



# Alaska Fish and Wildlife Fund

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## PARTNERS



## ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 6,000 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of \$8.1 billion.

Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)

## NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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Spectacled eider in Alaska

## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) builds partnerships between leading U.S. corporations, federal agencies, nonprofits and individuals who drive conservation efforts across Alaska. The Alaska Fish and Wildlife Fund (AFWF) was established in 2008 to further conservation of species and habitat while supporting communities responding to the challenges presented by changing climate and land use in Alaska.

The AFWF's comprehensive watershed approach endeavors to restore and protect essential Pacific salmon and wildlife habitats throughout Alaska. Conservation investments support a variety of projects to fill key information gaps that mitigate direct threats to species, inform and execute implementation actions, improve subsistence management and engage Alaska Native communities. Since the AFWF's inception, over \$12.6 million has been invested in 162 projects leveraging more than \$27.7 million in grantee matching contributions for a total on-the-ground conservation impact of over \$40.3 million.

NFWF announced 2023 funding for AFWF projects. Ten new and continuing fish and wildlife conservation grants totaling \$651,500 were awarded. The ten awards announced generated nearly \$1.3 million in match from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of over \$1.9 million.

The ten projects awarded will support the goals and priority geographies of the Alaska Fish and Wildlife Fund by protecting and restoring essential habitat to ensure long-term viability of Pacific salmon populations and fill data gaps that will directly inform subsistence managers, fill information gaps on migratory movements of birds to determine areas where they may be vulnerable, and incorporate outreach and engagement to Alaska Native communities and pursue collaborative management while elevating traditional knowledge to produce measurable conservation benefits.

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**REGIONAL STRATEGIES AND PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS**

The AFWF’s strategies focus on targeted geographies including the North Slope, Cook Inlet/Matanuska-Susitna Basin, and the Chugach and Tongass National Forests, as well as Pacific salmon conservation projects within the State of Alaska.

**PACIFIC SALMON CONSERVATION**

In partnership with federal agencies, NFWF is protecting, enhancing, and restoring essential salmon habitat to ensure long-term viability of the stock complex, and fill data gaps that will directly inform Pacific salmon subsistence managers.

**Assessing Mortality of Chinook Salmon During Freshwater Migration in Western Alaska**

Grantee: Bering Sea Fishermen’s Association

Grant Amount:.....\$67,936

Matching Funds:.....\$92,940

Total Project: ..... \$160,876

Estimate the prevalence of heat stress and pre-spawn mortality in migrating western Alaska adult Chinook salmon using natural biomarkers in the tissues of living individuals. Project will identify specific locations and populations where heat stress mortality is more likely in order to prioritize conservation efforts.



Chinook salmon



Tongass National Forest

**CHUGACH AND TONGASS NATIONAL FORESTS**

In partnership with the USFS, NFWF is supporting projects on these National Forests to improve Pacific salmon habitat. Grants include watershed assessments, in-stream habitat restoration, and aquatic organism passage projects on National Forests and adjacent public and private lands for the benefit of Pacific salmon, while engaging Alaska Natives.

**Tongass “Top Five” Fish Passage Restoration Design Initiative**

Grantee: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Grant Amount:..... \$100,000

Matching Funds:..... \$348,000

Total Project: ..... \$448,000

Develop an interagency partnership to identify, prioritize, field verify, select and contract for engineered shovel ready designs at not less than five fish passage restoration sites across the Tongass National Forest, Alaska. The project will create interagency involvement and support for a rolling panel of at least five sites per year bringing additional internal and external awareness and resources for fish passage improvements in Southeast Alaska. Today, partners are implementing these habitat restoration projects identified through the design initiative funded by NFWF.





Map of targeted geographic regions for Alaska Fish and Wildlife Fund

**COOK INLET, MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BASIN, AND KODIAK ARCHIPELAGO**

NFWF, in partnership with federal agencies in Alaska, is supporting comprehensive watershed management approaches to conserve fish and wildlife in the Cook Inlet and Matanuska-Susitna Basin regions. Projects include incorporating outreach to Alaska Native communities to foster traditional ecological knowledge sharing and stewardship that will lead to proactive management actions and measurable conservation benefits.

**Indian Creek Watershed Fish Passage Restoration**

Grantee: Tyonek Tribal Conservation District  
 Grant Amount:.....\$70,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$639,412  
 Total Project: .....\$709,412  
 Restore access for spawning and rearing coho and pink salmon in the Indian Creek Watershed, Alaska by engaging Tyonek residents and diverse partners. The project will: 1) remove undersized, perched culverts at three sites; 2) install stream simulation culverts opening 9.5 miles of stream and 147 acres of lake habitat; and 3) monitor and evaluate the project site prior to and after culvert installation.

**NORTH SLOPE**

In coordination with USFWS, NFWF continues to focus on opportunities to implement and fill key information gaps for fish and wildlife populations that will result in improved monitoring and management of species in the North Slope.

**Assessing Shorebirds in Teshekpuk Lake Special Area of the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska**

Grantee: Manomet  
 Grant Amount:.....\$95,765  
 Matching Funds:.....\$117,357  
 Total Project: .....\$213,122  
 Conduct shorebird surveys in the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) following the protocols developed by the Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring. Project will provide a comparison of changes in shorebird populations, and provide critical information on the distribution of shorebirds breeding in the NPR-A.



ANSEP students participate in fisheries career exploration in Alaska.

