael Daigneault, FWS Alaska Region Coastal Program Coordinator**. “The project conserves valuable habitat for important fish and wildlife species, increases wildlife-based recreational opportunities along the Kasilof River, and

contributes to the local economy – a win-win-win for Alaskans, the community, and the species we care about.”

The Department of Natural Resources' mission is to develop, conserve and maximize the use of Alaska's natural resources consistent with the public interest.

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