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Alaska Awards More Than \$300,000 in Clean Water Actions Grants

(JUNEAU, AK) – A wide range of organizations are the recipients of \$304,020 in Alaska Clean Water Actions (ACWA) grants in the summer of 2015. The ACWA partnership between the Departments of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Fish and Game, and Natural Resources awarded 17 grants to assist the State in achieving its clean water goals. The grants focus efforts on waters in greatest need of protection and restoration.

"This grant program allows us to direct federal funds to important clean water projects throughout the State of Alaska," said Michelle Hale, Director of DEC's Division of Water. "Many of the projects awarded augment work being done by other federal, state, and local entities. For example, the Fairbanks Complete Street Construction project is taking advantage of the City of Fairbanks's Complete Streets Cushman Street upgrade to implement green infrastructure applications."

In addition, many of the projects will help to solve longstanding environmental problems. For example, the project in Anchorage is working with the Municipality to make sure the parks are free of dog feces and reduce the impacts from migratory fowl on our waterways.

ACWA grants are balanced between projects that protect at-risk waters and projects that restore waters considered polluted or impaired. The grant funds come from a combination of federal water quality grants with matching funds provided by the project grant recipient.

For more information about ACWA and the list of priority waters and actions, see www.dec.state.ak.us/water/acwa/acwa_index.htm.

Below are summaries of the Alaska Clean Water Actions Grants for projects starting in July 2015 and finishing in June 2016. The summaries are arranged by region of the state and include the contact information for the group conducting the project.

Southeast Region

Jordan Creek Rain Garden and Snow Barrier Fence

Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, \$29,300

This project addresses an ACWA Restoration priority. In collaboration with the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida, the project will design and build a rain-garden and bioswale to intercept run-off from the airport shopping center south of the Glacier Highway. The project will also construct a barrier fence along the banks of Jordan Creek to prevent contaminated snow from being pushed into the creek. Finally, the project will educate the local community including the adjacent landowners on the benefits of these types of projects. Contact: Brad Ryan, (907) 314-0477.

Petersburg Beach Monitoring Program

Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, \$26,439

This project addresses an ACWA Stewardship priority. In collaboration with the Petersburg Indian Association, the project will conduct the first year of recreational beach monitoring at Sandy Beach Park in Petersburg, Alaska. This beach was identified by DEC as a high priority, because it is commonly used for swimming and wading recreation activities. DEC will work with local agencies to notify the public if monitoring results exceed the standards for bacteria that protect public health at recreational beaches. The project will also increase public awareness of potential sources of bacterial contamination, associated health risks, and actions that can reduce the risk of disease. Contact: Angela Eldred, (907) 231-1710.

Sawmill Creek Low Impact Development Demonstration

Takshanuk Watershed Council, \$18,432

This project addresses an ACWA Stewardship priority. The project will construct two green infrastructure projects: a rain garden at the Chilkoot Indian Association's new building in Haines and a bioswale at the snow storage area at 6th and Dalton Streets. In addition to reducing the pollution to Sawmill Creek, these projects will help to educate the local community about the benefits of green infrastructure. Interpretive signs will be strategically placed and a video will be produced by an after-school film education program called "EcoPro" and shown to the Haines Assembly, Planning Commission, and the community. Contact: Meredith Pochardt, (907) 766-3542.

Wrangell Beach Monitoring

Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, \$29,804

This project addresses an ACWA Stewardship priority. This project will conduct the second year recreational beach monitoring at City Park and Petroglyph Beach in Wrangell, Alaska. These beaches were identified by DEC as a high priority, because they are commonly used for swimming and wading recreation activities. DEC will work with local agencies to notify the public if monitoring results exceed standards for bacteria that protect public health at recreational beaches. The project will also increase public awareness of potential sources of bacterial contamination, associated health risks, and actions that can reduce the risk of disease. Contact: Angela Eldred, (907) 231-1710.

South-Central

Clean Boating in the Susitna Valley and Cook Inlet

Cook Inletkeeper, \$37,612

This project addresses both ACWA Restoration and Protection priorities and continues an ongoing program. Since 2010, DEC, Cook Inletkeeper, and local partners have been educating boat owners about clean boating practices. This project continues the education activities at popular sport fishing areas and other recreational locations throughout Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Kenai Peninsula. Sport fishing is an important economic asset yet some popular fishing locations are polluted or at-risk of pollution by petroleum hydrocarbons and turbidity. The project will partner with the boating community including local businesses to increase the number of boaters that understand clean boating practices. Contact: Rachel Lord, (907) 235-4068 ext. 29.

