

Potter Marsh Watershed Conservation Project Phase 2**FY2024 Request:****\$1,000,000****Reference No:****AMD 63826****AP/AL:** Appropriation**Project Type:** Life / Health / Safety**Category:** Natural Resources**Location:** Statewide**House District:** Statewide (HD 1 - 40)**Impact House District:** Statewide (HD 1 - 40)**Contact:** Theresa Cross**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2023 - 06/30/2028**Contact Phone:** (907)269-6398**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

In FY2023, the division was granted Phase 1 of the Potter Marsh Watershed Conservation Project funding through the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program (NCWCG), which acquired 62.2 acres of land. Phase 2 is a continuation of a three-phase effort to permanently protect over 300 contiguous acres of threatened coastal wetland ecosystem.

Funding:	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	Total
1002 Fed Rcpts	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000					\$2,000,000
Total:	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ongoing
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	
Totals:	0	0

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

Sec11 Ch11 SLA2022 P91 L20 HB 281 \$1,000,000

Project Description/Justification:

DNR Office of Project Management and Permitting has applied for a National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant. If awarded, the State of Alaska, in collaboration with the Municipality of Anchorage and Great Land Trust, will partner with the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program (NCWCG Program) to use \$1,000,000 in grant funds to permanently protect 83.5 acres of an imminently threatened coastal wetland ecosystem including nationally declining wetlands, leveraging a current conservation effort amongst the same partners and a FY22 NCWCG Program award for 62.2 adjacent acres. The Potter Marsh Watershed Conservation Project Phase II serves as the second complete phase of a three-phase effort to permanently protect over 300 contiguous acres. The total budget for Phase II is \$1,548,820, including \$464,820 in non-Federal match from the Municipality of Anchorage and \$84,000 from Great Land Trust.

The Phase II project will place deed restrictions on two adjacent property areas and expand a new Municipal Natural Area under the management of the Municipality of Anchorage: the new Municipal Natural Area was first funded by a Phase I project through the NCWCG Program. Phase II grant funds will be used to purchase additional property in the area, which is slated for residential development from GCI, the willing seller of the land. The Municipality of Anchorage will donate the

second connecting property to the project to ensure conservation efforts are maximized and that the land base remains unfragmented. Both properties are located at a unique convergence in the southern part of Anchorage between the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge iconic Potter Marsh subunit and Chugach State Park. Potter Marsh is a key component of Anchorage's coastal marsh ecosystem and is a significant attraction and resource for the city and state; it is heavily utilized, ranging from birders photographing migratory birds to juvenile Pacific salmon rearing in the nutrient-rich environment of fresh- and salt-water. The Phase II project will protect major freshwater sources that ensure the viability and vitality of the coastal marsh, and therefore ensure that it remains enjoyed as public land, habitat, and sustenance in perpetuity.

The State of Alaska will work with project partners through 2026 to ensure that the threatened properties are permanently protected by facilitating an escrow transfer for municipal acquisition of the subject land and conducting all necessary due diligence for the process. As a result, the project will safeguard the hydrological function of Potter Marsh; productive Pacific salmon spawning habitat; nesting, feeding, and resting habitat for migratory and coastal-dependent birds; and Critical Habitat for the endangered Cook Inlet beluga whales, as well as achieve local, state, and Federal-level conservation priorities and the expansion of well-managed natural areas for the enjoyment of recreational and educational opportunities.

Line 1000	22,662
Line 2000	
Line 3000	12,338
Line 4000	
Line 5000	965,000
Line 7000	
Total	1,000,000