DEC Awards $1.4 Million Dollars in Clean Water Actions Grants

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is pleased to award 11 Alaska Clean Water Actions (ACWA) grants to organizations across the state to protect or improve Alaska's surface waters. The federally funded grants focus efforts on waters in greatest need of water quality protection and restoration.

Grant funds will be used for projects that: design and implement best management practices to capture and treat stormwater runoff, implement water quality public outreach, monitor water quality, or complete planning work for protecting and restoring water quality.

DEC partners with the Departments of Fish & Game and Natural Resources to review the project proposals.

The projects began in spring 2025 and will be completed by March 2027.

The next ACWA grant Request for Proposals is anticipated in fall 2026 if Congress appropriates funds to support the State of Alaska's program.

For more information about ACWA, see https://dec.alaska.gov/water/water-quality/nonpoint-source-control/alaska-clean-water-actions/.

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Attached are summaries of the Alaska Clean Water Actions Grants arranged by region of the state and include the contact information for the group conducting the project.

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2025-2027 Alaska Clean Water Actions Grant Summaries

Southeast Region

Improving Function and Decreasing Sedimentation in Vanderbilt Creek

Southeast Alaska Land Trust, $140,002
Applicant Contact: Stephanie Lawlor, (907) 586-3100

This project implements a water quality restoration priority. Vanderbilt Creek is an urban salmon-bearing stream in Juneau and was listed as an impaired waterbody in 1990. A recovery plan was completed in 1995, and several implementation activities have occurred since then with additional work needed. The tributaries feeding into Vanderbilt Creek largely originate on the east side of Glacier Highway, and several cross the Lemon Creek Trail. There are 11 culverts along Lemon Creek Trail with varying levels of function or failure. This project will assess, prioritize, and design replacements for these diminished crossings with properly sized and designed culverts that will facilitate natural stream function and mitigate sedimentation and pollution to downstream waters including Vanderbilt Creek. A final report summarizing project activities will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.

Juneau Marine Beach Pathogen Monitoring

Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, $74,074
Applicant Contact: Rebecca Bellmore, (907) 205-4028

This project addresses a BEACH priority and will be conducted by the Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition (SAWC). SAWC staff will conduct monitoring for fecal coliform, enterococci, and in situ water quality (temperature and turbidity) at three Juneau-area beaches (Lena, Auke Recreation, and Sandy) during the recreational seasons (mid-May through mid-September) of 2025 and 2026 and will be responsible for transporting samples to a local laboratory for analysis. Samples will also be collected for Microbial Source Tracking analysis once per recreational season at each beach location. Community notifications will be provided if water quality exceeds recreational criteria and there is a potential health risk, thus improving the safety of recreators and harvesters in the area. Data may be used to determine whether beaches meet water quality standards. A final report summarizing the monitoring outcomes will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.

Haines Marine Beach Pathogen Monitoring

Takshanuk Watershed Council, $89,781
Applicant Contact: Stacie Evans, (907) 766-3342

This project addresses a BEACH priority and will be conducted by the Takshanuk Watershed Council (TWC). TWC staff will conduct weekly bacteria monitoring for fecal coliform and enterococci at three recreational beaches (Lutak Inlet, Tanani, and Portage Cove) in the Haines area during the summer

seasons of 2025 and 2026 and assist DEC in notifying the community if results exceed state allowed limits. The monitoring will help TWC gain a better understanding of the safety of recreational waters and to inform recreational beach users of ways to better protect human health and the environment, while also evaluating the 2011-2013 baseline beach data to current 2025-2026 beach conditions. TWC will conduct educational outreach events focused on residents and recreational users prior to the first recreation season, and at the end of both recreational seasons. A final report summarizing the monitoring outcomes will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.

Southcentral Region

Alaska Sea Grant Fellowship to Advance Alaska Clean Harbors Program

Alaska Sea Grant, University of Alaska Fairbanks, $169,855
Applicant Contact: Tav Ammu, (907) 631-8361

This project implements a priority identified in Alaska's Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Prevention and Restoration Strategy. Alaska Clean Harbors is a voluntary, non-regulatory program working throughout Alaska to help harbormasters, communities, and boaters prevent pollution and reduce waste in Alaska's harbors and waterways. This project will continue the work of the previous Alaska Sea Grant Fellowship supported by ACWA 23-10 to focus on completing certification for currently "Pledged Clean Harbors" (Whittier, Dillingham, Kodiak, and Unalaska), recertify previously "Certified Clean Harbors" (Sitka, Haines, and Homer) as well as work with multiple harbors that have expressed interest but have not taken steps towards becoming become certified (Skagway, Cordova, and Aleutian East Borough). The project will use the new tiered certification checklist that allows for more harbors in Alaska to work towards becoming a "Certified Clean Harbor". Other project tasks include updating the Alaska Clean Harbors website with training and outreach materials and participating in several outreach events in coastal communities throughout Alaska. A final report summarizing project activities will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.

Drainage Map and Stormwater Management Plan for the Community of Chignik

Chignik Bay Tribal Council, $166,199
Applicant Contact: Jeanette Carlson, (907) 740-4019

This project implements a priority identified in Alaska's Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Prevention and Restoration Strategy. The Drainage Map and Stormwater Management Plan for the Community of Chignik emerged as a community priority action as part of the 2024 Chignik Subregional Watershed Plan's action planning process (ACWA 23-01). The Chignik Bay Tribal Council will complete a two-phase project for the community of Chignik Bay with Phase One creating a drainage map of the community and conducting a drainage study that includes calculating stormwater design events and identifying areas where nonpoint source pollution may be impacting local waterbodies. It will include inventorying City streets, storm drains, old landfill and dump sites, and culverts, with notes on condition and drainage issues related to each. In Phase Two, the drainage study will be used as the basis for developing a stormwater management plan. The stormwater management plan will include proposed locations for

nature-based stormwater infrastructure; recommended improvements and alterations to existing infrastructure; and considerations when planning future development. Reports from both phases will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.