Improving Water Quality in Anchorage's Waterbodies

Anchorage Waterways Council, \$50,000

This project addresses an ACWA Restoration priority. The project will lead to reducing the amount of fecal coliform bacteria entering Anchorage's waters by addressing several problems. First, building on information previously gathered about pet waste stations, the project will identify other best management practices occurring within the watershed. The work will be done in conjunction with the Municipality of Anchorage, enabling city managers to have a comprehensive up-to-date list of existing structures and improvements needed. Secondly, additional pet waste stations and trash receptacles will be installed. The need for these pet waste stations was identified in prior projects. Finally, signs will be installed to discourage feeding waterfowl at popular waterfowl feeding areas and to educate the public on why feeding waterfowl can be

unhealthy for the birds and the waterbodies where they live. Contact: Cherie Northon, (907) 272-7335

Kenai River Beach Bacteria Monitoring Assessment

Kenai Watershed Forum, \$20,005

This project addresses an ACWA Stewardship priority. From 2010 to 2014, DEC has funded sampling for enterococci and fecal coliform bacteria at the mouth of the Kenai River. Sampling has shown that high levels of bacteria exist, increasing health risks associated with coming into contact with the polluted water or eating uncooked fish. This project will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the data collected over the last five years and produce a cumulative report that can be used by government decision makers. The information can then be used by government officials to choose management strategies to reduce risks to public health. Contact: Edgar Guerron Orejuela, (907) 260-5449 ext. 1209.

Monitoring Stormwater Discharges in Cordova, AK

Copper River Watershed Project, \$15,900

This project addresses an ACWA Stewardship priority. The project implements recommendations from a 2013 stormwater assessment for the Odiak Pond watershed. The results from this project will enable the City of Cordova public works staff to improve pollutant loading modeling and predictions on the effectiveness of Best Management Practices for stormwater management. The sampling results will be integrated into City operations in street and drainage repairs, snow management, and new construction development. The project will gather screening level water quality data for Total Settleable Solids, petroleum constituents, and heavy metals at the stormwater discharge points to Odiak Pond and Orca Inlet in order to gain a better understanding of influences of common stormwater contaminants to these waters. The data will be collected under a DEC approved Quality Assurance Project Plan and Sampling Plan. The monitoring results will be provided to DEC and local residents via a number of formats including newspaper advertising and City of Cordova's electronic newsletters and bills. Contact: Kristin Carpenter, (907) 424-3334.

Stormwater Analysis on Cottonwood Creek

Matanuska Susitna Borough, \$45,000

This project addresses ACWA Stewardship and Restoration priorities. This project will survey and map stormwater infrastructure and flow paths, identifying inadequate storm drain collection and treatment systems, in the Cottonwood Creek watershed. The survey will identify specific areas which may be contributing to the creek's pollution and make recommendations for the physical stormwater control structures, including green infrastructure, which could be used to improve water quality. A report of design recommendations and a completed Geographic Information Systems hydrography data layer will be created. The information will

then be used by local planners and engineers as a tool in land use decisions and management. This is an 18 month project. Contact: Mike Campfield, P.E., (907) 861-7719.

Interior

Clean Boating Education on the Salcha

Tanana Valley Watershed Association, \$6,747

This project addresses an ACWA Stewardship priority. This project will include education for 200 landowners and 25,000 recreational users on the importance of the Salcha River and ways to keep the river healthy. Using existing outreach materials, face-to-face outreach will occur with boaters at the Salcha boat launch, at popular outdoor sporting shows, and at local boating and hunting events. Permanent signage with clean boating tips will be installed. Contact: Jewelz Barker, (907) 322-2633.

Fairbanks Complete Streets Construction

Tanana Valley Watershed Association, \$19,525

This project addresses an ACWA Restoration priority and builds on on-going work. Several green infrastructure projects will be implemented in conjunction with the Cushman and Barnette Complete Streets improvement projects. The project constructs green infrastructure projects at S Salon, Madden Real Estate, the Big I, and the Fairbanks North Star Borough Bus Depot. Signs will be installed at each project location describing the benefits of using green infrastructure techniques to manage stormwater on-site. Contact: Jewelz Barker, (907) 374-8890.

Project Green Map

Tanana Valley Watershed Association, \$5,256

This project addresses an ACWA Stewardship priority. This project will create maps identifying areas that are the most in need of and feasible for green infrastructure instead of traditional stormwater piping systems, or "gray" infrastructure. The maps will showcase to Fairbanks residents and planners what areas are strategically best suited for green infrastructure projects. Implementing green infrastructure will save water and reduce pollution inputs to the Chena River. Contact: Jewelz Barker, (907) 374-8890.

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