

Dear Alaska Conservation Partners:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Restoration Branch is in the process of updating our Coastal program and Partners for Fish and Wildlife program strategic plans for the upcoming 5-year period, 2022-2026. One of the most important aspects of our update process is seeking honest, transparent feedback from our partners. The purpose of this questionnaire is to ask you a few questions to better understand your experiences and perspectives regarding these two programs, the staff that deliver them, the services that we provide, and areas where we should focus within the next 5 years.

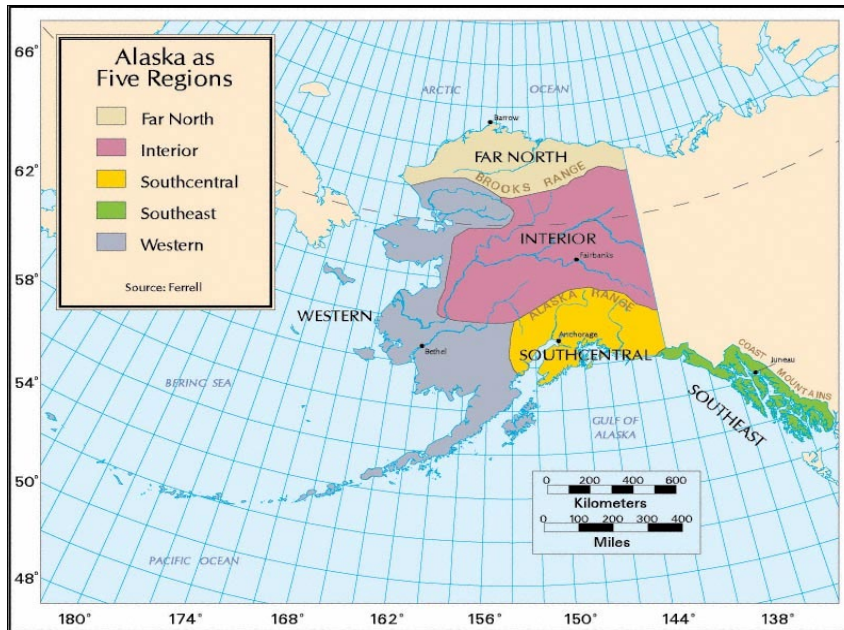
Please note that in Alaska, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service invests in [habitat restoration](#) with four programs: Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Coastal, Fish Passage, and the National Fish Habitat Partnership. The Service collectively implements this suite of programs to address Pacific salmon conservation needs at the intersection of existing habitat and human presence. While you may have had experiences with any or all of these programs, this questionnaire is specific to the Coastal and Partners for Fish and Wildlife programs. The current geographic focus areas of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program include the Tanana Valley, the Matanuska-Susitna Basin, the Kenai Peninsula, the Kodiak Archipelago, and Southeast Alaska. The Coastal program has similar geographic focus areas that are delineated more broadly: Southcentral Alaska, Southwest Alaska, and Southeast Alaska.

Your responses to this questionnaire are voluntary and anonymous. The questionnaire includes 18 questions and is anticipated to take 10-15 minutes to complete. Please respond by **XXX (date)**. Thank you for your time and feedback, and as always, thank you for partnering with us to conserve Alaska's fish and wildlife!

1. Based on the map shown below, the region in Alaska where my organization primarily works is:
- Far North
 - Interior
 - Western
 - Southcentral
 - Southeast
 - Multiple regions (please list): _____
 - Statewide

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is collecting information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*) from participants in the Partners for Fish and Wildlife and Coastal programs regarding their satisfaction with the Alaska Region strategic plans associated with the upcoming strategic planning process for the 5-year period, 2022-2026. Your response is voluntary and we will not share your response publicly. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. OMB has reviewed and approved this focus group and assigned OMB Control Number 1090-0011.

Estimated Burden Statement: We estimate it will take 15 minutes for the survey, including time to read instructions and gather information. You may submit comments on any aspect of this information collection to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or via email at Info_Coll@fws.gov.



Source: Alaska Humanities Forum (<http://www.akhistorycourse.org/geography/places-and-regions/>)

2. I primarily classify my organization as a (select only one):

- Local (city or borough) government
- State government
- Federal agency
- Soil and water conservation district
- Non-government or non-profit organization
- Tribal entity
- Other (please list): _____

3. My organization focuses on the following (select all that apply):

- Long-term protection of functioning habitat (e.g., conservation easements, water reservations)
- Habitat restoration, rehabilitation, enhancement, or management
- Biological monitoring of species or habitats
- Conservation education or outreach
- Advocacy or influencing conservation policy
- Permitting or serving a regulatory role
- Other (please list): _____

4. I have worked with the following U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service programs (select only one):

- Coastal
- Partners for Fish and Wildlife
- Both
- Unsure

5. Based on my experience with the Coastal and/or Partners for Fish and Wildlife programs and staff, I feel like I have a solid understanding of what the programs can/cannot do and where/how they are applied in my region of Alaska.