Anchor Point and Homer Marine Beach Pathogen Monitoring

Homer Soil and Water Conservation District, $77,641
Applicant Contact: Kyra Wagner, (907) 299-4920

This project addresses a BEACH priority and will be overseen by the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District (HSWCD). The Alaska Beach Monitoring Program is part of a nationwide effort to decrease the incidence of water-borne illness at public beaches under the federal Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act. HSWCD staff will collect nearshore marine water quality samples at three recreational beaches (Anchor Point, Bishop's, and Mariner Park) in Anchor Point and the Homer area during the summer seasons of 2025 and 2026. The water samples will be sent to a laboratory for fecal coliform and enterococci bacteria analysis. HSWCD will work with DEC to notify communities if results exceed state allowed limits. The project results will help inform and prioritize future actions to reduce pollution, directly benefiting the environment and public health. HSWCD will conduct educational outreach events targeting residents and recreational users at the start and end of the recreational year. A final report summarizing the monitoring outcomes will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.

Healthy Mat-Su Riparian Areas: Education and Outreach

Matanuska-Susitna Borough, $113,500
Applicant Contact: Maggie Brown, (907) 861-8556

This project implements a priority identified in Alaska's Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Prevention and Restoration Strategy. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) will conduct a public education and outreach project to engage MSB residents in maintaining and building healthy riparian areas for protecting and improving water quality, providing flood protection, and other key functions of riparian areas. The primary goal of this project is to reduce nonpoint source pollution by educating MSB residents on actionable steps and mitigation measures they can take to maintain, improve, and restore riparian areas on private property. Special attention will be paid to riparian areas adjacent to impaired waterbodies as well as other areas adjacent to lakes and streams with dense development. A final report summarizing project activities will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.

Seldovia Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements Raby/Vista

City of Seldovia, $232,968
Applicant Contact: Heidi Geagel, (907) 234-7643

This project implements a priority identified in Alaska's Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Prevention and Restoration Strategy. The City of Seldovia will contract an engineering firm to assist in design and project planning for drainage improvements along Vista Avenue and Frank Raby Drive through culvert

replacement and relocation. The City of Seldovia will also purchase a BP25 pickup broom with gutter brush attachment for the City's Caterpillar 938K loader. These projects will improve drainage and stormwater management in specific locations by resolving problems identified in the City's 2024 Stormwater Management Plan and Drainage Map and will also allow the City to reduce sediment and associated pollutants draining into Seldovia Bay by increasing the frequency with which the City can conduct street-sweeping operations (currently limited to one time per year). A project factsheet will be developed and posted to DEC's website at project conclusion.

Seldovia Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements Main Street

City of Seldovia, $249,979
Applicant Contact: Heidi Geagel, (907) 234-7643

This project implements a priority identified in Alaska's Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Prevention and Restoration Strategy. The City of Seldovia will contract an engineering firm to carry out engineering, design, and project planning for drainage improvements along Main Street near the Harbor Pavilion and the City Boat Ramp, to remedy problems identified in the 2024 Stormwater Management Plan and Drainage Study. The City will also contract a construction firm to construct the recommended drainage improvements for the Main Street inlet across from the municipal boat launch. Regrading of parking areas to direct stormwater to the newly improved infrastructure will be done by the City using non-ACWA funding. Paving and other stormwater improvements to the Harbor Pavilion and other areas along Main Street will be pursued under future funding opportunities. Outcome will be a 100% engineering design for stormwater improvements along Main Street, and implementation of improvements for the inlet located near the Main Street boat ramp and storage area adjacent to 275 Main Street. A project factsheet will be developed and posted to DEC's website at project conclusion.

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust's Salmon Suite Campaign

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, $36,677
Applicant Contact: Carson Chambers, (907) 235-5328

This project implements a priority identified in Alaska's Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Prevention and Restoration Strategy. Kachemak Heritage Land Trust (KHLT) will address nonpoint source pollution concerns on the Kenai Peninsula by utilizing its existing salmon education outreach programs. The programs include Baby Salmon Live Here, the King Maker Award, and Fish Need Land Too. This outreach campaign is designed to educate landowners, local leadership, and resource managers on the environmental benefits of intact riparian land and promote best management practices to protect and improve water quality for fish habitat. The project focuses on the significance of land adjacent to anadromous streams and educates the public on the critical role healthy streambanks play in stabilizing soil, filtering runoff pollution, regulating water temperature, and sheltering aquatic food sources. A final report summarizing project activities will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.

Interior-Northern Region

Recommendations for Noyes Slough to meet Water Quality Criteria

Tanana Valley Watershed Association, $11,868
Applicant Contact: Cory Whiteley, (907) 374-8890

This project implements a priority identified in Alaska's Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Prevention and Restoration Strategy. Noyes Slough (Fairbanks) has multiple water quality impairments and was originally listed as an impaired waterbody in 1994. Water quality recovery plans were approved in 2008 and 2011. Since that time several recovery actions have occurred. For this project, Tanana Valley Watershed Association (TVWA) will a.) review, compile and summarize all previous studies and projects on the Noyes Slough, b.) develop a gaps analysis to identify what additional actions or recommendations may be needed for Noyes Slough to meet Water Quality Criteria, and c.) coordinate with appropriate community committees and stakeholders to develop recommendations to improve water quality. The final report will include possible actions and recommendations for Noyes Slough to meet water quality criteria. The final project report will be available on the DEC website at project conclusion.