**2023 GRANTS**

**Assessing Culverts for Fish Passage in the Matanuska-Susitna Basin (AK)**

Grantee: Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
 Grant Amount:.....\$89,300  
 Matching Funds:.....\$89,500  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$178,800  
 Assess over 200 culverts in the Matanuska-Susitna Basin in Alaska to identify culverts for replacement or removal with the goal of rectifying fish barriers to increase and improve habitat connectivity. Project will implement a survey assessment protocol to prioritize culverts for improvement and provide survey data to the public for use by all stakeholders involved in culvert replacements in the Matanuska-Susitna Basin.

**Protecting Salmon Habitat through Hydrologic Investigations in the West Susitna River Basin (AK)**

Grantee: Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
 Grant Amount:.....\$62,200  
 Matching Funds:.....\$62,300  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$124,500  
 Establish a streamgaging network to provide continuous, multi-year hydraulic data to inform water resource management recommendations for important salmon-producing rivers in the Western Susitna River basin in Alaska. Project will collect and analyze hydrologic data needed to quantify water resource needs of fish and provide hydraulic recommendations to attain long-term conservation of fish populations and their habitats.

**Determining Effects of Changing Temperatures on Salmon Productivity in Southeast Alaska (AK)**

Grantee: Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition  
 Grant Amount:.....\$59,300  
 Matching Funds:.....\$60,600  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$119,900  
 Assess the impacts of climate change on Pacific salmon productivity in watersheds across southeast Alaska. Project will produce a region wide assessment of streamflow and water temperature data in monitored streams to develop an online user interface of the impacts of climate change on salmon life cycles to inform regional conservation approaches, watershed land management, land use designation plans, restoration planning and local conservation efforts.

**Determining Thermal Impacts to Salmon in the Yukon River through Education and Stewardship (AK)**

Grantee: Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association  
 Grant Amount:.....\$53,300  
 Matching Funds:.....\$170,200  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$223,500  
 Engage students in monitoring and collection of stream temperature and discharge data to determine impacts of the Yukon River thermal landscape in Alaska on juvenile Chinook salmon during freshwater residency. Project will fill information gaps on the thermal characteristics of freshwater Pacific salmon habitat and investigate water temperature impact on Pacific salmon productivity and the potential redistribution of Pacific salmon in a changing climate.

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Sockeye salmon in Alaska

### **Assessing Red Knot Abundance and Diet in Pacific Flyway Stopover Site (AK)**

Grantee: Manomet

Grant Amount:.....\$34,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$150,500  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$184,500

Assess abundance and diet of red knots in Controller Bay, a critical spring stopover site in southcentral Alaska, to advance red knot conservation in the Pacific Flyway. Project will estimate abundance through field surveys and scans, and determine prey composition through eDNA sampling to inform state and federal resource managers on critical habitat for red knot populations.

### **Evaluating Infrastructure Effects on Tundra-Nesting Birds and Prey (AK)**

Grantee: Arctic National Wildlife Refuge – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Grant Amount:.....\$32,200  
 Matching Funds:.....\$32,200  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$64,400

Perform remote monitoring of tundra-nesting birds and small mammals in Alaska's North Slope to determine if roads on the Arctic Coastal Plain impact common species and examine the effect of human infrastructure on populations. Project will use remote monitoring tools including nest bowl temperature loggers, micro time-lapse nest cameras, and ground-facing infrared small mammal cameras to gather data on abundance, behavior, and nest predators along transects perpendicular to oil field roads.

### **Surveying Winter Distribution and Abundance of Spectacled Eiders in the Bearing Sea (AK)**

Grantee: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office

Grant Amount:.....\$120,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$279,700  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$399,700

Conduct an aerial survey of spectacled eiders on the northern Bering Sea wintering area to understand how changing sea ice conditions in the Bering Sea are affecting eider populations. Project will provide critical information on the size and distribution of wintering flocks, wintering habitat use, and the status and trend of the global population of spectacled eiders to inform management decisions for this threatened species.

### **Assessing Forage Conditions for Porcupine Caribou Herd in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (AK)**

Grantee: U.S. Geological Survey, Alaska Science Center

Grant Amount:.....\$83,500  
 Matching Funds:.....\$314,000  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$397,500

Collect field data on forage conditions in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska to understand how changing climate conditions in summer forage areas and insect harassment are shaping the distribution, behavior, and dynamics of the Porcupine Caribou Herd. Project will sample forage conditions during the summers of 2023-2024 and leverage existing monitoring data to forecast future forage conditions, enable more accurate predictions, and determine forage influence on caribou movements.

### **Supporting Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Students in Advancing Conservation (AK) - III**

Grantee: University of Alaska Anchorage

Grant Amount:.....\$87,700  
 Matching Funds:.....\$87,800  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$175,500

Support seven Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) student internships with agencies and local organizations relating to salmon management projects across Alaska. Project will strengthen the existing pathway for Alaska Native youth to engage in on-the-ground conservation activities that provide data for information gaps dedicated to supporting salmon that Alaska Natives depend on for sustaining a subsistence lifestyle.

### **Supporting Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Students in Fishery Management (AK)**

Grantee: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Grant Amount:.....\$30,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$25,500  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$55,500

Provide stipends for three Alaska Native Science and Engineering Student internships with federal and state fishery biologists to work on Pacific salmon monitoring projects on the Yukon, Kuskokwim, and Unalakleet rivers in Alaska. Project will engage students on in-season management of fisheries, collect salmon research data used to make fishery management and regulatory decisions, work alongside local subsistence users and attend stakeholder meetings associated with management decisions.