- Yes

-No

-Please explain your answer: _____

6. Based on your opinion, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff** on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being not at all and 5 being very much so.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff:

- Possess technical knowledge and expertise of species and habitats
- Possess technical knowledge of project design, implementation, and permitting
- Are accessible and responsive
- Are professional in how they go about their work
- Are creative in solving problems
- Have good communication skills
- Are skilled in establishing and fostering partnerships

7. In general, how have your interactions been with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff?

-Excellent

-Good

-Fair

-Poor

-Please explain your answer: _____

8. Based on your experience, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the **Coastal and/or Partners for Fish and Wildlife programs** on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being not at all and 5 being very much so:

The Coastal and/or Partners for Fish and Wildlife programs:

- Are focused on the highest priority geographies in Alaska
- Are focused on the highest priority species and habitats
- Are focused on the highest priority conservation needs
- Provide adequate technical expertise
- Provide adequate funding to meet conservation needs
- Provide adequate education and outreach to the public
- Have adequate staffing at current levels
- Have staff stationed in locations that are effective in meeting conservation needs
- Provide flexibility to meet my needs
- Have administrative processes that are burdensome for my organization

9. In general, how was your experience with the Coastal and/or Partners for Fish and Wildlife programs?

-Excellent

-Good

-Fair

-Poor

-Please explain your answer: _____

10. In my area of work, the most important conservation needs that require attention within the next 5 years are (please rank your top three answers in order of importance):

- Invasive species prevention

- Invasive species management or eradication
- Climate change adaptation
- Fish passage barrier prevention
- Fish passage barrier removal
- Monitoring and improving water quality
- Streambank and riparian habitat restoration
- Water quantity (e.g., instream water reservations)
- Habitat protection (e.g., conservation easements)
- Advocacy or influencing conservation policy
- Conservation education and outreach
- Assessment/prioritization of conservation needs or conservation planning
- Fundraising and increasing capacity
- Other (please list): _____

11. The Coastal and Partners for Fish and Wildlife programs currently focus conservation efforts on aquatic habitats (specifically Pacific salmon habitat). Should the programs expand their focus to include habitats throughout the entire watershed (thus supporting a broader suite of both terrestrial and aquatic species/habitats)?

- Yes, expand focus to watershed scale
- No, maintain aquatic habitat focus
- Please explain your answer: _____

12. I have, or would, benefit from receiving the following types of technical assistance (e.g., non-financial) from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff (please rank your top three answers in order of importance):

- Species specific scientific/biological support for my project or effort
- Information about habitat restoration, rehabilitation, enhancement, or management
- Information about long-term protection of habitats
- Information about permitting needs and processes
- Information about project planning, implementation, and contractors
- Education and/or outreach support
- Information about other technical or financial resources that may be available for my effort
- Grant writing support
- Prioritization or strategic planning support
- Other (please list): _____

13. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service feels that communicating the value of conservation is critical in engaging others and garnering support, especially with those outside of the existing conservation community. What themes do you feel are most effective in communicating the purpose, value, and benefits of conservation to others? (Please rank your top three answers in order of importance.)

- Economic value of healthy habitats and species
- Economic contributions (e.g., number of jobs created and supported) of restoration actions
- Cultural and historical significance of habitat and species
- Ecological services provided by healthy and functioning habitat
- Mental and physical health benefits of open or green spaces
- Conservation contributions to climate change resilience
- Fish and wildlife for human use (e.g. hunting, fishing, subsistence)
- Other (please list): _____

14. What is the best way to share stories about the themes listed in the previous question? (Please rank your top three answers in order of importance.)

- Holding specific education or outreach events (e.g. workshops, speaker series)
- Providing education in the school setting
- Producing and distributing reports
- Fact sheets, brochures, or pamphlets
- Having a presence (e.g., booth) at community events, industry conferences, or trade shows
- Website
- Digital newsletters or blog posts
- Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube)
- Mailed newsletters
- Local media (e.g., radio, local newspaper)
- Other (please list): _____

15. Please use the space below to share additional insights that can help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service be a better conservation partner.

16. Do you have any emerging needs or opportunities that we can collectively partner on? If so, please describe.

17. If there was one thing about our programs that you could change, what would that be?

18. Would you like to have a follow-up conversation with either Coastal or Partners for Fish and Wildlife program staff?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide your name, organization, and best contact. We will follow-up within 2 to 3 weeks to arrange a phone call or virtual meeting.

- Name: _____
- Organization: _____
- Phone and/or email: _____

Thanks again for taking the time to complete our questionnaire!